



Department of Health & Social Care

Freedom of Information Team
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

www.gov.uk/dhsc

Ms Amanda Hart
request-659288-96d95c20@whatdotheyknow.com

4 May 2020

Dear Ms Hart,

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1216920

Thank you for your request dated 15 April, in which you asked the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

“Please kindly provide a breakdown of who you supplied PPE to by date, the type of PPE it was (such as disposable aprons, disposable gloves, fluid resistant face masks, surgical mask with integrated visor, full face shield/visor) and the count of each of those items for the month of March 2020.

Please output in the following fields: Date; Destination; PPE type; Count

For example...

01.03.2020; Princess Grace Hospital, London; fluid resistant face masks; 1032 01.03.2020; Princess Grace Hospital, London; disposable gloves; 1032.”

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

DHSC holds the information you have requested. However, 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 the DH 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 from individual hospitals and pharmacies.

Where section 12 applies to one part of a request we refuse all of the request as being over the cost limit, as advised by the Information Commissioner’s Office.

As an example of the work involved, in relation to one particular document, a search through emails and spreadsheets would involve many hours of work. Consequently, I apologise that we will not be able to respond to your request in its current format.

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, requesting a reduced selection focusing on specific hospitals or geographical areas.

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.

However, outside of the FOIA, and on a discretionary basis, since the start of the outbreak, DHSC has delivered over 946 million pieces of PPE to the frontline. This includes:

- 174 million masks;
- 166 million aprons;
- 1.3 million gowns; and
- 452 million pairs of gloves.

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 this letter and sent to FreedomOfInformation@dhsc.gov.uk, or to the address at the top of this letter.

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

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
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

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

Yours sincerely,

Jane Spencer
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