

Freedom of Information Request: Our Reference CTMUHB_361_23

Clarification requested and provided 24/08:

RFI in this context would be "request for information" - the intent was to frame the request in such a way that it could be easily broken down into parts.

In this case, the question is intended to act as a follow-on for the parts in RFI1, and RFI2.

You asked:

I am writing to make a formal request under the Freedom of Information Act, for information held by your NHS Trust (health board) about the food production methods and catering procedures employed within the Trust's healthcare facilities.

For the purposes of clarity, I am referring to food that is prepared for, or otherwise supplied to patients by the Trust. This would likely, predominantly, be food supplied to in-patients; but it may well also include any restaurants supplied by your catering department (e.g., cafés, where supplied).

Food Production Methods:

- 1. Does the Trust produce food for patients in-house? If so, please clarify whether this is carried out on a central site (e.g., central production unit), or within each individual hospital. If there is a mixture of both, please clarify, where possible.**

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTM UHB) operates a predominantly ward-based Catering service in all District General Hospitals (DGH) and Community sites (with the exception of one DGH). CTM UHB have a Central Production Unit (CPU), which is run as a food manufacturing cook-freeze operation, the site is UKAS accredited to STS Standard for Food Safety (an NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP)) Wales framework requirement). The STS Food Safety Standard is audited annually by a third-party and we are inspected twice a year by Environmental Health and consistently hold a five star rating. CTM UHB manufactures a range of cook-freeze products for all our hospital sites ranging from soups, main dishes, accompaniments and puddings. These dishes are developed in line with The All Wales Nutrition and Catering Standards for Food and Fluid Provision for Hospital Inpatients, 2012 (current being revised). At our hospital sites, which offer ward-based Catering food, products will be regenerated in a ward trolley to the required legal temperatures. The non-ward Catering site will regenerate centrally and deliver the food to wards.

All of our Catering sites also procure from NWSSP All Wales Contracts for non-supplied CTM CPU supplied items and this spans a variety of ambient, chilled and frozen items which may be served as part of a patient meal e.g. breakfast items, vegetables or certain pre-packaged products. Where a patient has a specific diagnosis e.g. dysphagia and are on IDDSI level meals then these again will be procured through NWSSP All Wales Contracts.

If further information is required, please contact [NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership](mailto:shared.services@wales.nhs.uk) (NWSSP). Contact details are as follows:- shared.services@wales.nhs.uk

- 2. If food is not produced in-house, please provide details on whether it is produced by a third-party facilities contractor (e.g., under a PFI agreement), or purchased from external sources, in frozen (or chilled) format.**

Where possible, for request for information (RFI) 1 and 2, please also clarify the arrangements for delivery-to-patient (e.g., is the food supplied to wards and then reheated on-site, or is some other reheating method used).

Answered as part of question 1.

- 3. For in-patient meals, what is the average cost per meal, to the Trust?**

The cost for 2022-23, which has been submitted via the Estates and Facilities Performance Management System (EFPMS) is average £4.48 (across DGH/community sites).

Recipe and Cooking Method Information:

- 4. In the event that the Trust produces food in-house, please supply a copy of the recipes, and cooking / preparation methods utilised by the catering department for standardised food items. I would imagine that this information would be readily available, owing to standardisation of menu items [1].**

This would include information on ingredients, preparation steps, cooking temperatures, and any relevant nutritional considerations (e.g., it might be noted on menus that certain items are suitable for those on restricted diets, or that some menu items have specific allergens).

CTM UHB produces cook-freeze meals for patient feeding. The Health Board holds recipes, and cooking / preparation methods however, we would like to advise you that the information you requested is being withheld under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The exemption which the Health Board has applied to this information is: Section (43)(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 43(2) protects information which would or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it). In applying section 43 we have balanced the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing it.

The manufacturing process is a cook-freeze operation and the manufacturing facility handles chilled, ambient and frozen raw materials.

The All Wales Nutrition and Catering Standards for Food and Fluid Provision for Hospital Inpatients, 2012 (current being revised) are met from a nutrition perspective for 'nutritionally well' and 'nutritionally vulnerable' patients. If a patient is assessed as a particular diet e.g. medically restricted, allergens, level meals then a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) is involved to ensure the specific nutrition needs of that patient are met.

Products that are supplied to hospital sites from CTM UHB are labelled in accordance with the requirements set out in:

Regulation (EC) 1169/2011 Food Information to consumers (Labelling)

Food Information Regulations (Wales) Amendment (No.2) Regulations 2020

Pre-packed for Direct Sales (PPDS) – Natasha's Law October 2021

Allergen sheets are available in ward-based kitchens and via the Catering teams to inform patient choice and allergen information. CTM UHB is currently transferring to a digital system where information will be available via an iPad. In early 2024 clinical sign off will commence at our hospital sites so that patient food orders are all done at patient bedside and nursing teams have signed off any dietary requirements. All allergens will move to the digital portal. Printed copies of the menu will shortly be available in conjunction with our new launch (However, please find attached the previous menus).

If more information regarding the standardisation of menus and recipes is required, please contact NWSSP directly. Contact details are as follows:-

shared.services@wales.nhs.uk

5. If you do not produce food in-house, please confirm whether you hold standardised information as to what items are available (e.g., menus, and nutritional / allergen information), and supply a copy, where possible.

Procured food items via NWSSP contracts come with back of pack information on ingredients/allergens/nutrition and detailed specifications. This information is available via each Catering site and is currently being transferred to a digital portal.