

28 June 2023

Dear

ATISN 18623 – Diagnostic Scans

Thank you for your request to the Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) received on 19 June 2023 regarding diagnostic scans. You requested the following:

1. How many people are currently on the waiting list for diagnostic scans?
2. What is the current waiting time for scans for each health board ?
3. Are the current rules preventing GPs from referring their patients for scans (my GP has thus informed me) being considered for change?
4. Is the government considering or currently using private health care providers to alleviate the backlog?
5. Where and when are surgeries held by the Minister for Health and your own surgeries also?

Our Response

1 & 2 The data you have sought can be found and split by health board and specific tests at the following link:

[Diagnostic and Therapy Services Waiting Times by week, November 2019 onwards \(gov.wales\)](#)

To note: From April 2018, Computed Tomography scan CT and Magnetic Resonance image MR scans were split between Cardiac and Non-cardiac.

3. Requesting access to diagnostic scans is managed between primary care and specialist secondary care through the agreement of clinical pathways. There has to be a clear clinical justification for requesting diagnostic tests to ensure effective and efficient use of resources.

To support this work a national programme of work has commenced to agree national pathways which will include expected diagnostic tests required to support assessment and referral. This will be supported where appropriate by direct access from primary care for diagnostics (including scans) to support more effective and timely diagnosis.

4. In the national Diagnostic plan [Diagnostic Recovery Transformation Plan for Wales \(gov.wales\)](#) published April 2023 clearly states that we will seek to use all available capacity to ensure that the people of Wales are diagnosed as

quickly as possible. This will include using managed service contracts and the voluntary sector where appropriate.

Welsh Government would expect health boards to provide services to meet the needs of their population. There is no postcode lottery in NHS Wales. We will ensure the deployment of services using managed service contracts will not negatively impact the NHS workforce. The risks and mitigations will be considered as part of the HEIW workforce plan.

Each health board has used their additional recovery funding over recent years to secure additional activity, some of which was delivered within the health board area through insourcing arrangements (patients continue to be seen locally).

5. Ministers do not hold surgeries, and you may mean the surgeries held by constituency MSs, in their MS capacity (and not a Ministerial one). If you wish to raise a matter with your MS via their constituency surgeries, you can find details for your MS via the Senedd website - [Find a Member of the Senedd](#) or via <https://www.writetothem.com/>

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,