



Our Ref: ATISN 10080

1 February 2016

Dear

I wrote to you on 19 January following your request for information, which asked for;

- The current number of people in Wales being treated for chronic conditions, such as heart disease and high blood pressure.
- The findings from analysis conducted by Welsh Government which informed the decision to abolish prescription charges in Wales from 1 April 2007 (to include the number of chronic condition sufferers who could not afford to pay and administration charges associated with prescriptions).

The information you have requested on the current number of people in Wales being treated for chronic conditions, such as heart disease and high blood pressure is accessible to the public via:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/general-medical-services-contract/?lang=en>

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/welsh-health-survey/?lang=en>

Therefore we are not required to provide you with a copy of the information under Section 21 of the FOI Act 2000, 'Information accessible to the applicant by other means'. This is an absolute exemption and is not subject to the public interest or substantial harm tests.

With regard to your request for findings from analysis conducted by Welsh Government which informed the decision to abolish prescription charges in Wales from 1 April 2007, the Welsh Government does not hold this information.

A document published by the Welsh Government '**Helping to improve Wales' Health: Free prescriptions three years on**' cites that a Citizens Advice Bureaux Report, prior to the introduction of the policy and based on evidence gathered between 1999 and 2001, found that 50 percent of clients who paid prescription charges reported difficulties in affording the charge and 28 percent had failed to get all or part of a prescription dispensed during the previous year because of the cost. The report also references the administrative

costs of undertaking counter fraud activities. The report can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/documents/prescriptions-report-three-years.pdf>

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  
Email: [FreedomOfInformationOfficer@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FreedomOfInformationOfficer@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

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.

Also, if you think that there has been maladministration in dealing with your request then you may make a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales who can be contacted at:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales  
Ffordd yr Hen Gae  
Pencoed  
Bridgend  
CF35 5LJ

Yours sincerely

**Government Business Team**