



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

Chris Neurath

By email to: request-874933-dfc0961c@whatdotheyknow.com

15 August 2022

Dear Mr Neurath,

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1410858

Thank you for your request dated 1 July to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), a copy of which can be found in the accompanying annex.

This was a clarification of your earlier request dated 3 May to DHSC, a copy of which can also be found in the accompanying annex.

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and I apologise for the delay in responding.

I can confirm that DHSC holds information relevant to your request.

There was one member on the 2022 Water Fluoridation Health Monitoring Report Working Group, who remains on it now. He is Professor John Newton, the Director of the Public Health Analysis Unit at the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.

However, some information is being withheld under Section 40 of the FOIA, which provides for the protection of personal information.

For further information on the use of this exemption, please see the [ICO's guidance on requests for personal data about public authority employees](#).

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 sent to freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk or to the address at the top of this letter and be submitted within two months of the date 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.

Guidance on contacting the ICO can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us> and information about making a complaint can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint>.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team
FreedomOfInformation@dhsc.gov.uk

Annex

*"From: AEHSP request-874933-dfc0961c@whatdotheyknow.com
Sent: 01 July 2022 14:41
To: FreedomofInformation freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk
Subject: Freedom of Information request - names of members of the Water Fluoridation Health Monitoring Working Group*

Dear Department of Health and Social Care,

A recent publication of DHSC is titled "Water fluoridation: Health monitoring report for England 2022" and is available at this URL:

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fwater-fluoridation-health-monitoring-report-for-england-2022&data=05%7C01%7Cdhmail%40dhsc.gov.uk%7C94588e9786874296e40b08da5b6a49b7%7C61278c3091a84c318c1fef4de8973a1c%7C1%7C0%7C637922809294106792%7CUnknown%7CTWFPbGZsb3d8eyJWljoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7Camp;sdata=IZLv5kixAEvsXx6%2F9w2UcCyoOFzcGQe2SdPC6R8We0%3D&reserved=0>

On page 4 of the report it is stated:

This report is published by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID). It was prepared by the Water Fluoridation Health Monitoring Working Group, comprising colleagues from both OHID and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).

I request the names of the individual members of the Water Fluoridation Health Monitoring Working Group during the time the 2022 report was prepared, as well as the current members if any have changed. I also request the affiliation and position of each member of the Working Group. By affiliation, I mean the government agency and subdivision; or for those not affiliated with a government agency, the name of the organization they are affiliated with. By position, I mean their job title within the government agency or organization.

Yours faithfully,

*Chris Neurath
for AEHSP"*

FOI-1403762

*"From: AEHSP <request-858685-455946ca@whatdotheyknow.com>
Sent: 03 May 2022 00:13
To: FreedomofInformation <freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk>
Subject: Freedom of Information request - data on water fluoride concentrations used in "Water fluoridation: Health monitoring report for England 2022"*

Dear Department of Health and Social Care,

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information law we request data that was used to produce a recent report by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) titled “Water fluoridation: Health monitoring report for England 2022”. The report is available at this URL:

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fwater-fluoridation-health-monitoring-report-for-england-2022&data=05%7C01%7Cdhmail%40dhsc.gov.uk%7C3226f07e76b44ac5f60208da2cdebdeb%7C61278c3091a84c318c1fef4de8973a1c%7C1%7C0%7C637871632414073293%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6I k1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sd=INKNJv6KKshw8qMxYnbzl1pyMhL6RPQvA%2BMXJFxaO9Q%3D&reserved=0>

We request the data on drinking water fluoride concentrations in England that was used to produce the report. The section of the report headed “Methods: Exposure” on pages 21-24, gives details on the data used for the report. Three different definitions of fluoride exposure were used for the report and we request the data for each of the three measures.

The water fluoride measures were at the geographical area of LSOA (Lower-level Super Output Area).

For all LSOAs we request:

1. The fluoride concentration category, as defined in the report by the following five categories:

- <0.1mg/l*
- 0.1 - <0.2mg/l*
- 0.2 - <0.4mg/l*
- 0.4 - <0.7mg/l*
- ≥0.7mg/l*

2. Fluoride concentration as a continuous exposure measure (in units of mg/l).

3. The category of Fluoride Scheme for the LSOA, following the definitions of the three possible categories given in the report, quoting directly:

EXPOSED: Presence of a fluoridation scheme in any of the years of the exposure period, regardless of the mean fluoride concentration achieved (there were no areas with a fluoridation scheme in place and a grand mean fluoride concentration of <0.2mg/l)

UNEXPOSED: No fluoridation scheme functioning in any of the years of the exposure period, and a grand mean fluoride of <0.2mg/l

EXCLUDED: No fluoridation scheme functioning in any of the years of the exposure period, and a grand mean fluoride of ≥0.2mg/l

The data may be supplied as three separate files or as a single file with one (or both) LSOA identification fields and three fields for the three definitions of fluoride exposure:

LSOA identification code

LSOA identification name

fluoride concentration category (5 categories)

fluoride concentration (continuous)

fluoride scheme category (3 categories)

The report says the software STATA was used for data management and analyses. We therefore ask that the requested data be supplied as an electronic file in STATA format. Alternatively, we request it be supplied as an Excel file. Here is the report's description of the software used for producing the report:

“Data management

Data cleaning, management, and visualisation were conducted in STATA 16, R 4.1, and R Studio 2021.09.0. Data analysis was conducted in STATA 16.”

*Yours faithfully,
AEHSP”*