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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Request Reference FoI/22/075

Musculoskeletal Therapy

I am writing to request information regarding services that you provide for musculoskeletal conditions, and specifically low back pain. I would appreciate your help with the following questions. The questions are all with regards to outpatient and/or community physiotherapy services:

- 1. What is the current average waiting time for a musculoskeletal physiotherapy appointment for a new referral or self-referral for non-specific lower back pain? (If you are not able to answer this specifically for low back pain please provide the figure for musculoskeletal physiotherapy more generally).**

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (the UHB) does not hold this information. The UHB are not able to provide average wait times specifically for low back pain. However, under our Section 16 obligation, the duty to provide advice and assistance, the UHB can advise you that our current average MSK wait for routine assessment is 11.4 weeks.

- 2. How has the waiting time for musculoskeletal physiotherapy appointments for lower back pain changed over the historical time period for which you have data? If possible, an annual figure for each of the last 5-10 years would be most helpful. (Again, please answer for general musculoskeletal physiotherapy services if you do not hold specific data for back pain).**

Our data shows that from 2013 our average MSK wait for routine assessment was 5.8 weeks. This has now risen to a current position of 11.4 weeks post-Covid.

- 3. How many patients are currently on your waiting list(s) for physiotherapy services for lower back pain?**

The UHB does not hold this information. However, under our Section 16 obligation, the UHB can advise you that around 22% of MSK referrals to our service are for people with lower back pain. This would mean a projected 1,741, of our current 7,915 patients waiting for assessment, would have lower back pain.

- 4. How many patients are currently on your waiting list(s) for physiotherapy services across all musculoskeletal conditions?**

7,915 patients.





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5. Does your musculoskeletal physiotherapy service(s) accept self-referrals from patients for back pain (as opposed to requiring a GP or primary care referral)?

Yes, patients can self-refer to our First Contact Practitioner (FCP) physiotherapy service which provides assessment and brief intervention within all 9 GP clusters across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Patients requiring enhanced rehabilitation at our locality MSK outpatient physiotherapy departments do require a referral from a GP, FCP physiotherapist or other HCP.

6. What percentage of general practice appointments within your region are for back pain? (or musculoskeletal conditions more broadly if this is the only data level held)

The UHB does not hold this information. However, under our Section 16 obligation, the UHB can inform you that GPs are independent contractors and would hold this information themselves.

7. What is the average healthcare spend per patient in your region for non-specific low back pain?

The UHB does not hold this information.

8. How does the average healthcare spend per patient for non-specific low back pain break down across different services and costs?

The UHB does not hold this information.

9. Do you currently commission NHS musculoskeletal physiotherapy services from any private providers? If yes, what proportion of your overall MSK physiotherapy spend is with private providers?

No



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Cardiff and Vale University Health Board is the operational name of Cardiff and Vale University Local Health Board

