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Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Managing Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

Date: October 2024

Review: October 2027

Review took place in July 2022. - Template letter amended to make easier uploading responses to Disclosure Log on the HB's website, no longer requiring redaction.

Review took place in Oct 2024 – Section 22A included in exemption list regarding Research Information.

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides the health Board with a process for managing requests for information and facilitating the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 by setting out good practice the health Board will follow when handling requests for information.

SCOPE

This SOP applies to all members of the Corporate Services Team who are delegated responsibility to respond to FOIA requests.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Director of Corporate Governance** is responsible for ensuring overall compliance with this procedure.

The **FOIA Lead/Corporate Services Manager** is responsible for drafting complex requests and reviewing all draft FOIA responses and supporting the FOIA Officer to meet timescales. They will also be responsible for reporting performance data to key committees

The **FOIA Officer** is responsible for the day to day co-ordination of requests for information, including acknowledging, logging requests, chasing departments for information and drafting responses.

Directorate leads are responsible for the coordination and gathering of the information being requested, ensuring that they liaise with the appropriate individuals and/or other departments, as necessary, and return the information to the Health Board FOIA lead within the timeframe laid down.

Copy of draft response to be issued to the service director or Executive Director with the responsibility for information be provided to ensure they have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft response.

The Director of Corporate Governance will approve all draft Health Board responses prior to issue. In their absence the relevant Executive Director for the area of the FOIA subject will approve and sign off in their absence.

This document should be used in line with the Health Boards FOIA Policy.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Freedom of Information Act Requests

1.1.1 Receiving requests for information

All requests made under the Freedom of Information Act must be carried out in accordance with the [Section 45 - Code of Practice – request handling](#).

Information can be requested in the normal course of business such as general advice e.g. opening times, directions etc and therefore this should be passed to relevant staff to answer with no formal deadline but to provide information in a reasonable timeframe.

Information included in the publication scheme should be provided automatically, or by providing a link to where the information can be accessed.

If the person is asking for their own personal data (or someone authorised to act on their behalf), it should be handled as a subject access request under GDPR and passed to the relevant department – Information Governance/HR/Medical records.

If the person is asking for 'environmental information' (i.e. land, soil water, air atmosphere etc), it should be handled in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Such requests may be made verbally or in writing.

Any other non-routine request for information should be dealt with under the FOIA. Requests must be in writing. **NB the requestor does not have to reference the FOI Act in their request for information, but the Health Board must still acknowledge and respond to such requests in line with this procedure, under the FOI Act.**

Requests received via the FOIA.requests@wales.nhs.uk will be logged on the system and given a unique ref number with the prefix month/year/next sequential number.

Requests received by other means into the Health Board, must be referred immediately to the Corporate team for logging and monitoring of response.

Where the request received is made by letter or in any other written form, the request will be logged and the paper copy should be scanned and uploaded into the relevant folder on the corporate shared drive.

1.1.2 Referencing a Request

All FOIA requests must be referenced by logging on the FOIA Corporate spreadsheet, a reference number will be generated and applied to each request.

1.1.2.1 Current Requests

Any new FOIA requests must utilise the prefix by month (January – A, February – B), followed by the year and next available sequential number which must be manually entered into the ref field on the system. So for example the first request received in January 2021 would be logged as 21-A-001, then 21-A-002 etc.

1.1.3 Acknowledging a Request

Requests received by or forwarded to email address FOIA.requests@wales.nhs.uk must be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt.

Where a request is received by any other means, an acknowledgement that the request has been received should usually be sent within five working days of receipt, unless a response can be sent within this timeframe.

For the purpose of the FOIA, the first working day is the next day after the receipt of the request.

1.1.4 Processing the Request

How each request is handled will depend on the complexity of the request.

Guidance on how to deal with a request where a large amount of time and effort will be involved is contained in Appendix 1.

A list of key exemptions is included in Appendix 2.

The Information Commissioner has produced flow charts which can be used as a guide on how to deal with requests. These have been modified for Health Board use with a copy included in appendix 3.

If information is held by the Health Board, the corporate services team will release any information in the interests of transparency unless a reason for non-disclosure can be identified and justified. This may be because in order to provide the information a large amount of time and effort would be involved, or that the information is exempt.

If the directorate contacts assess that the request could possibly exceed the FOI time limits, they should notify the FOI Officer immediately, giving details of why the decision was made and giving an estimation of the hours it would take to gather the information, this data would then be incorporated into a draft response, applying section 12.

Where information is held by another organisation and the Health Board, any information held by the Health Board should be disclosed and the requestor should be advised that the other organisation holds further information as part of the duty to advise and assist (Section 16). Where disclosure of information held by the health Board alone produces a misleading result (e.g. where only part of the information is held), the requestor must be advised of this. There is no duty to transfer a request to another statutory organisation, however on occasion collaboration may prove useful in the interests of producing accurate information.

1.1.5 Responding to a Request

FOIA requests can be responded to by email/letter. All requests should be answered within 20 working days of receiving the request. For the purpose of the FOIA, the first working day is the next day after the receipt of the request. The twenty working day period includes every day Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays. This does not include the time spent clarifying a request or waiting for a response to any fee notice. Where 20 working days is exceeded for any reason, this should be recorded and a holding letter/email issued to the requestor.

A corresponding folder titled with the reference number must be created both on the Z drive and within Outlook under the year and month it was received. You can find the Z drive folder here - Z:\npt_fs2\CorporateAdministration\CorporateServices\FOIA\FOIA Requests

Within this folder there is also 'a Guide to managing FOIA requests' which identifies all departmental leads for the organisation in relation to FOIA and the step by step process for logging new requests.

Z drive folder – this should hold a copy of the original request received, any draft responses and any relevant data received from the service relating to the request.

Outlook folder – this should hold the original email, plus all correspondence (both received and sent) relating to the request. Please BCC in the foia.requests@wales.nhs.uk inbox each time to ensure a copy of all outgoing emails is retained.

When a request is answered by direct email or letter, a PDF copy of the response and the email or letter it is attached to must be saved in the relevant Outlook and Z drive folders.

If the response is sent by post, please enter a file note of the date and postal class it was sent by.

A redacted version of the final approved response should be loaded onto the Health Board disclosure log under the Publication scheme. Redacted version must have all identifiable

information removed from The Health Board response, i.e. Requestor's name or email address. This is also relevant to any attachments that may be issued with the response letter.

A final response template is included in Appendix 7.
A holding response template is included in Appendix 6.

1.1.6 Re-use request

Re-use means using the information provided, for a purpose other than the initial task it was produced for.

This could mean an individual, a company or other organisation taking information the Health Board has produced and republishing it or using it to produce a new product or resource, often by combining it with other information.

A request for re-use must be submitted in writing, with the requestor's name and address for correspondence, and specify the information they want to re-use and the purpose they intend to use it for.

When a request for re-use is received the Health Board must respond within 20 working days.

A Re-use response template is included in Appendix 8.

1.2 Internal Reviews/Complaints

An internal review must be carried out in accordance with the [Section 45 - Code of Practice – request handling](#).

Where a requestor submits a request to carry out an internal review of a response under the Freedom of Information Act this must be undertaken by an individual who has not been involved in the original request. This may be the FOIA Lead.

When considering an appeal, all documentation in relation to the request must be obtained and the process should be considered as a whole, ensuring that the specifics of complaint are thoroughly considered. An appeal must be answered in a timely manner and usually take no more than thirty working days.

The FOIA Lead will consider the submissions of the complainant and may consult with other persons, departments or third parties, or take legal advice as they consider appropriate.

The FOIA lead will discuss the outcome of the review with the Deputy CEO of the Health Board and will produce a report outlining findings, conclusion and any recommendations to be made to the internal process. The Deputy CEO will review and respond to the complainant.

A response to an appeal must inform the requestor that if they are unhappy about the outcome of that appeal they may complain to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). The contact details of the ICO must be provided.

An appeal outcome can be communicated responded to by email/letter.

Complaints should be received within three months of the requester receiving the original response from the FOIA Team. Requests received after this three month period, will be treated as a new FOIA request, rather than a complaint.

Appendix 1 - Where costs exceed the appropriate limit

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) provides an exemption from the obligation to comply with a request for information where the cost of compliance is estimated to exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit is the key concept concerning fees.

Where the Health Board is concerned, the appropriate limit is set at £450. If the cost of complying with a request exceeds the appropriate limit, the Health Board can:

- refuse to supply the information on the grounds of cost, or
- can offer to provide the information if the applicant is prepared to pay a fee.

Where it has been estimated that cost of compliance exceeds £450, the Health Board can charge the total amount for:

- determining whether it holds the information;
- locating the information, or documents which may contain the information;
- retrieving the information, or documents which may contain the information, and
- extracting the information from a document(s) in which the information is contained.

The four activities are sequential.

NB: The Health Board can take into account the costs attributable to the time that staff (and if applicable, external contractors) are expected to spend on these activities. Such costs are calculated at £25 per hour per person regardless of the actual cost or rate of pay, which means that the limit will be exceeded if these activities exceed 18 hrs.

The University Health Board is not permitted to take into account any time likely to be spent:

- considering exemptions that may apply to the information requested, and
- redacting exempt material.

NB: If the Health Board refuses a request because the appropriate limit has been exceeded, it must bear in mind the duty under Section 16 of the FOIA to advise and assist an applicant; such advice could include how to 'refine or limit' the request to bring it within the cost limit.

Refusal on the Grounds of Cost

Where a decision is made to refuse a request because the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit, the requester will be informed via a Refusal Notice issued at the earliest opportunity and within the twenty working day time limit.

The Refusal Notice must:

- Confirm or deny whether the information is held (unless cost of this alone would exceed the appropriate limit)
- Specify the reason for refusal
- Quote the (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004
- Provide an estimate of the cost of complying with the request
- Specify the exemption, (Section 12 (1))

As set out in Section 17(7) the applicant will also be informed of the University Health Board's complaints procedure and of their right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

NB: The Fees Regulations state that two or more requests to the University Health Board can be aggregated for the purposes of calculating costs if they are:

- by one person, or by different persons who appear to the Health Board to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign;
- for the same or similar information; and
- the subsequent request is received by the Health Board within 60 working days of the previous request.

The intention of this provision is to prevent individuals or organisations evading the appropriate limit by dividing a request into smaller parts.

Example Refusal Notice

‘To obtain this information would involve a manual trawl and search of records which we have estimated would significantly exceed the 18 hours limit set down by the FOI Act as the reasonable limit. Section 12 of the FOI Act provides that we are not obliged to spend in excess of 18 hours in any sixty day period locating, retrieving and identifying information in order to deal with a request for information and therefore we are withholding this information at this time’.

Provision of the information where the applicant is prepared to pay a fee

The Health Board may take a decision to provide the requested information if the requester is prepared to pay the fee. Where this is the case, the requester will be issued with a Fees Notice. The Fees Notice will specify the fee, (payable in advance), provide the calculations and specify the time limit for a response.

NB: The period from the day the Fees Notice is issued to the day the fee is received does not count towards the 20 working day limit for response. Where the requester wishes to pay the fee, the 20 working days would resume once the cheque is cleared. The Health Board must ensure that cheques are banked promptly.

If, following the issue of a Fees Notice, the specified fee is not paid within three months beginning on the day on which the fees notice was given to the requester, the request will be closed.

Appendix 2 - Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Exemptions

Absolute Exemptions

- Section 21: Information accessible by other means
- Section 23: National Security - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters (a certificate signed by a Minister of the Crown is conclusive proof that the exemption is justified. There is a separate appeals mechanism against such certificates)
- Section 32: Court Records
- Section 34: Parliamentary Privilege - a certificate signed by the Speaker of the House, in respect of the House of Commons, or by the Clerk of the Parliament, in respect of the House of Lords is conclusive proof that the exemption is justified.
- Section 36: Effective Conduct of Public Affairs - so far as relating to information held by the House of Commons or the House of Lords
- Section 40(1): Personal Information of the data subject. Note: The applicant already has the right to request the information as a subject of that data (i.e. as a 'subject access' request) under Data Protection legislation
- Section 40(2) Where the information constitutes personal data of a third party and disclosure would breach one of the 'data protection principles'
- Section 41: Information provided 'In Confidence' (i.e. where disclosure would breach the Common Law Duty of Confidence)
- Section 44: Prohibitions on disclosure - where a disclosure is prohibited by an enactment or would constitute contempt of court.

Qualified Exemptions

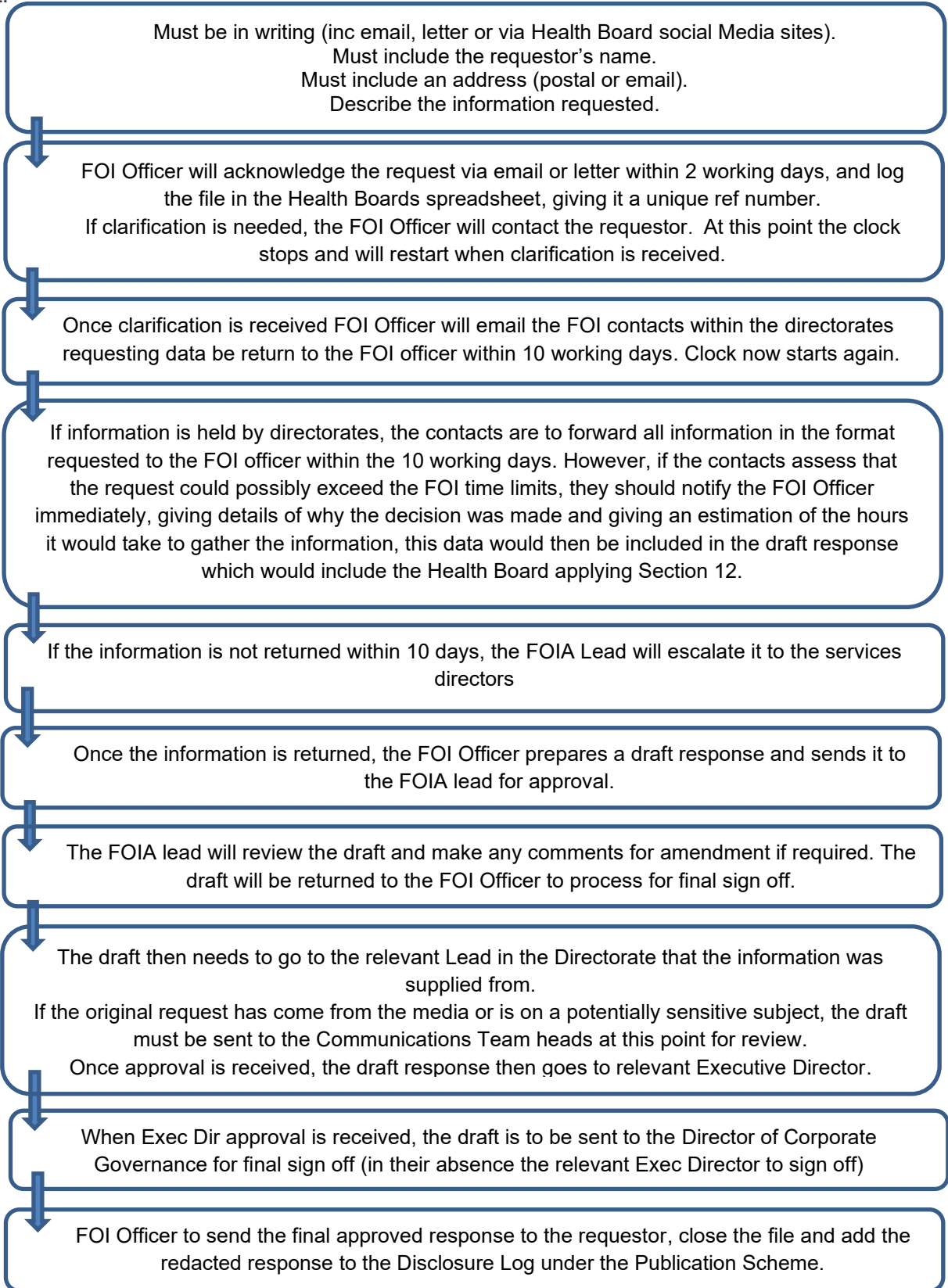
- Section 22 and 22A: Information Intended for Future Publication and **Research Information**
- Section 24: National security (other than information supplied by or relating to named security organisations, where the duty to consider disclosure in the public interest does not apply)
- Section 26: Defence
- Section 27: International relations
- Section 28: Relations within the United Kingdom
- Section 29: UK Economic Interests
- Section 30: Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities
- Section 31: Law Enforcement
- Section 33: Audit Functions
- Section 35: Formulation of government policy and Ministerial Communications

- Section 36: Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs (except information held by the House of Commons or the House of Lords)
- Section 37: Communications with Her Majesty, the Royal Family or concerning honours
- Section 38: Health and Safety
- Section 39: Environmental Information - as this can be accessed through the Environmental Information Regulations
- Section 42: Legal Professional Privilege
- Section 43: Commercial Interests

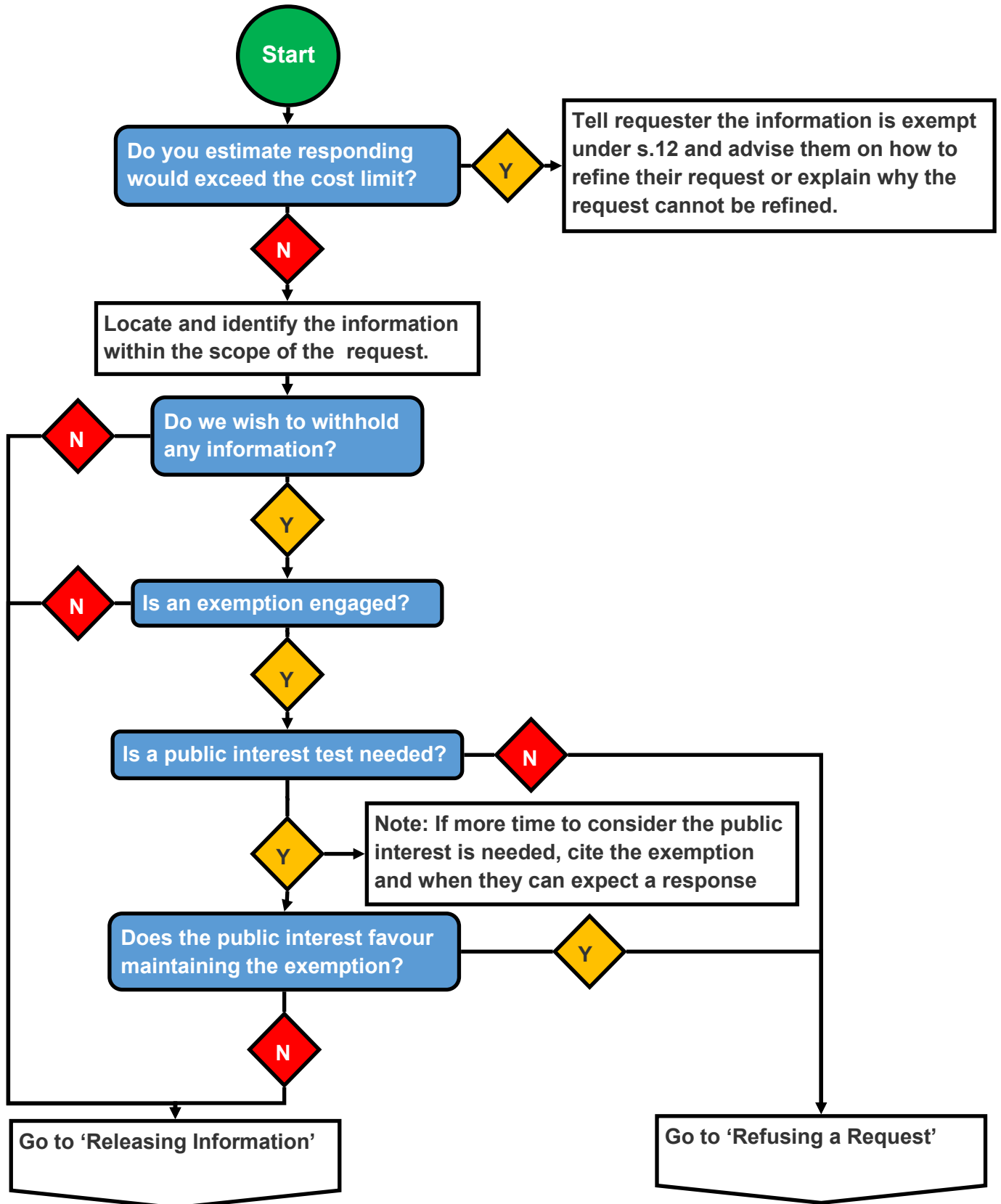
Where the Health Board consider that the public interest in withholding the information requested outweighs the public interest in releasing it, the authority must inform the applicant of its reasons, unless to do so would mean releasing the exempt information.

Further guidance on exemptions is available on the ICO website [here](#)

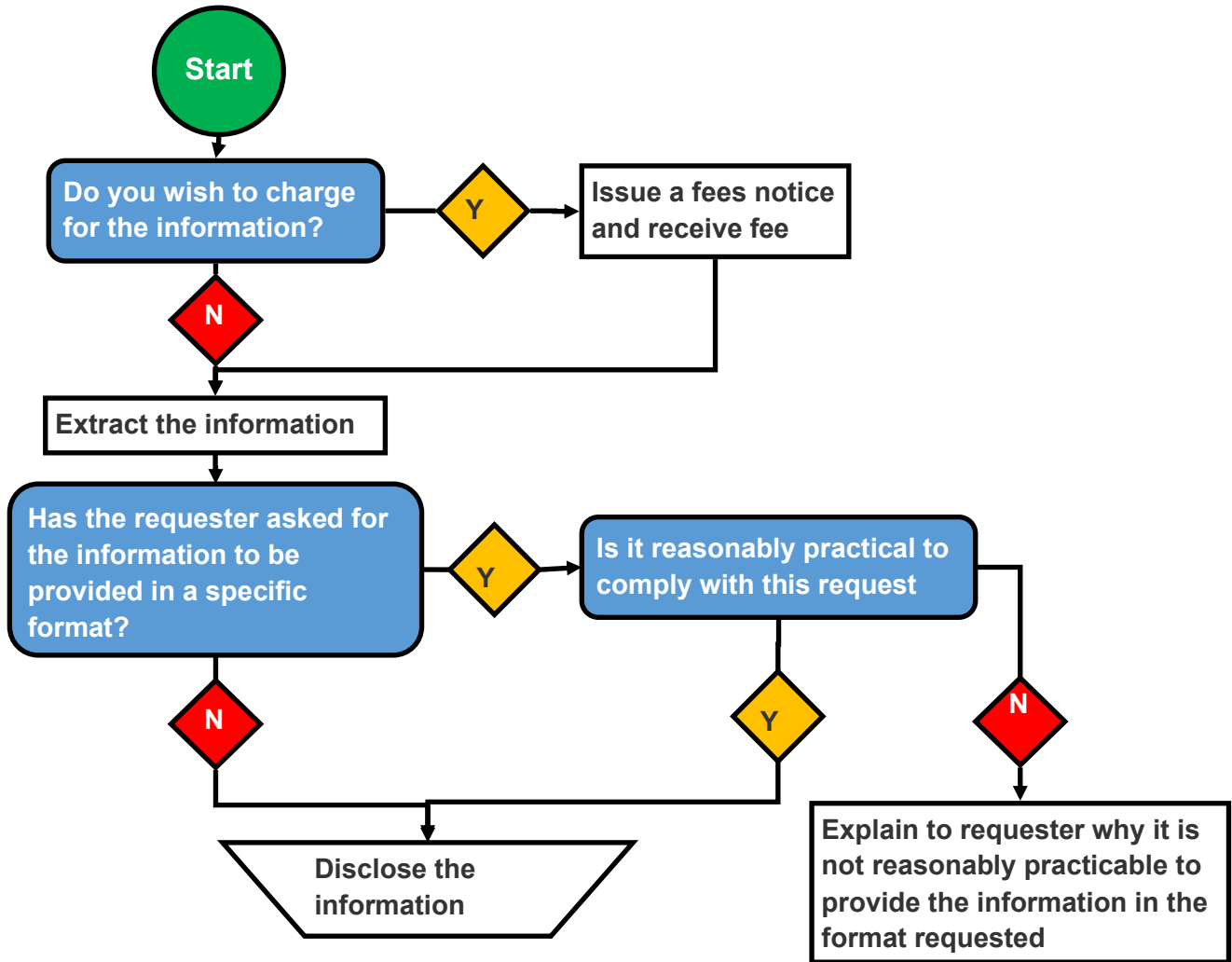
Appendix 3 – Freedom of Information Act processes - Logging and Acknowledging a Valid request.



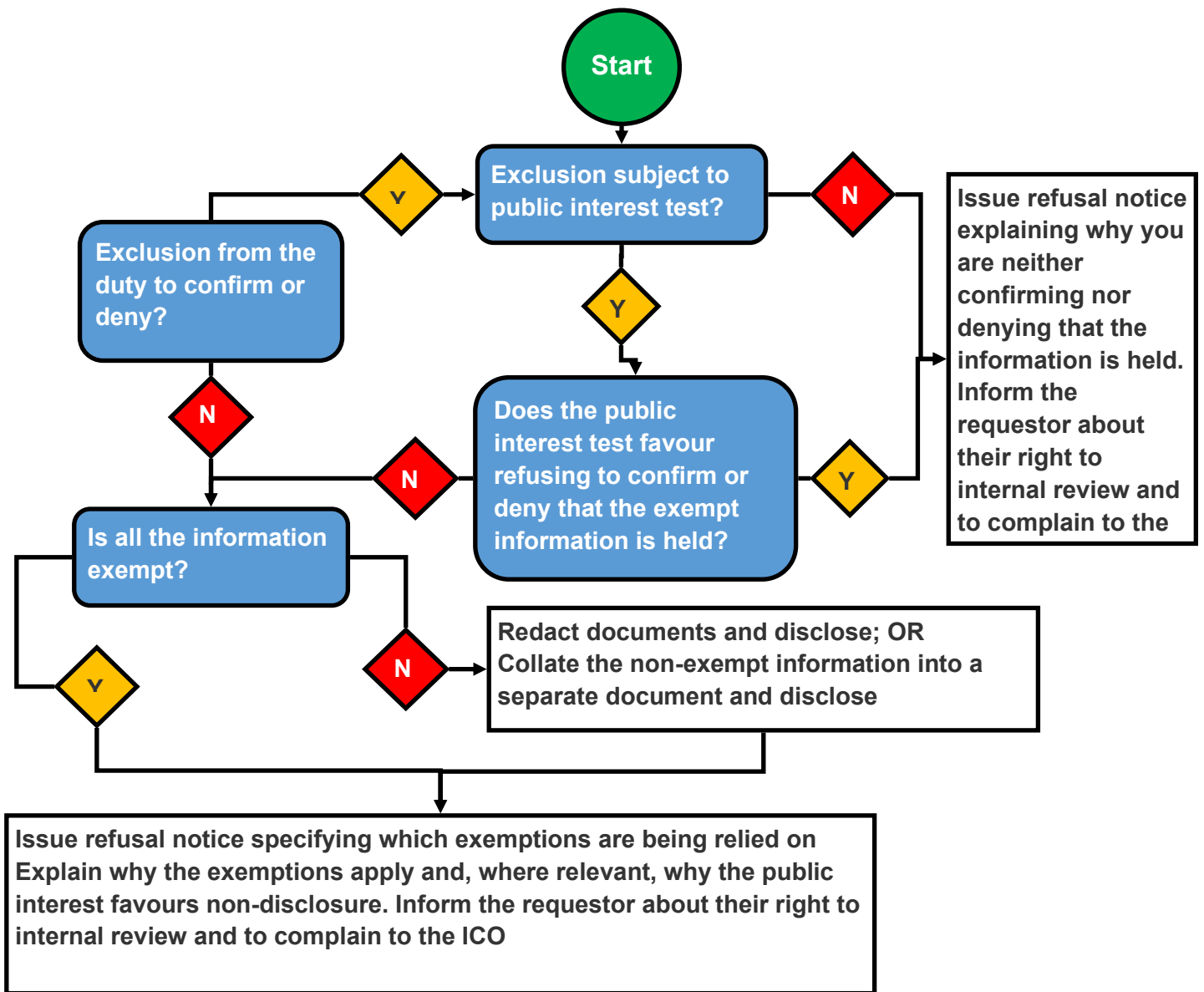
The cost of responding / applying any exemptions



Releasing information



Refusing a Request



Appendix 4 – Freedom of Information - acknowledgement letter/email template & leaflet

Dyddiad/Date: **DRAFT**

Ein Cyf / Our Ref: {insert FOIA file reference number}

Dear {insert name}

Thank you for your letter dated {insert date} received by us on {insert date} making a request under the Freedom of Information Act (2000). Please find attached a leaflet outlining the FOI Act (**see appendix 9**)

We are processing your request and will respond to you shortly. In the meantime if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us at FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Officer

Appendix 5 – Freedom of Information Act - email to directorates/department to gather data template.

Dear {insert name/s}

Ref number – {insert FOIA reference number}

Please see below a new Freedom of Information request.

Please can you confirm whether you hold this information and if so, please return this information by {insert date – 10 working days from today}

Many thanks,

Appendix 6 – Freedom of Information Act - holding letter/email template.

Subject of email: {insert FOIA file reference number}

Dear {insert name}

I am writing to let you know we are still in the process of collating the information you requested below. We apologise for the delay and hope to get this information to you shortly.

In the meantime if you have any queries then please contact us FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 7 – Freedom of Information - final response template

Dyddiad/Date: **DRAFT**

Ein Cyf / Our Ref: {insert FOIA file reference number}

Dear

I refer to your Freedom of Information Act Request acknowledged by ourselves on {insert date}. Your request sought information relating to {summary of request}.

Please find attached our response. I hope this information is helpful. If you require anything further please contact us at FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk.

Under the terms of the Health Board's Freedom of Information policy, individuals seeking access to recorded information held by the Health Board are entitled to request internal review of the handling of their requests. If you would like to complain about the Health Board's handling of your request please contact me directly at the address below or register your complaint via FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk.

If after Internal Review you remain dissatisfied you are also entitled to refer the matter to the information commissioner at the Information Commissioner's Office (Wales), 2nd Floor, Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff, CF10 2HH. Telephone Number: 029 2067 8400.

Yours sincerely

Director of Corporate Governance

{Attachment to template letter}

Freedom of Information Request: Our reference {insert our FOIA file reference here}

You asked:

{Insert requesters questions here}

Our response:

{insert Health Board information/response}

Appendix 8 – Freedom of Information Act - Re-Use response template

Dear {insert name}

Re: Re-Use Request

Following your request for the re-use of the information supplied under Freedom of Information:

Re-Use Request

- **[insert full request details]**

Health Board Response

The Re-Use of Public Sector Information (RoPSI) encourages the re-use of public sector information.

Therefore, the Health Board grants permission to re-use the information provided, via provisions within the Freedom of Information Act 2000, its website or otherwise supplied by the Health Board on the following terms and conditions:

- You must reproduce the material accurately (except for logos and insignia). In cases where you want to reproduce material that has been superseded you should make it clear that a more up to date version is available
- You must identify the source of the material i.e. the Health Board

Disclaimer

Your use of the material is entirely at your own risk. The Health Board makes no warranty, representation or guarantee that the material is error free.

{Note: Most public sector bodies must permit re-use of the information they produce, hold or disseminate within their public task (unless it is restricted or excluded). Regulations 11 to 16 describe the requirements and exclusions for permitted re-use}

OR

The Health Board does not grant permission for the release of information for re-use due to the copyright not being held by the Health Board. Therefore please seek permission from the copyright holder for re-using this information.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 9 – Freedom of Information – 3rd party consultation

Dear {insert name}

I am writing to you about a request for information received by the Health Board under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act.

Some of the information requested [was supplied by] [relates to] your organisation.

The information in question is [as follows] [set out in the attached Annex].

The FOI Act carries a presumption in favour of disclosure. However, it also contains a number of exemptions which can be used to withhold information in appropriate circumstances. In the case of some of these exemptions we have to apply a public interest test before we can decide whether information can be disclosed or not. This test is used to balance the public interest in disclosure against the public interest in favour of withholding the information under any particular exemption.



If you consider that the information [supplied by you] [relating to you] should not be disclosed, please let me know in writing how, in your view, disclosure of the information would be harmful.

The final decision on whether the information should be withheld rests with the Health Board, but we will take into account your views. While the Health Board is committed to presumption in favour of disclosure, we will not disclose information where there are legitimate reasons, in the public interest, for not doing so.

I would be grateful if you could respond by [insert date], to enable us to take your views into account in deciding whether to disclose the information. The FOI Act normally requires us to send a full response to a request within twenty working days of receiving it. If you do not make any representation by [insert date], then we will not be able to take into account any objections that you have to the information being released.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX 10 – FOIA INFORMATION LEAFLET – TO ATTACH TO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT EMAIL/LETTER

 <p>Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe Swansea Bay University Health Board</p> <p>DEDDF RHYDDID GWYBODAETH (FOIA) 2000</p> <p>Y DDEDDF Mae Deddf Rhyddid Gwybodaeth 2000 yn rhoi hawl mynediad cyhoeddus i rychwant o gofnodion a gwybodaeth a ddelir gan wahanol gyrf cyhoeddus. Daeth i rym ar 1st Ionawr 2005 ac mae'n gymwysadwy yng nghyswllt unrhyw wybodaeth heblaw am eithriadau penodol.</p> <p>Y CYNLLUN CYHOEDDI Dechreuwyd gweithredu'r Ddeddf ym mis Hydref 2003 pan ddaeth yn ofynnol ar bob corff cyhoeddus i ddarparu 'Cynllun Cyhoeddi'. Mae Cynllun Cyhoeddi Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe yn cynnwys gwybodaeth cyffredinol am y Bwrdd Iechyd ac yn egluro pa wybodaeth sydd ar gael yn rhwydd i'r cyhoedd.</p> <p>Gellir gweld Cynllun Cyhoeddi Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe y wefan: http://www.baeabertawe.gig.cymru</p> <p>Mae copi papur ar gael gan y Cydlynnydd Rhyddid Gwybodaeth, ym Mhrif Swyddfeydd Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe, Un Porthfa Talbot, Baglan, Port Talbot SA12 7BR. Ffôn: 01639 683348, e-bost: FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk</p>	<p>HAWLIAU AC YMRWYMIADAU ALLWEDDOLAN DDEDDF RHYDDID GWYBODAETH 2000</p> <p>Mae gan y Ceisydd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> yr hawl i wneud cais ysgrifenedig am gael gwybodaeth (trwy lythyr neu e-bost), gan roi enw a chyfeiriad fel y gall y Bwrdd Iechyd ateb yr hawl i gael ei hysbysu mewn ysgrifen a yw'r wybodaeth a geisir ar gael. <p>Y Bwrdd Iechyd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mae dyletswydd ar y Bwrdd Iechyd i roi cyngor a chymorth rhesymol i unrhywun sy'n gwneud cais rhaidd iddo geisio ymateb o fewn 20 niwrnod gwaith a hysbysu'r Ceisydd os na ellir gwneud hyn nid oes rhaidd iddo ryddhau gwybodaeth os oes darpariaeth dan y Ddeddf sy'n cyflawnhau eithriad diamed rhaidd iddo ystyried rhyddhau gwybodaeth er lles y cyhoedd os yw hyn yn gymwys dylai ddarparu'r wybodaeth a geisir, a hynny yn y fformat a geisir lle bo'n ymarferol nid oes rhwymedigaeth arno i gydymffurfio â chais penodol os yw'r costau'n uwch na'r swm aruchaf a ganiateir o ran ffioedd ar gyfer hyn os yw'n gwrthod cais, rhaidd iddo ddiwedd pam wrth y Ceisydd a datgan ar ba eithriad y seilwyd y penderfyniad rhaidd iddo gynnal Cynllun Cyhoeddi wedi ddiweddarau a chyhoeddi gwybodaeth yn unol â'r Cynllun hwn. <p>PARCHU HAWL YR UNIGOLYN I GYFRINACHEDD</p> <p>Nid yw'r Ddeddf Rhyddid Gwybodaeth yn neud hawl unigolion, boed yn gleifion neu'n aelodau staff, i ddisgwyl y bydd y wybodaeth bersonol y mae'r Bwrdd Iechyd yn ei chadw amdanant yn cael ei diogelu. Mae cynnal yr hawl gyfreithiol i sicrhau cyfrinachedd pob gwybodaeth bersonol yn dal i fod yn ymrwymiad pwysig i'r Bwrdd Iechyd.</p> <p>EIN HYMRWYMIAD I CHI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bod mor agored ag y gallwn ni mewn perthynas â'r gwaith a wnawn ni Gwneud ein gorau i roi ichi unrhyw wybodaeth yr ydych chi'n ei cheisio Cadw at y graddfeydd amser gofynnol Atgyfeirio unrhyw gwynion ynghylch rhyddhau gwybodaeth at Adolygiad Mewnol gan ryvun na chwaraeodd ran yn y penderfyniad gwreiddiol. <p>Os ydych chi o hyd yn anffodlon, fe gewch chi gyfeirio unrhyw bryderon sydd gennych chi at y Comisiynydd Gwybodaeth yn:</p> <p>Swyddfa'r Comisiynydd Gwybodaeth – Cymru Ail Lawr, Tŷ Churchill, Ffordd Churchill, Caerdydd, CF10 2HH Ffôn: 029 2067 8400 e-bost: cymru@ico.gsi.gov.uk</p>	 <p>Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe Swansea Bay University Health Board</p> <p>THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) 2000</p> <p>THE ACT The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives public right of access to a variety of records and information held by public bodies. This comes into force on 1st January 2005 and can relate to any information subject to certain exemptions.</p> <p>THE PUBLICATION SCHEME Implementation of the Act began in October 2003 when all public bodies were required to make their 'Publications Schemes' available. Swansea Bay's Publication Scheme contains general information about the organisation and specifies the information that is readily available to the public.</p> <p>The Swansea Bay University Health Board Publication Scheme is available on the website at: http://www.swanseabay.nhs.wales</p> <p>A paper copy is available from the Freedom of Information Co-ordinator at Swansea Bay University Health Board, Headquarters, One Talbot Gateway, Baglan, Port Talbot, SA12 7BR. Tel 01639 683348, email FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk</p> <p>KEY RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE FOI ACT 2000</p> <p>The Applicant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has the right to make a written request for information (by letter or email) providing a name and address so that the Health Board can reply has the right to be informed in writing if the information being sought is available <p>The Health Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a duty to provide reasonable advice and assistance to anyone making a request must aim to respond within 20 working days and keep the applicant informed if this cannot be met does not have to release information if there is a provision in the Act conferring an absolute exemption must consider releasing information in the public interest if applicable where practicable, should supply the information requested, in the format requested is not obliged to comply with a request if the costs involved exceed the upper fees limit if refusing a request, must tell the applicant why and state which exemption is being relied on must maintain an up-to-date Publication Scheme and publish information in accordance with this Scheme 	<p>RESPECTING AN INDIVIDUAL'S RIGHT TO CONFIDENTIALITY</p> <p>The Freedom of Information Act does not change the rights of individuals, whether they are patients or members of staff, to expect that the personal information that the Health Board holds about them is protected. Maintaining the legal right of confidentiality of all personal information continues to be an important commitment for the Health Board.</p> <p>OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be as open as we can be in relation to the work we do To do our best to provide you with any information you are seeking To refer any complaints about release of information for Internal Review by someone who is independent of the original decision. <p>If you remain dissatisfied, you can refer any concerns you may have to the Information Commissioner at:</p> <p>Information Commissioner's Office – Wales 2nd Floor, Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff, CF10 2HH Telephone: 029 2067 8400 e-mail: wales@ico.gsi.gov.uk</p>
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