



## Department of Health & Social Care

Freedom of Information Team  
Department of Health and Social Care  
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London  
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[www.gov.uk/dhsc](http://www.gov.uk/dhsc)

Mr Phil Booth  
request-599161-a3ebd468@whatdotheyknow.com

19 March 2020

Dear Mr Booth,

### **Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1295937**

Thank you for your clarification dated 20 February in which you asked the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

*"I am referring to all correspondence and meetings between the companies listed in my original request and any/all DHSC officials who currently work in NHSX, who (also) worked for DHSC before NHSX was launched.*

*The time period during which I am requesting copies of correspondence and meetings is from 30 August 2017 to 7 October 2019 - though, of course, I would appreciate copies of any such correspondence or meetings up until the date of this clarification (20 February 2020) if they exist.*

*My concern is not so much with the particular role or position held by the officials in their correspondence and/or meetings with the listed companies, as with the correspondence and meetings themselves - i.e. I would like copies of any/all correspondence and meetings from when those officials were working for DHSC (i.e. from 30 August 2017 until July 2019) \*and\* when those DHSC officials were working in NHSX (i.e. from July 2019 onwards).*

*For an excess of clarity, I am not asking for copies of correspondence and meetings between any NHS staff members (now working in NHSX or otherwise) and the listed companies.*

*I hope that is clear, and look forward to hearing from you. "*

This was in relation to the following request dated 7 October 2019;

*"Subject: Re: Freedom of Information request - Correspondence with Optum, IQVIA, Apple IBM  
Dear Department of Health and Social Care,*

*Thank you for your response confirming you hold the information I have requested, and suggesting that I refine my request for information by focusing on correspondence and meetings between one company and a particular minister, or the Permanent Secretary, or NHSX officials. Given the situation you describe, I appreciate that my initial request may have been over-broad.*

*That being the case, please would you:*

*a) provide confirmation - i.e. dates, not papers - of any meetings since 30 August 2017 between the former or current Secretary of State for Health and (1) Optum, Inc., (2) IQVIA, (3) Apple or (4) IBM (health).*

*b) provide copies of correspondence and meetings since 30 August 2017 between DHSC officials now in NHSX and, in order of priority\*, the following companies:*

- 1) Optum, Inc.
- 2) IQVIA
- 3) Apple
- 4) IBM (health)

*\*For the sake of clarity, by in order of priority I simply mean I would like copies of such materials as you are able to locate within the Section 12 cost limit. If that means you are only able to locate materials relating to a single company, then that company would be Optum - if some time remains after such a search, then please check for correspondence and meetings with IQVIA, and so on. I am happy for you to provide partial information in a timely manner, even if it is only for correspondence and meetings between NHSX officials and just one of the companies - although I would obviously prefer it to cover more, having narrowed this aspect of my request to NHSX officials only.  
I look forward to your response."*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

To provide the information as it is currently framed would exceed the appropriate cost limit set out in the FOIA.

Section 12(1) of the FOIA means public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit for DHSC is set at £600, which represents the cost of one person spending 3.5 days determining whether we hold the information, and then locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

We have estimated that the cost of extracting all the information from various systems and email accounts would exceed the appropriate limit. Consequently, we will not be answering your request.

Although we cannot answer your request at the moment, we may be able to answer a refined request within the cost limit. You may wish to consider, for example, limiting your request to communications to and from senior civil servants (SCS level). Please be aware that we cannot guarantee at this stage that a refined request would fall within the FOIA cost limit, or that other exemptions will not apply.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to appeal by asking for an internal review. This should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the address at the top of this letter, or the email address at the end of this letter.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have already appealed our original response and received our internal review decision. You should raise your concerns with the ICO within three months of your last meaningful contact with us.

The ICO can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow SK9 5AF

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns>

Yours sincerely,

Ed Franklyn

Freedom of Information Officer

E [freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk)