

Freedom of Information Request: Our Reference CTMUHB_52_22

You asked:

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. The number of deaths in the health board's hospitals of patients involving Covid-19 as a result of hospital onset infection – "probable" onset and "definite" onset – from 1 October 2021 to 31 January 2022.

If available, to provide a breakdown of hospital sites where deaths occurred and by month.

Our response:

We can confirm that the Health Board does hold this information. However, to release the specific information in the way that you have requested would mean disclosure of low numbers.

Where numbers are low we have considered that there is the potential for the individuals to be identified from the information provided, when considered with other information that may also be in the public domain.

In our view disclosure of these low figures would breach 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, in order to fulfil our obligation under Section 16 of the Act to provide advice and assistance, we can confirm that there were 31 deaths in the health board's hospitals of patients involving Covid-19 as a result of hospital onset infection – "probable" onset and "definite" onset – from 1 October 2021 to 31 January 2022.

Please note the following:

- Hospital deaths. – Patients admitted to CTM UHB Hospitals.
- Patients with a Hospital Acquired Infection (HAI)/Probable Hospital Acquired Infection (PHAI).
- Patients may belong to another University Board area.
- The source of the data used for this response is the Office of National Statistics (ONS) data Registered Deaths, supplied to us via Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) formerly the NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS). As such, there will be a time lag on the reporting of deaths, as ONS data awaits the official clinical determination of death.