

Mr Taylor c/o request-61537-90280b9b@whatdotheyknow.com

DWP Commercial Management of Medical Services Team

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

Our Ref: CMMS 3454

DATE 14 June 2011

Dear Mr Taylor,

Thank you for your letter dated 5 June 2011 that was received by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Adelphi and forwarded for response by the DWP Commercial Management of Medical Services (CMMS) team.

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

On the 1 June the BBC website published an article about incapacity benefit changes and suicide <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-13611298>. It appears that despite your earlier response to my request and the review that you and/or your contractors did not have information relating to the number of Incapacity benefit claimants or people claiming employment and support allowance (ESA) that have committed suicide, or attempted to commit suicide, following notification of the requirement for them to attend an Atos Medical Examination and/or a work capability assessment (WCA) that you did indeed have this information. Why have I not been supplied with that information?

In response to your question, a thorough search of the article you mentioned has been made. The reference to suicides within the article was in relation to a letter sent to The Guardian by the group that included the charity "Mind". This group stated that "the changes were causing huge distress and had resulted in suicides". The article did not provide any statistics from any source that was able to approve or disprove the groups view.

I can assure you that no statistics exist within DWP relating to the query you have raised relating to Incapacity Benefit/Employment and Support Allowance customers. If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP CMMS Team