

Freedom of Information Request	FOI 23-079	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2023
--------------------------------	------------	----------------------------

**1. I'd like to know why you impose Welsh language first on a population that overwhelmingly speaks another language.**

Welsh and English are the official languages of the Welsh Government. Health service provision in both languages is a statutory responsibility outlined in regulatory standards established by the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Health Board is required by government policy to actively demonstrate to our patients and their families that we provide all services and communication in both English and Welsh.

The 'Welsh Language Commissioners' standards state that within bilingual messages Welsh must precede English. Callers to the Health Boards' automated phone lines are asked at the earliest point whether they want to hear the options in Welsh or English. To ensure that we meet the needs of all our patients, all signage on Health Board sites is bilingual. Staff will greet patients and their families in their preferred language after an initial bilingual greeting.

We recognise that not all employees will speak Welsh, so we ask all employees to note their Welsh language abilities on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 representing no skill and 5 representing complete fluency. This information is compiled and recorded on the Electronic Staff Record and is included in the staff directory. Departments must then become familiar with where the Welsh speakers are in their area of work so that if a patient is identified who requires Welsh support, they can ensure they know who can provide it. Where there is a lack of capacity, the Welsh Language Unit staff will provide additional assistance.

**2. How much do you spend pushing this Welsh language agenda? I'm sure it could be put to much better use.**

Financial Year	Welsh Language Spend £'000
2020/2021	157
2021/2022	171
2022/2023	121 as at January 2023

As a Health Board, we ensure our Welsh Language service delivery meets the needs of our communities as well as our statutory duties as a public body, as outlined by the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

As part of an NHS Wales delivery framework, Welsh language skills training is made available to all our staff. The Health Board's public communications are bilingual to ensure that all patients can read and understand the information and to ensure compliance with Welsh Government legal requirements. Failure to

provide bilingual communication may have an unintended impact on the quality of care and, as a result, treatment outcomes.