



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 Alison Stevens
request-661730-73e8a748@whatdotheyknow.com

2 June 2020

Dear Ms Stevens,

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1221025

Thank you for your request dated 1 May, in which you asked the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

*"1.It is reported that ventilators brought from China are not adequate enough to nurse corona virus patients on and would be dangerous to use. Can you please confirm how much money the Department has spent on these ventilators so far?
2. How many corona disease patients have been put on these ventilators and have died?
3. Does the Department have a risk assessment policy about ventilators that are being bought from other countries?
and if yes could you please forward me a copy of any such policies?
4. What will the Department be doing with all the ventilators that are of no use any more?
5.will the Department be asking for a refund for the amount of money spent on these ventilators?
6.How many corona Patients have been put on these ventilators and Survived?"*

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

I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request.

"1.It is reported that ventilators brought from China are not adequate enough to Nurse corona virus patients on and would be dangerous to use. Can you please confirm how much money the Department have spent on these ventilators so far?"

I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request.

DHSC is increasing its provision of ventilators to ensure the NHS continues to have the resources it needs through procuring more ventilators from overseas, including thousands from China; scaling up the production of existing or modified designs; and working to design and manufacture new devices.

DHSC currently has around 15,100 mechanical ventilators available to NHS patients across the UK, as well as over 11,000 non-invasive ventilators.

The Shangrila 510 model is not being used in hospitals and no patients are at risk.

With regard to part two of your question, *"can you please confirm how much money the Department has spent on these ventilators so far?"*, we consider that this information is exempt under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which exempts from the general duty to release information which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any entity, including the public authority holding the information.

Section 43 is a qualified exemption and, as such, we are required to assess the public interest in withholding this information against that of its release. We recognise a general public interest in this area. However, we also take into account the fact that this information is commercially sensitive, and we consider that releasing this information would not be in the public interest, as it would prejudice future commercial relations with suppliers and our ability to secure best value for money if this information were to get into the public domain.

"2. How many corona disease patients have been put on these ventilators and have died?"

The Shangrila 510 ventilator model is not being used in hospitals and no patients are at risk. Several alternative makes and models of ventilators are available to NHS trusts should they need them. There is currently spare ventilator capacity in all areas of the country.

"3. Does the Department have a risk assessment policy about ventilators that are being bought from other countries and if yes could you please forward me a copy of any such policies?"

Ventilators need to pass robust regulatory tests to ensure they are up to standard before they are delivered to NHS hospitals. All ventilators are checked and tested as part of the installation process before they are used on patients.

With regard to the second part of your request, I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request.

However, as the information held by the Department is in the public domain, we will under Section 21 of the FOI Act (information accessible to the applicant by other means) refer you to the published source.

Details of the regulatory checks that ventilators must go through are available from the MHRA at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/medicines-and-healthcare-products-regulatory-agency>

"4. What will the Department be doing with all the ventilators that are of no use any more?"

The Shangrila 510 ventilator model is not being used in hospitals and are in the process of being recalled, after which, decisions will be taken on next steps.

"5. Will the Department be asking for a refund for the amount of money spent on these ventilators?"

The Shangrila 510 ventilators are in the process of being recalled from hospitals after which decisions will be taken on next steps.

"6. How many corona patients have been put on these ventilators and survived?"

The Shangrila 510 ventilator model is not being used in hospitals and no patients are at risk.

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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