

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Request Reference Fol/20/283

Surgery

Request details

1. Are routine/non-urgent operations now taking place as normal in the health board following the coronavirus lockdown?

Since the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic in mid-March elective surgical treatments had been reduced to treatment of Cancer and time sensitive Urgent Cases. Welsh Government had advised that a clinical guide produced by NHS England supported by the RCS for prioritisation of surgical cases be adopted. The guide classifies patients requiring surgery during the pandemic into five categories:

Priority Level 1(a) Emergency – operation needed within 24hours (b) Urgent – operation needed with 72 hours)

Priority level 2 Surgery that can be deferred for up to 4 weeks

Priority level 3 Surgery that can be delayed for up to 3months

Priority level 4 Surgery that can be delayed for more than 3 months

Following the introduction by Surgery Clinical Board, the Protected Elective Surgery Unit has allowed Surgical Specialties to recommence activity for non-Cancer and Urgent work. Some level 3 activity is taking place where it has been assessed as clinically appropriate to ensure that theatre capacity is fully utilised.

2. How long on average is the waiting time for a routine/non-urgent operation at the health board? How does this compare with the waiting time before the coronavirus lockdown in March?

In line with Welsh Government reporting framework at the end of February 2020 Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (the UHB) reported there were 925 patients on an surgery waiting list across all specialties, who were waiting in excess of their 36 week referral to treatment target.

In line with Welsh Government reporting framework at the end of August 2020 the UHB reported there were 5864 patients on an surgery waiting list across all specialties, who were waiting in excess of their 36 week referral to treatment target.

3. How many patients have had their procedures delayed by the shortage of PPE in the health board area?

No patients have had their surgical procedures delayed due to shortage of PPE within the UHB.