

28 October 2022

Dear

ATISN 16699 – COVID 19 Investigations

Thank you for your request to the Welsh Government for information received on 29 September 2022 relating to COVID 19 investigations which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) (FOIA). You requested the following:

1. *Why if this a Welsh Government investigation do they not know when the investigations were completed?*
2. *What's the definition of downgraded?*
3. *What are the downgraded options?*
4. *What's the definition of recategorised?*
5. *What are the recategorised options?*
6. *Have families been informed if their case has been downgraded /recategorised?*
7. *Are all health boards investigating using the same methodology?*
8. *Are all health boards reporting using the same methodology?*
9. *Can you provide links to each health board's nosocomial reports?*
10. *In a meeting with the Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice Cymru on 30 Aug 2022, the First Minister agreed that as 1619 investigations had been completed the learnings should be implemented now, not wait until next year. Is this now happening and if yes where can see what is being implemented?*
11. *If not, why not?*

Our Response

1. [ATISN 16639](#) question 2 provided a response to this question.
2. and 3. The definition of downgraded is where, following assessment it is determined that the infection is not healthcare acquired and therefore not within scope of the **'NHS Wales National Framework – Management of patient safety incidents following nosocomial transmission of COVID-19' (the Framework)**. [National nosocomial COVID-19 programme: patient and family frequently asked questions \(FAQ\) | GOV.WALES](#)

There are no further downgraded options.

4. and 5. The definition of recategorised is where an initial investigation has been conducted utilising the surveillance definitions within the Framework and deemed not to meet the

scope for inclusion in the programme of work. An example of this would be where it was initially suspected that a patient had an indeterminate infection but following an investigation, it was concluded that in all probability the acquisition was community acquired. There are no further recategorised options.

6. Where contact has been established, patients or their representatives will be advised of any decision to downgrade or recategorise, together with the full reasoning. The concerns regulations only require organisations to proactively contact patients and families when moderate harm or above has or could have occurred, and where no complaint or other correspondence has been received.

7. The Framework requires all organisations to conduct proportionate investigations in keeping with part 23 of the National Concerns Regulations 2011. Organisations can however use different investigation tools which meet the national requirements, but this does not alter the scope and objective of the investigations within the programme. Organisations will use methodologies in which staff have been trained and are competent to use.

8. Yes, all health boards are reporting in accordance with the Framework that has been developed.

9. The Welsh Government cannot provide links to each health board's nosocomial reports. Please see health board websites for this information.

10. and 11. National learning has been ongoing throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and has been used to develop and tailor patient care.

An interim themed national learning report will be produced by the NHS Wales Delivery Unit at the end of the first year of the programme (March 2023). This timing will ensure sufficient validation of the learning and actions required and will include a handling plan of how recommendations will be implemented.

In 2024 at the end of the programme, the NHS Wales Delivery Unit (DU) will publish an end of programme national report. Individual organisations will also publish their own reports in line with reporting requirements.

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,