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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board

Cadeirydd/Chair: **Emma Woollett**
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive: **Mark Hackett**

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: 20th July 2021
Ein Cyf / Our Ref: 21-F-045

☎ 01639 648363

✉ FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk

[REDACTED]

Corporate Services
Headquarters
1 Talbot Gateway
Baglan
Port Talbot, SA12 7BR

[REDACTED]

I refer to your Freedom of Information Act Request acknowledged by ourselves on 24th June 2021. Your request sought information relating to legal fees with Blake Morgan Solicitors.

The information provided below are for the period - 01/07/19 to 30/06/21.

1. How much have the law firm Blake Morgan billed the Health Board for in the past two years?

The total invoices received from BLAKE MORGAN LLP during the last 2 years is £83,557 held on our finance systems.

2. The Health Board instructed Blake Morgan in relation to issues around Subject Access Requests. Please provide the amount of fees paid to Blake Morgan relating to this issue.

Total value of invoices relating to BLAKE MORGAN LLP during the last 2 years that specifically mention SARs in the invoice is £31,716 held on our finance systems.

3. Please release any bill / invoice documents supplied by Blake Morgan to the Health Board in the past two years. This should include any invoice breakdowns and summaries of work.

I can confirm that this information is withheld under Section 42 of the Freedom of Information Act – Legal Professional Privilege. Legal professional privilege (LPP) protects confidential communications between lawyers and clients: it is a fundamental principle of English law.

The invoices requested will contain communications and details of cases/legal advice between the Health Board and its legal advisors.



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

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe yw enw gweithredu Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Prifysgol Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University Health Board is the operational name of Swansea Bay University Local Health Board

Section 42 is subject to the public interest test and as such arguments for and against releasing the requested information have been considered.

It is acknowledged by the Health Board that release of the information would promote transparency and accountability. Providing the requested information would be in line with the spirit of openness and transparency and the Health Board acknowledges there is a public interest in the way that public authorities spend public money.

However, the information represents comprehensive details of the work carried out to date by the Board's legal representatives in respect of on-going legal proceedings. There is a public interest in ensuring that the Board can obtain advice on matters without the details of the work conducted and issues addressed by legal advisers being disclosed. The Health Board and individuals involved in this ongoing process have the expectation that matters should remain confidential and will not be disclosed to the general public. There is a general public interest in maintaining the exemption in order to safe guard the openness in all communications between the Board and its solicitors to ensure full and frank legal advice.

In conclusion the Health Board concludes that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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

Under the terms of the Health Board's Freedom of Information policy, individuals seeking access to recorded information held by the Health Board are entitled to request internal review of the handling of their requests. If you would like to complain about the Health Board's handling of your request please contact me directly at the address below or register your complaint via FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk.

If after Internal Review you remain dissatisfied you are also entitled to refer the matter to the information commissioner at the Information Commissioner's Office (Wales), 2nd Floor, Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff, CF10 2HH. Telephone Number: 029 2067 8400.

Yours sincerely



Pam Wenger
Director of Corporate Governance

