



HM Treasury

Information Rights Unit
HM Treasury
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Andy Fugard

Via email: request-293922-afdd2c36@whatdotheyknow.com

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www.gov.uk/hm-treasury

23 October 2015

Ref: FOI2015/22455

Dear Mr Fugard,

Freedom of Information Act 2000: Mental Healthcare Funding

Thank you for your Freedom of Information enquiry of 25 September 2015.

You asked for the following information –

"Blame for insufficient mental healthcare funding has been passed around between Department of Health, NHS England, and individual Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), however, the source of funding is the Treasury. Although CCGs and other mediating organisations make decisions about how much funding mental health receives, this is as a proportion of budgets decided at Treasury level. Any budgetary planning at Treasury level must therefore take mental health into consideration, alongside other areas of healthcare.

I am writing to request:

- (i) names of individuals at Treasury and above, including advisors by official name or function, who are responsible for decisions made in relation to mental health care budgets;*
- (ii) documentation on budgetary decisions made, including evidence of how, in calculating the total health budget, mental health needs have been taken into consideration."*

With regards to your **first question**, I can confirm that HM Treasury does not hold information in scope of your request. HM Treasury is not responsible for specific items of departmental expenditure, but rather allocates an overall budget to government departments who have responsibility for spend in their areas of responsibility. With regards to "mental health care budgets" this is a matter for NHS England and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs).

NHS England and CCGs are independent of the Department of Health and HM Treasury. The main role of NHS England is to improve health outcomes for people in England. NHS England provides national leadership for improving outcomes and driving up the quality of care. NHS England oversees the operation of CCGs, allocates resources to CCGs and commissions primary care and specialist services.

With regards to your **second question**, I can confirm that HM Treasury does hold information in scope of your request which we consider engaged s35 of the FOI act.

Section 35 is a qualified exemption, and public authorities must consider whether the balance of public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in withholding it. In relation to the release of this information, we recognise that there is an inherent public interest in transparency and accountability of public authorities. We also recognise the broad public interest in furthering public understanding of the issues which public authorities deal with. There is a clear public interest in the work of Government Departments being transparent and open to scrutiny to increase diligence

Balanced against this is the public interest in protecting the Government's ability to discuss and develop policies and to reach well-formed conclusions. The information Commissioner has recognised that policy development needs a degree of freedom to enable the process to work effectively and we consider that there is a strong public interest in protecting information where release would be likely to have a detrimental impact on the ongoing formulation of policy.

There is a strong public interest in protecting against encroachment on the ability of Ministers and officials to formulate and develop policy options freely and frankly.

In this case, we consider that disclosing the information held, which includes advice to ministers, would be likely to prevent officials conducting rigorous and candid assessments of the options available to them, and that disclosure might close off discussions and the development of better options in the future. Disclosure of information relating to policy formulation could corrode the relationship between Ministers and civil servants

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us. Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Information Rights Unit

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

If you are not happy with this reply, you may request a review by writing to HM Treasury, Information Rights Unit, 3/Red, 1 Horse Guards Road, London SW1A 2HQ or by emailing us at the address below. Any review request must be made within 2 months of the date of this letter.

Email: foirequests@hmtreasury.gsi.gov.uk

It would assist our review if you set out which aspects of the reply concern you and why you are dissatisfied.

If you are not content with the outcome of the review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner will not make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by HM Treasury.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

