

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Request Reference Fol/21/013
NHS Wig Allowance - Amended

In regards to this FOI made by myself regarding the NHSWA I still have further questions and would be so grateful if you could answer the following in as much detail as possible.

- 1. You advised that you do not hold statistics on the number of people affected by alopecia in Wales. Are you saying that these records do not exist/are not recorded? If not can you please advise who would hold these records, if they do exist?**

Cardiff and Vale UHB does not hold data on an all-Wales basis and cannot present data for the whole of Wales.

- 2. You stated that dermatology took over the NHSWA due to retirement at their orthotics department in ALAC. What is ALAC?**

The ALAC is the Artificial Limb and Appliance Center, also referred to as Artificial Limb and Appliance Service (ALAS).

- 3. Are Banbury Postiche the equivalent to Natural Image, as in they both supply all wigs to NHS patients?**

Cardiff and Vale UHB does not hold this information. Under our Section 16 obligation to provide advice and assistance, this information is not created or recorded by the UHB.

- 4. Apart from the NHSWA what other help is available for alopecia patients both medical and non-medical?**

Princess trust provides support to young people with hair loss. Alopecia UK support group is another source of support.

- 5. What is the amount of the allowance for NHSWA patients and what does this cover? (Please give details of both the maximum and minimum amounts in pounds if this differs)**

The NHS Wig Allowance is a historical Service and is no longer offered by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (the UHB). In 2019 the wig provision was transferred to Dermatology and the service has continued to provide wigs to historic patients. However, we can advise that currently the UHB are in the process of developing a policy to provide a standard allowance for all patients requiring wigs.

The current Wig allowance per patient is £83.41 before VAT and each patient is entitled to 2 wigs a year.

The current annual budget for Dermatology wigs is £21,499

- 6. My research has shown that a lot of wigs available to alopecia patients via Natural Image, especially a lot in the more costly ranges like Raquel Welch , Jaclyn Smith and Paula Young, are not available in Black, the most common hair colour in the world. Can you tell me why you think this is and if you think that this is fair?**

Please see question three.

- 7. Would you provide the 'Freedom Wig' (New Zealand) on the NHS if requested?**

The UHB does not hold this data. However, we are in the process of developing a policy to provide standard allowance for patients requiring wigs. Patients will have a choice to use this allowance to get the wig of their choice as long as this is locally available.

- 8. Is counselling available by the NHS for alopecia patients?**

There is no specific counseling in place for alopecia patients in Cardiff and Vale.

- 9. Many years ago I was offered steroids by injections to the scalp and tablet form. Are alopecia patients still offered both of these 'treatments' and how does this help? Also are you able to tell me how I can find out exactly what doses I was prescribed from my medical records and if not how I can go about finding this out?**

This should be acknowledged and responded to by CAVAccesstorecords.

- 10. Do patients who lose their hair due to chemotherapy also use the same process as alopecia patients to select wigs and are they provided by Natural Image also? Can you please provide particulars on this for comparison reasons?**

The UHB does not hold this data. However, I can inform you that chemotherapy patients do receive a wig allowance.

- 11. Every year Natural Image has a summer sale online. It just so happens that my allowance comes around every June in the middle of the sale. I was told by Salon wills a couple of years ago that I was unable to take advantage of the sale due to it being unfair on other patients who get their wigs at different times throughout the year. Are you aware of this and is this true?**

Please see question three.

- 12. Does the NHSWA have a code of practice or code of conduct? If so may I please be forwarded a copy?**

The NHS Wig Allowance does not have a code of practice.