



By email

request-686869-62bbfb48@whatdotheyknow.com

Our ref: 21/08/ld/1079

27 October 2020

Dear Peter Newton,

Re: 1079 – FOI Evidence to prove SARS-COV-2 virus

Thank you for your email dated 23 August 2020. In accordance with Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act), I can confirm that Public Health England (PHE) does hold the information you have specified.

Request

1) Evidence to prove SARS-COV-2 virus. Provide any recorded information to evidence that Public Health England have acquired scientific evidence proving that the so called SARS-COV-2 virus has been isolated and purified in reference laboratories run by Public Health England under Professor Zambon (Imperial College London and Sage member).

PHE can confirm that it holds the information you have specified. However, the information is exempt under section 21 of the FOI Act because it is reasonably accessible by other means, and the terms of the exemption mean that we do not have to consider whether or not it would be in the public interest for you to have the information. Under Section 16 of the FOI Act, public authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance. Accordingly, we have provided a link to the following paper which shows evidence of culture of virus in the PHE reference lab at Colindale:

<https://www.eurosurveillance.org/content/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2020.25.32.2001483>

2) Evidence to prove Covid-19 disease. Provide any recorded information to evince that Public Health England have acquired scientific evidence proving that the so called COVID-19 disease has been isolated and purified in reference laboratories run by Public Health England under Professor Zambon (Imperial College London and Sage member).

Please refer to question 1.

3) Evidence to prove causality between the alleged new novel SARS-COV-2 coronavirus and the purported COVID-19 disease. Provide any recorded information to evince that Public Health England have acquired scientific

evidence proving that SARS- COV-2 is the cause of the COVID-19 disease so as to fulfil all of the requirements of Rivers Postulates (1973).

PHE can confirm that it holds the information you have specified. Rivers proposed his own postulates to establish a causal relationship between a virus and a disease: (i) a specific virus must be found associated with a disease with a degree of regularity; and (ii) the virus must be shown to occur in the sick individual not as an incidental or accidental finding but as the cause of the disease under investigation. Rivers' postulates differed from Koch's postulates in that the pathogenic virus did not need to be present in every case of the disease, the possibility of a viral carrier state was recognized, and the requirement for propagation of the pathogenic virus in media or cell culture was abandoned (<https://cmr.asm.org/content/cmr/9/1/18.full.pdf>).

4) Evidence to prove transmission capability of SARS-COV-2 novel coronavirus. Provide any recorded information to evidence that Public Health England have acquired scientific evidence of clinical study to prove that the purported SARS-COV-2 new novel coronavirus is capable of transmission between like species.

PHE can confirm that it holds the information you have specified. At PHE Porton Down we have established NHP and ferret models of COVID. We have not specifically used these models to assess transmission but several international studies have successfully shown transmission of SARS-CoV-2 using animal models. However, this is an area we have recently received funding for.

5) Evidence to prove spread. Provide any recorded information to evince that Public Health England have acquired scientific evidence of clinical study to prove that the SARS-COV-2 virus is capable of being spread, so as to decree whether alive in the air, alive on surfaces, alive in droplets, and/or something other.

PHE can confirm that it holds the information you have specified. PHE has detected SARS-CoV-2 RNA on surfaces and in the air in COVID-19 patients' rooms as have many researchers worldwide. However viable virus was not detected in the following study: <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.09.24.20191411v1>. Other studies have detected viable virus in air, for example the paper "Viable SARS-CoV-2 in the air of a hospital room with COVID-19 patients". The paper can be found here: <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.08.03.20167395v1.full.pdf>

Please note that you have the right to an independent review by the Information Commissioner's Office if a complaint cannot be resolved through the PHE complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner's Office can be contacted by writing to Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,
FOI Team