



Disclosure Team
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

Rob Brew
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data.access@justice.gov.uk

30 July 2020

Dear Mr Brew

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – 200717022

Thank you for your request dated 17 July 2020 in which you asked for the following information from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ):

I would like to answer a question based on this premise:

Is withdrawing from anti psychotic medication over a short period of time worse for the suffer than being schizophrenic and not medicated.

The data from this might also hint that withdrawal from medication is enough to unbalance someone to the point that their condition is worse than originally being unwell.

The implications of the data as referenced may encourage those on anti psychotic medication to continue to take their medication and only withdraw from them under the guidance of a psychiatrist, potentially lowering the number of incidents suffers find themselves committing.

Therefore I am requesting, as a percentage, the cases of those who have committed manslaughter / murder whilst withdrawing from anti psychotic medication vs those as a percentage who had undiagnosed schizophrenia / psychosis.

Your request has been handled under the FOIA.

I can confirm the MoJ holds all of the information you have requested, having interpreted your request as being for data concerning the number of convictions for murder and manslaughter offences in the circumstances that you describe. However, to provide as the request currently stands would exceed the 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 central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

Centrally held information on murder and manslaughter offences does not provide information concerning any medication the offender may have been taking at any point in the lead up committing the offence.

We believe that the cost of locating, retrieving and extracting the requested information from individual case files held at the courts in England and Wales would exceed the appropriate limit. Consequently, we are not obliged to comply with 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, reducing the scope of your request to a single year, or a single court. Please be aware that we cannot guarantee at this stage that a refined request will fall within the FOIA cost limit, or that other exemptions, such as Section 32 court records etc, will not apply.

For guidance on how to structure successful requests please refer to the ICO website on the following link: [http://ico.org.uk/for the public/official information](http://ico.org.uk/for_the_public/official_information)

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/3244/pdfs/ukxi_20043244_en.pdf

Outside the scope of the FOIA, it may interest you to know the Home Office collects specific data on homicide via the Homicide Index, which may answer your question. Should you wish to contact the Home Office, their details are provided below:-

Contact by email:-

foirequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to request an internal review by responding in writing to one of the addresses below within two months of the date of this response.

data.access@justice.gov.uk

Disclosure Team, Ministry of Justice, 10.14, 102 Petty France, London, SW1H 9AJ

You do have the right to ask the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to investigate any aspect of your complaint. However, please note that the ICO is likely to expect internal complaints procedures to have been exhausted before beginning their investigation.

Yours sincerely

David Carmichael
Justice Statistics Analytical Services