



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

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By email

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Our ref: 04/09/ds/1175, 02/12/ds/2054

24 December 2020

Dear Bartholomeus Lakeman,

Re: Internal review of Case ref: No. 950 and 1932 Conclusive evidence, the data to assess the putative flu vaccine / COVID-19 relationship and Proof that PHE research did cultivate and isolate the Covid19 virus

I refer to your emails of 4 September 2020 and 2 December 2020 requesting an internal review of the handling of case references 950 and 1932, respectively, in relation to your requests for information under the Freedom of information Act 2000 (FOI) "the Act".

Your Request case ref: 950

Public Health England (PHE) received your information request on the 04 August 2020.

Under the FOI Act PHE had until the 03 September 2020 to respond to your request or the 1 October 2020, if it extended the time for compliance by an additional 20 working days to allow more time to consider the public interest in disclosing or withholding the information specified, and tell you when to expect a response.

Case ref: 950 Response:

PHE sent you its response on the 14 November 2020 and, correctly, confirmed it did not hold the information you requested. PHE also provided you with advice and assistance under section 16¹ of the FOI Act by including the following link which provides details of flu vaccination uptake in various groups:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-flu-reports>.

¹ <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1624140/duty-to-provide-advice-and-assistance-foia-section-16.pdf>

Your Request case ref: 1932

Public Health England (PHE) received your information request on the 14 November 2020.

Under the FOI Act PHE had until the 2 December 2020 to respond to your request or the 04 January 2020, if it extended the time for compliance by an additional 20 working days to allow more time to consider the public interest in disclosing or withholding the information specified, and tell you when to expect a response.

Case ref: 1932 Response:

PHE sent you its response on the 2 December 2020 and, correctly, confirmed it did not hold the information you requested. PHE also provided you with advice and assistance under section 16 of the FOI Act by including the following link to a publication containing some information on virus isolation:

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

Additionally, PHE directed you towards the editor of Eurosurveillance with any questions or comments you might have about the article.²

Internal review decision

PHE has now conducted the internal review and conclude that PHE sent you its response to the information you requested outside of the statutory deadline for case 950. PHE would like to apologise for this.

PHE sent you its response for case reference 1932 within the statutory deadline. PHE, correctly, confirmed it does not hold the information you have specified in both your requests.

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 calling the ICO's helpline on 0303 123 1113, visiting the ICO's website at www.ico.org.uk or writing to the ICO at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

FOI Manager

² <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1624140/duty-to-provide-advice-and-assistance-foia-section-16.pdf>