

Vale of Glamorgan Council  
**Deprivation of Liberty  
Safeguards (DoLS)  
Annual Report**  
2024-2025





# Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Annual Report

Reporting Period: April 2024 – March 2025

## Overview

This report summarises the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Team (DoLS) responsibilities and activity across Cardiff Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council, and Cardiff & Vale University Health Board for the period April 2024 to March 2025.

## Legislative Context

DoLS were introduced as an amendment to the **Mental Capacity Act 2005**.

They apply in **England and Wales** to people aged **18 or over** who **lack capacity** to consent to their care or treatment.

DoLS ensure that any **deprivation of liberty** in a **care home or hospital** is:

- **Lawful**
- **Necessary**
- **Proportionate**
- In the **person's best interests**

The legal basis is grounded in **Article 5 of the Human Rights Act**, which protects the right to liberty and security.





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## Purpose of the DoLS Team

- To **protect the rights and freedoms** of individuals who are under continuous supervision and not free to leave their care setting.
- To ensure that any restrictions placed on a person's liberty are **justified and legally authorised**.
- To provide **safeguards** such as representation, advocacy, and the right to challenge decisions.

## What do we do? Key Activities and Responsibilities

The Cardiff and Vale Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards/Mental Capacity Act (DoLS/MCA) Team is a multi-agency partnership hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The team fulfils the Supervisory Body responsibilities for DoLS on behalf of Cardiff Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council, and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.

We ensure that any deprivation of liberty for individuals who lack capacity is lawful, necessary, and in their best interests, in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and associated codes of practice. Our responsibilities include:

To

- **Assess** whether a person lacks capacity and is being deprived of liberty.
- **Authorise** deprivation of liberty when it is necessary and in the person's best interests.
- **Respond** to requests from hospitals and care homes.
- **Appoint** representatives or advocates to support the person.
- **Review** authorisations regularly to ensure care remains appropriate.
- **Support** legal challenges and ensure compliance with the law.





- **Train** care staff on recognising and managing deprivation of liberty.

### Why Is This Important?

Everyone has the right to **freedom and safety**. If someone's liberty is restricted, it must be done **properly and fairly**. The DoLS Team makes sure this happens.

### Who are we?

The team is made up of:

- 1 Team Manager
- 2 Business Support Officers
- 9 Best Interest Assessors (7.5 FTE)

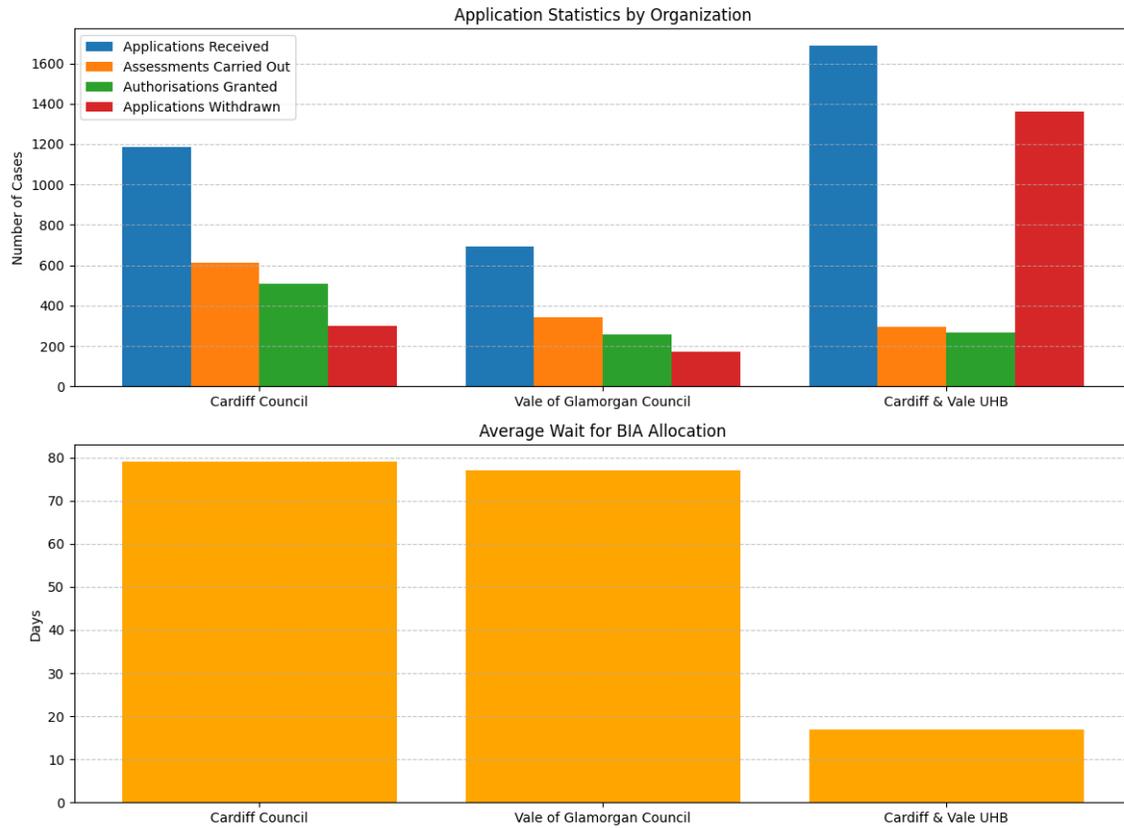
The Best Interest Assessors are all required to have a professional background and experience in areas including social work, health services such as Occupational Therapy, Nursing.





## Performance Data 2024-25

### DoLS Data Overview (April 2024 – March 2025)



### Insights from DoLS Activity Overview (April 2024 – March 2025)

#### Applications Received

- Cardiff & Vale UHB had the highest number of applications (1,687), accounting for 47.3% of the total.
- Cardiff Council followed with 1,185 applications (33.2%), while Vale of Glamorgan Council applications were 695 (19.5%).





These figures are consistent with numbers in previous years and reflective of where the highest number of individuals are potentially deprived of liberty.

### Assessments Carried Out

- Despite Cardiff & Vale UHB having the most applications, they had the fewest assessments (293), representing 23.5% of the total.
- Cardiff Council led with 611 assessments (49.1%)
- Vale of Glamorgan Council completed 342 assessments (27.4%), showing a balanced response relative to our application volume.

It is expected that Cardiff & Vale UHB have a low number of assessments completed, compared to the number of applications received, due to the number of applications that are subsequently withdrawn as the individual is no longer in a hospital setting.

### Authorisations Granted

Authorisation rates closely mirror assessment activity:

- Cardiff Council: 506 authorisations (49.2%)
- Vale of Glamorgan Council: 257 (25%)
- UHB: 265 (25.8%)

### Applications Withdrawn

- UHB : 1,362 applications withdrawn (74.1% of all withdrawals).

As stated, this indicates the frequent changes in patient circumstances that means the DoLS is no longer required i.e.no longer in hospital setting

- Cardiff Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council had significantly fewer withdrawals (301 and 174 respectively), due in part to the more stable care and accommodation arrangements (residential/nursing care) for individuals.





The data shows a high level of demand for this team, one which cannot be met consistently within agreed timescales. However, this demand is well understood and is similar to that across England and Wales. We continue to put mechanisms in place to ensure effective oversight and prioritisation of applications, for instance ensuring prompt allocation where an individual is objecting to their deprivation and/or accommodation arrangements. Also ensuring those who are unfriended (no family/friend representation) or have not had a DOLS in place previously are allocated in a prompt way.

The Vale of Glamorgan continues to receive annual funding from Welsh Government that enables us to commission additional services to address the backlog of applications. This is critical funding, above our core budget, that enables us to make some progress in addressing this backlog.

## Challenges & Successes

The DoLS process remains bureaucratic and resource-intensive, with the proposed Liberty Protection Safeguards still being on hold.

Despite challenges, the team:

- Streamlined processes (e.g., reusing assessments, reducing administration steps).
- Provides advice and advocacy during care home visits.
- Ensures resident and family voices continue to be central to assessments.

## Developments in 2024–25

- Recruitment of 4 additional BIAs (2.5 FTE) and 1 administrator. These posts were funded via the partnership arrangements across Cardiff Council & UHB.
- Over 1,200 assessments completed, including 350+ in Vale of Glamorgan care homes.
- Collaborative work with data and performance teams led to a triage and tracking tool for assessments.



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- A peer-to-peer development project improved the quality of Best Interest Assessments and produced a new assessment template.

## Planning for 2025–26

- Audit tool development with the Quality and Performance Team to evaluate and enhance assessment recording.
- Continued focus on efficiency and quality improvement in assessment processes.
- Expand feedback collection to include residents and families.
- Review application quality to reduce withdrawals.
- Increase BIA capacity to manage demand.
- Support high-volume units to maintain service standards.
- Monitor urgent case handling to reduce breaches.

**Natasha James**

**Operational Manager**

**Safeguarding & Service Outcomes**



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