

Freedom of Information Request: Our Reference CTMUHB_340_21

You asked:

I am emailing to request:

How Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board plans to treat patients requiring elective joint replacement surgery within the target waiting times, following the cancellation of many surgeries due to the Covid-19 pandemic?

All information that Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board holds from 1st September 2020 onwards regarding how it plans to deal with the elective joint replacement surgeries that were postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our response:

Orthopaedic surgery forms part of our overall Elective Recovery programme, although we do not have specific plans in place in relation to joint replacement as each patient is considered individually. The way in which our hospitals are required to be set up during and following the pandemic has meant that considerably more separation is required for certain patients, with orthopaedic surgery being amongst this group.

Our Orthopaedic Specialists clinically advise that the wards used for these patients have to be ring fenced for that purpose and that purpose only (ie orthopaedic surgery); this can become problematic when urgent care pressures reach critical levels. There can be significant consequences if joint patients develop infections and the successful implantation of joints cannot be carried out on mixed wards with people who are having other types of surgical procedures.

We are working across the Health Board and region to explore options to develop capacity and enhance services in order to reduce the delays currently being experienced by patients, these options include working with the Independent Sector, other NHS organisations where we are reviewing 'mutual aid'. Strategically we are considering more longer term solutions to our growing waiting times.