



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

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 neu'r Saesneg. Atebir gohebiaeth Gymraeg yn y Gymraeg, ac ni fydd hyn yn arwain at oedi. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English. Welsh language correspondence will be replied to in Welsh, and this will not lead to a delay.

Cais Rhyddid Gwybodaeth / Freedom of Information request **Ein Cyf / Our Ref: 23-B-024**

Please note that from 1st April 2019 responsibility for providing healthcare services for people in the Bridgend County Borough Council area transferred from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board to Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board. In light of this change to ABMU's responsibilities, the organisation's name has changed to Swansea Bay University Health Board.

However as this response asks for data prior to 1st April 2019, we have provided the information that ABMU Health Board held which will include Bridgend data.

Swansea Bay Health Board recognise how distressing it is for people who have had long waits for surgery, and understand the devastating effect it can have on their lives. The pandemic has stretched NHS resources to the limit, leading to record waiting times for orthopaedic and other surgery across the UK. This is on top of the usual winter and emergency pressures, which have only worsened an already challenging situation.

Last year, the health board agreed to create a series of centres of excellence at its main hospital sites, allowing it to work through the backlog as quickly and efficiently as possible. The plans include a centre of excellence for planned orthopaedic and spinal surgery at Neath Port Talbot Hospital. It will mean additional beds and operating theatres for orthopaedic surgery, increasing capacity by around 3,000 cases a year.

The centre of excellence at Neath Port Talbot Hospital is a key part of the health board's strategic Changing for the Future programme. Orthopaedic waiting lists, which were already very long before Covid-19, were worsened by the effects of the pandemic. Over half of our patients have now been waiting more than two years for orthopaedic surgery.

Neath Port Talbot Hospital plans to offer a ring-fenced elective service aimed at powering through the majority of patients on these lists.

Morrison Hospital will continue to be responsible for orthopaedic trauma patients and orthopaedic patients with more complex needs. The health board is actively looking at



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

how best to serve this last group.

We are in the construction stages and anticipate the new theatres will become operational by June 2023.

Please note that Neurosurgery is not performed within Swansea Bay Health Board hospitals. These patients are referred to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. We therefore do not have a "Neurosurgery" category in our complaints, operations or incidents recording systems. We have, however, provided the number of data requested for the remaining categories.

You asked:

I am seeking information about the number of complaints received by your Health Board in the past five years for the following specialties: neurosurgery, orthopaedic surgery, cardiothoracic surgery, and vascular surgery.

Specifically, I would like to request the following information for each specialty:

- 1. The total number of complaints received for each specialty in each of the past five years;**
 - **The nature of the complaint**
 - **The outcome of the complaint, including any actions taken by the Health Board to address the issue;**

We are unable to provide you with the level of detail you are seeking as to the nature and the outcome of each individual complaint, as due to the level of specific detail there is a potential risk of identifying the individual if this was disclosed. Therefore, the data is classed as personal data as defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 and its disclosure would be contrary to the data protection principles and constitute as unfair and unlawful processing in regard to Articles 5, 6, and 9 of GDPR. We are therefore withholding this detail under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This exemption is absolute and therefore there is no requirement to apply the public interest test.

However, we have provided the "top themes" of complaints for each specialty as well as outcome categories to give a wider picture of each.

Orthopaedic surgery

2018 – 261 complaints

2019 – 256 complaints

2020 – 110 complaints

2021 – 132 complaints

2022 – 195 complaints

Top themes of complaints for Orthopaedic surgery;



- delayed/cancelled admissions
- delayed/cancelled appointments
- communication issues
- clinical treatment issues

Outcomes of complaints and actions taken for Orthopaedic surgery;

- 530 complaints partially or completely upheld
- Referral to treatment time (RTT) waiting times are monitored on a weekly basis. A report is provided to the Morriston Business and Performance Group on a weekly basis in order to monitor current performance against agreed Health Board targets.
- Staff asked to reflect on communication with patients
- Patients added to waiting lists
- To develop a standalone Orthopaedic Unit

Cardiothoracic surgery

2018 – 2 complaints

2019 – 13 complaints

2020 – 13 complaints

2021 – 3 complaints

2022 - 3 complaints

Top themes of complaints for Cardiothoracic surgery;

- Clinical treatment issues
- Delayed/cancelled admissions

Outcome of complaints and actions taken for Cardiothoracic surgery;

- 12 partially or completely upheld
- RTT waiting times are monitored on a weekly basis. A report is provided to the Morriston Business and Performance Group on a weekly basis in order to monitor current performance against agreed Health Board targets.
- Self-reflection of staff involved
- Improved communication

Vascular surgery

2018 – 1 complaint

2019 - 1 complaint

2020 – 0 complaints

2021 - 1 complaint

2022 - 2 complaints

We are unable to provide you with the level of detail you are seeking as to the nature or outcome of Vascular surgery complaints, as due to the low number of complaints and level of specific detail there is a potential risk of identifying the



individual if this was disclosed. Therefore, the data is classed as personal data as defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 and its disclosure would be contrary to the data protection principles and constitute as unfair and unlawful processing in regard to Articles 5, 6, and 9 of GDPR. We are therefore withholding this detail under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This exemption is absolute and therefore there is no requirement to apply the public interest test.

Actions taken for Vascular surgery;

- RTT waiting time are monitored on a weekly basis. A report is provided to the Morriston Business and Performance Group on a weekly basis in order to monitor current performance against agreed Health Board targets.

2. Number of operations performed in the past five calendar years for the following specialties: neurosurgery, orthopaedic surgery, cardiothoracic surgery, and vascular surgery

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Cardiothoracic	1,062	1,013	494	693	776	4,038
Trauma & Orthopaedic	4,871	4,704	2,567	3,042	4,264	19,448
Vascular Surgery	1,183	1,208	840	906	1,061	5,198

3. Number of reportable / recordable patient safety incidents in the past five calendar years for the following specialties: neurosurgery, orthopaedic surgery, cardiothoracic surgery, and vascular surgery
a. Breakdown by incident category (if available);

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Cardiothoracic	239	261	146	174	228	1048
Orthopaedics	1069	836	411	478	395	3189
Vascular	208	211	174	142	158	893

Please see attached appendix 1 for remaining surgery types broken down by incident category. We have included all incidents from both our old system "Datix Web" for the period 01.01.18 to 31.03.22 and our newer system "Datix Cymru" for the period 01.04.22 to present. In some cases you may see more than one similar incident categories – this is due to the pulling of information from two different systems.

