

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request Reference FoI/23/624**  
**Counterweight Plus Programme**

For EACH of the following years -- 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23:

**What was your total expenditure on the Counterweight Plus weight-loss programme?**

After considering your request, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (the UHB) considers this information to be exempt from disclosure under section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('Commercial interests'). This section of the Act sets out an exemption from the right to know if:

- the information requested is a trade secret, or
- release of the information is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person. (A person may be an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity.)

This exemption was considered by the UHB when deciding whether to disclose information because it considered that in doing so there could be a significant risk in prejudicing the commercial interests of both the supplier and the UHB. As this is a qualified exemption, the UHB is required to complete a public interest test in deciding whether it is in the public's interest to withhold or disclose the information.

In favour of disclosure: There is a public interest in transparency and in the accountability of spending of public funds. Furthermore, it is in the public's interest that public funds be used effectively and that public sector bodies obtain the best value for money when contracting for the provision of services.

Against disclosure: It has been established that releasing the information sought under the Freedom of Information Act, to which the UHB is subject, will give an unfair advantage to the supplier's competitors. There is a risk of disclosure prejudicing the commercial interests of the UHB by affecting its bargaining position with suppliers. This in turn could lead to less effective use of public funds in future. The UHB believes that there is wider established public interest in suppliers not being prejudiced merely because they have contracted with a public sector body (as upheld in ICO decision notice FS50473543 *ICO v Royal Marsden Hospital Trust*).

Decision: The UHB considers that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the interests in disclosing it and thereby giving unfair commercial advantage to competitors of the supplier to which this information concerns. The UHB believes that disclosure of information in a manner which fails to protect the interests and relationships arising in a commercial context could have the effect of discouraging companies from dealing with the Health Board because of fears that the disclosure of information could damage them commercially. In turn this could then jeopardise the Health Board's ability to compete fairly and pursue its function to bring forward development in the area and obtain value for money. It was therefore decided that it was not in the public's interest to disclose this information.

However, the UHB has been able to source the following staff time costs for the programme:

- 2019–20: £6,195
- 2020–21: £7,980

- 2021–22: £0
- 2022–23: £19,510

For EACH of the years above:

**1. How many patients with type 2 diabetes (T2D) enrolled on Counterweight Plus?**

2019–20: 3

2020–21: 10

2021–22: 3

Total recruited to cohort 1: 16

2022–23 (ongoing): 19

*2022–23 represents patients in cohort 2. As it is an ongoing intervention, the outcome data is not currently available.*

**2. How many patients with T2D who enrolled completed Counterweight Plus?**

Over the course of the 2019–22 period, six Cardiff and Vale patients completed the 12-month intervention. Due to patients beginning the intervention at different moments in time, they did not complete the 12-month intervention during the same financial year. The Covid-19 pandemic also had an impact on a number of patients during 2020–21, either delaying or disrupting the intervention.

**3. How many of the enrolled patients who completed Counterweight Plus achieved T2D remission?**

| Outcomes of those who completed 12m | CAVUHB |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Achieved remission (HbA1c ≤48mmol)  | 5      |
| HbA1c >48 lower than baseline       | 1      |

The low-calorie intervention supported people to achieve remission (i.e. HbA1c ≤48mmol or improvement in management from baseline, i.e. >48 and lower than baseline hbA1c). Unfortunately, HbA1c was not available for five individuals at the end of the 12-month intervention.