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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board

Cadeirydd/Chair: **Emma Woollett**
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive: **Tracy Myhill**

gofalu am ein gilydd, cydweithio, gwella bob amser
caring for each other, working together, always improving

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg ac yn y Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Dyddiad/Date: 26th March 2021
Ein Cyf / Our Ref: 21-A-016a

☎ 01639 683302

✉ Emma.Woollett@wales.nhs.uk

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Headquarters
1 Talbot Gateway
Baglan
Port Talbot, SA12 7BR

Dear ██████████

I refer to your email dated 6th February 2021.

As Chair of the Health Board, I am designated to undertake a review of the information provided in response to an FOIA request where a requester seeks internal review.

In conducting my review, I note you had asked for the following information:

Can you confirm how many deaths as a direct result of covid-19 have occurred since 1st March 2020 until January 8th 2021?

The Health Board responded to you on the 26th January 2021 stating that it did not hold this information. It confirmed that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) provided it with data relating to COVID deaths where COVID-19 is mentioned anywhere on the death certificate, including as a contributing factor. The Health Board was not able to split this data further in order to exclude contributing factors to death to provide the number of deaths as a direct result of COVID-19 only, therefore it had recommended that you contact the ONS, who may be able to provide this breakdown for you, via this email: foi.team@ons.gov.uk.

On submitting your appeal, you have asked the Health Board to review its response, as you do not believe that the Health Board does not hold this information. Also, you followed this up with a further email on the 20th February stating, 'since when did a health board not keep on record the cause of someone's death?'

In response I can confirm that the Health Board does record a cause of death centrally on its systems, however this will be for example where COVID-19 was listed anywhere on the death certificate, so this could be for example where a person died from pneumonia, but COVID-19 was a contributing factor to their death. Your question was for COVID-19 deaths where COVID-19 was the sole reason for death



Pencadlys BIP Bae Abertawe, Un Porthfa Talbot, Port Talbot, SA12 7BR / Swansea Bay UHB Headquarters, One Talbot Gateway, Port Talbot, SA12 7BR

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with no contributing factors. I can confirm that death certificates are not held by the Health Board. When a death occurs, the attending doctor completes a certificate for the local registrar of births and deaths in the area where the death occurred. This certificate will be delivered to the registrar often by a relative of the deceased and most deaths are registered in this way.

Therefore, whilst the Health Board will record a death in relation to COVID-19 on its systems, it cannot provide you with the detail as to whether this was specifically COVID-19 only with no contributing factors, as this is only something that would be recorded on a patient's death certificate.

Therefore, I can conclude the Health Board was correct in its response to you. I therefore, as initially recommended to you, ask that you contact the ONS team who hold this information, to see if they can provide you with the breakdown of what you require: foi.team@ons.gov.uk

I hope this information is helpful and if you require anything further please contact us at FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, should you remain dissatisfied you are also entitled to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (Wales) by writing to: Information Commissioner's Office (Wales), 2nd Floor, Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff. CF10 2HH. Telephone Number 029 2067 8400.

Yours sincerely



Emma Woollett
Chair

