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Our reference: DSD/2014-0132

Date: 24 June 2014

Kathryn Hogan

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

I am writing in connection with your further request received on 30 May 2014 for additional information relating to the Department's use of form FRR4

For ease of reference your request was as follows:

*"You kindly informed me "The number of Form FRR4s used during the financial year 2013/14 in relation to Employment and Support Allowance was 1,806."*

*Of these 1,806 FRR4 forms, please provide a breakdown of information contained within them.*

*How many of these 1,806 FRR4 forms document telephone contact with a claimants HCP and please list the HCP by their profession, ie GP, Nurse, Speech therapist etc".*

The Department does not maintain a summary breakdown of the Health Care Professional's medical profession who have been contacted to complete form FRR4. To establish the information requested would require a scan of the computer system to be performed to initially identify the 1,806 FRR4 forms issued for the relevant period.

Thereafter, each individual case would need to be accessed on the system and then carefully scrutinised in an attempt to retrieve the information requested. To assess the logistical issues associated with your request, we timed how long it would take to access the computer system on one case where form FRR4 was issued. It is estimated that it would take 5 minutes to gather the information on 1 case, assimilate the information, and input the data onto a spreadsheet. This allows for system slowdowns and security checks that have to be completed. Given that the same steps would need to be repeated in each case, it is considered that 5 minutes is a fair assessment of the time to provide the information on each of the 1,806 cases.

$1,806 \times 5 \text{ minutes} = 9,030 \text{ minutes}$  which converts to a manpower requirement of just over 150 hours, rounded to 151 hours.

The Department is required to process Freedom of Information requests in line with guidance produced by the Information Commissioner's Office. For reference, I enclose a link to this guidance

[http://ico.org.uk/for\\_organisations/freedom\\_of\\_information/guide/~media/documents/library/Freedom\\_of\\_Information/Detailed\\_specialist\\_guides/refusing\\_a\\_request\\_writing\\_a\\_refusal\\_notice\\_foi.ashx](http://ico.org.uk/for_organisations/freedom_of_information/guide/~media/documents/library/Freedom_of_Information/Detailed_specialist_guides/refusing_a_request_writing_a_refusal_notice_foi.ashx)

Furthermore, this guidance provides further clarification on how the Department should financially quantify the cost associated with providing information. For reference, I enclose a further link below which notes that a rate of £25 per hour should be used to financially quantify costs.

[http://ico.org.uk/for\\_organisations/freedom\\_of\\_information/guide/refusing\\_a\\_request/#when-can-we-refuse-a-request-for-information-1](http://ico.org.uk/for_organisations/freedom_of_information/guide/refusing_a_request/#when-can-we-refuse-a-request-for-information-1)

In this case, the financial calculation is  $151 \text{ hours} \times £25 \text{ per hour} = £3,775$ .

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act notes that the statutory financial limit associated with the Department meeting a Freedom of Information request is £600.

It would only be possible to complete 15.89% of the analysis required to fulfil your request within the time limit however, as the cost associated with meeting your request is calculated at £3,775 and is therefore above the statutory limit of £600, the Department does not have to comply with your request and therefore, regrettably is not in a position to process your request.

You have the right to request a formal review by the Department within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you wish to do so, please write to:  
The FOI Team, Records Management Branch, Department for Social Development,  
First Floor, Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place, Gasworks Business Park, Ormeau Rd, Belfast BT7 2JB.

If, after such an internal review, you are still dissatisfied with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours faithfully

Jim McCleary  
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