

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: [freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gov.uk)

Our Ref: FOI2019/17527

20 May 2019

Dear Colleen Paviour,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 8 May. You asked:

*Please send me:*

- 1. The total amount of money awarded under the Vaccine Damage Fund since the fund's inception in 1979 until now.*
- 2. The total number of claims made under the Vaccine Damage Fund since the fund's inception in 1979 until now.*
- 3. The total number of successful claims made under the Vaccine Damage Fund since the fund's inception in 1979 until now.*
- 4. The total number of unsuccessful claims made under the Vaccine Damage Fund since the fund's inception in 1979 until now.*

**DWP Response:**

We confirm that we hold the information to respond to your request.

The Vaccine Damage Payments Act (the Act) was passed on 22 March 1979. An extra-statutory scheme was in place from 9 May 1978 until the passing of the Act.

The Vaccine Damage Payments Scheme (VDPS) provides a one-off tax free payment, currently £120,000, to those people who are severely disabled as a result of vaccination against a specified disease, within the meaning of the Act

It is not compensation. It is a payment to help ease the financial burden for those individuals where, on very rare occasions, vaccination has caused severe disablement. The Scheme does not prejudice the right of the disabled person to pursue a claim for damages through the courts. It should be considered in context with the range of support, financial and otherwise, that is available to disabled people in the UK, for example, free healthcare, social care support and disability benefits.

There have been many advances in medical knowledge and understanding of vaccine damage since the scheme was launched in 1978. Since then, numerous reliable research papers have been produced that demonstrate that vaccinations are safer than they have ever been and a rigorous licencing regime ensures that safety is of paramount importance.

It is worth noting that most of the disabling conditions claimed to have resulted from vaccination can also occur spontaneously in unvaccinated children and adults.

The majority of claims to the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme are turned down on the basis that vaccination did not cause the disability.

There has been no change in the causation criteria. They are applied consistently, in accordance with accepted expert guidance.

The statistics you have requested are as follows:

1. £74,690,000
2. 6,352
3. 941
4. 5,382

The claims not accounted for as awards or disallowances are currently being processed.

The figures provided are from 9 May 1978 up to and including 30 April 2019.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FoI Team

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#### **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@dwf.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwf.gov.uk) or by writing to DWP, Central FoI Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. 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  
Web: [ico.org.uk/Global/contact\\_us](http://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us) or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745