

To Adolph Healthscare (request-82985-9f1c26f7@whatdotheyknow.com)

e-mail: freedom-of-information-xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx

Our Ref: VTR 2344-2424

DATE 9 September 2011

Dear Adolph Healthscare

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request dated 17 August 2011 that was received by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Adelphi and forwarded for response by the Commercial Management of Medical Services Freedom of Information Officer.

In your email you asked to be provided with information answering the following questions:-

Dear Department for Work and Pensions,

As reported in the media an Atos employee is under investigation for referring to the claimants she assesses in her role of Health Care Professional as "down and outs"

Among Debbie Carr's comments about the sick and disabled were: "Oh god another day here with the down and outs arggggg!" And: "Well that's the end of my holidays! Back to work tomorrow with the down and outs I suppose..." And: "Thank god it's Friday last day in this god forsaken place with the down and outs!"

<http://blacktrianglecampaign.org/2011/08/11/atos-worker-sneers-down-outs/>

In response to a previous FOI request on the whatdotheyknow website the DWP have stated: "All Healthcare professionals (HCP) regardless of primary qualifications are fully trained in Disability Assessment Medicine.

Expertise in this field qualifies the HCP to give an impartial, independent assessment on the way in which a customer's illness or disability affects them in carrying out of a range of everyday work-related activities. Training includes the assessment of the effects of specific conditions, for example mental health, or where a condition may fluctuate. Emphasis is always placed on the differing circumstances of each individual customer.

All HCPs have passed strict recruitment and experience criteria and are trained in customer rights, equal opportunities and professional standards. Nurses must be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council, doctors with the General Medical Council. Primary qualifications can be viewed on www.gmc-uk.org or www.nmc-uk.org respectively.

A customer may submit evidence from their doctor or specialist, however, unlike the more widely known type of examination, the HCP's assessment is not concerned with diagnosis or decisions about treatment and therefore specialist diagnostic qualifications are unnecessary."

I wish to request the number of "down and outs" (claimants) that Health Care Professional Debbie Carr, who apparently has successfully passed strict recruitment and experience criteria and is trained in customer rights, equal opportunities and professional standards, has assessed, on behalf of the DWP, under the Work Capability Assessment.

I also wish to be informed how many of those "down and outs" (claimants) have been informed that the Health Care Professional who carried out their assessment, on behalf of the DWP, considered them to be "down and outs" and will they all be reassessed?

*Lastly could you inform me how you can reassure those "down and outs" (claimants) that the next assessment will not be carried out by an individual who, despite your assurances, considers discriminating against them publicly on the Internet to be acceptable? Given that there has been a further incident of an Atos employee referring to claimants as "parasitical w**kers" it appears these views are viral amongst Atos staff, to such an extent that they are confident to state them openly.*

In reply to your questions and in accordance with Section 8(1b) of the Freedom of Information Act, the Department is not obliged to comply with a request for information that does not state the name of the applicant. This is because DWP does not believe Adolph Healthscare is a real name. A name must be provided for a lawful Fol request to be made this has not been accepted as a request under the act and we will not be responding.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, 5th Floor The Adelphi, 1-11, John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk