

Freedom of Information Request: Our Reference CTMUHB_425_21

You asked:

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

- 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 May 2021 to 30 September 2021.
- 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 requested would mean disclosure of low numbers.

This being the case it is considered that such information should be withheld under Section 41 which sets out an exemption from the right to know where the information requested was provided to the public authority in confidence. The component which is applicable relates to the disclosure of the information would give rise to an actionable breach of confidence. In other words, if the Health Board disclosed the information being sought this could lead to their identification which would be unfair and inappropriate.

A duty of confidentiality does continue after the death of an individual to whom that duty is owed. Where there is a legally enforceable duty of confidentiality owed to a living individual, after death it can be enforced by the deceased's personal representative.

However, in order to fulfil our obligation under Section 16 of the Act to provide advice and assistance, we can confirm that for the date period 1 May 2021 to 30 September 2021, there were less than five deaths in the health board's hospitals of patients involving Covid-19 as a result of hospital onset infection – "probable" onset and "definite" onset.

Please note the following:

- Numbers are low due to most of the infection types being Community Acquired Infection (CAI) or Indeterminate (or not registered as covid on the death cert).
- The deaths occurred within Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board hospitals. However, patients can belong to other Health Board areas.
- 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.