



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](http://www.gov.uk/dhsc)

Mr Nick Flatt

By email to: [request-865754-3b8b4eca@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-865754-3b8b4eca@whatdotheyknow.com)

6 July 2022

Annex A: DHSC response to initial request

Annex B: Request for internal review

Dear Mr Flatt,

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 (FOIA): INTERNAL REVIEW**

### **CASE REFERENCE: IR-1410372 (FOI-1407122)**

You originally wrote to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on 29 May requesting NHS Voluntary Early Retirement statistics. We responded to you on 24 June and a copy of our response, including the full text of your request, can be found in Annex A.

You subsequently emailed DHSC on 29 June requesting an internal review into the handling of your original request. A copy of your email can be found in Annex B.

The purpose of an internal review is to assess how your Freedom of Information (FOI) request was handled in the first instance and to determine whether the original decision given to you was correct. This is an independent review as I was not involved in the original decision

### **Conclusion**

After careful consideration, I have concluded that the response you received to your FOI request was compliant with the requirements of the FOIA.

The information requested is controlled and held by NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) and is not shared routinely with DHSC. It has been possible to provide previous versions of this information to this requestor for previous requests because DHSC held the information at the point of request, as it had been shared with us by NHSBSA.

In the time between the FOI and internal review requests, the information requested has been shared with us by NHSBSA and is available below.

| Scheme Year | GPs |                      | Hospital Doctors |                      | Dental Practitioners |                      | Hospital Dentists |                      |
|-------------|-----|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
|             | VER | % of all retirements | VER              | % of all retirements | VER                  | % of all retirements | VER               | % of all retirements |
| 2019/20     | 517 | 40%                  | 401              | 17.7%                | 156                  | 26.3%                | 16                | 22.2%                |
| 2020/21     | 472 | 38.9%                | 387              | 17%                  | 174                  | 31.1%                | 12                | 17%                  |
| 2021/22     | 339 | 36%                  | 352              | 15.7%                | 117                  | 22.2%                | 15                | 29.4%                |

The above figures calculate retirements based on headcount. Previous releases of this data have calculated retirements based on the number of ending employments at the time a pension is put into payment. As above, the NHSBSA are the controllers of this data and can provide more information on the caveats.

The NHSBSA can respond to FOI's directly, removing the need to contact DHSC with further requests. Any future requests must be sent to NHSBSA as there is no guarantee we will hold the information for future years when it is next requested. The NHSBSA's website contains information on how to raise an FOI request:

<https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/contact-us/freedom-information>

The review is now complete.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by DHSC.

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,

FOI Internal Reviews

[freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk)

## Annex A: DHSC response to initial request



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Mr Nick Flatt

By email to: [request-865754-3b8b4eca@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-865754-3b8b4eca@whatdotheyknow.com)

24 June 2022

Dear Mr Flatt,

### **Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1407122**

Thank you for your request dated 29 May to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), a copy of which can be found in the accompanying annex.

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

DHSC does not hold the information you have requested. However, you may wish to contact the NHS Business Services Authority ([NHSBSA](https://www.nhs.uk/business-services)), which may hold information relevant to your request. Please be advised that the information provided to you in your FOI from last year was information DHSC had received from NHSBSA. Any further queries on this subject should be directed to them.

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](mailto: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](mailto:freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk)

## Annex

-----Original Message-----

From: Nick Flatt <request-865754-3b8b4eca@whatdotheyknow.com>

Sent: 29 May 2022 12:15

To: FreedomofInformation <freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk>

Subject: Freedom of Information request - NHS Voluntary Early Retirement statistics 20212022

[You don't often get email from request-865754-3b8b4eca@whatdotheyknow.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

Dear Department of Health and Social Care,

Last year you kindly provided me with NHS Voluntary Early Retirement statistics for 01/04/2020-31/03/2021 (FOI-1328701) as follows:

[https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.whatdotheyknow.com%2Frequest%2Fnhs\\_voluntary\\_early\\_retirement\\_s\\_2%23incoming-1806597&data=05%7C01%7Cdhmail%40dhsc.gov.uk%7Cce18ac76635c4740463e08da42476f29%7C61278c3091a84c318c1fef4de8973a1c%7C1%7C0%7C637895171806231638%7CUnknown%7CTWFPbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJB](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.whatdotheyknow.com%2Frequest%2Fnhs_voluntary_early_retirement_s_2%23incoming-1806597&data=05%7C01%7Cdhmail%40dhsc.gov.uk%7Cce18ac76635c4740463e08da42476f29%7C61278c3091a84c318c1fef4de8973a1c%7C1%7C0%7C637895171806231638%7CUnknown%7CTWFPbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJB)  
[Til6lk1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2BqJsQnqk8OJh k88HBjTcM7zmXPe1FO91LYpcvxoVMEE%3D&reserved=0](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.whatdotheyknow.com%2Frequest%2Fnhs_voluntary_early_retirement_s_2%23incoming-1806597&data=05%7C01%7Cdhmail%40dhsc.gov.uk%7Cce18ac76635c4740463e08da42476f29%7C61278c3091a84c318c1fef4de8973a1c%7C1%7C0%7C637895171806231638%7CUnknown%7CTWFPbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJB)

I would be grateful if you could provide the figures for 01/04/2021-31/03/2022 for the same groups i.e. Hospital doctors, General medical practitioners and General dental practitioners in England & Wales. Please include both total retirements and early retirements in each group. I looked on the NHSBSA site but their data is unclear. Thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

Nick Flatt

## **Annex B: Request for internal review**

From: Nick Flatt <request-865754-3b8b4eca@whatdotheyknow.com>  
Sent: 29 June 2022 10:32  
To: FreedomofInformation <freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk>  
Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - NHS Voluntary Early Retirement statistics 2021-2022

[You don't often get email from request-865754-3b8b4eca@whatdotheyknow.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Dear Department of Health and Social Care,

You have failed to answer my question, despite the fact that you did answer without preamble last year and the year before. If you read this year's request carefully, you would note "I looked on the NHSBSA site but their data is unclear."

Yours faithfully,

Nick Flatt