

Your request and our response are set out below.

Request

Between the dates of 1st Jan 2019 and 1st of February 2020 how many safeguarding referrals have been received from the following organisations "Department for Work & Pensions", "Centre for Health & Disability Assessments also known as Maximus", "ATOS also known as Independent Assessment Services" and "Capita"?

Response

We cannot identify any referrals from these organisations during this time period.

It is possible that there have been referrals from the above organisations, however recording practices currently limit the information available. Service provider information is captured when it is relevant to a safeguarding enquiry however this information is captured in a 'free text' form and therefore cannot easily be reported due to variances in the way organisations are named. As an example, an ambulance service could be recorded as:

- Ambulance
- Paramedic
- SECAMB
- South East Coast Amb
- South east Coast Ambulance Service

Therefore, it is estimated that carrying out this request would take over 18 hours because each case would need to be analysed separately. Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates that meeting the request would exceed the appropriate cost limit. This 'appropriate limit' is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. The 'appropriate limit' for non-Central Government public authorities is currently set at £450. In relation to staff time, this is calculated at a rate of £25 per member of staff per hour. This effectively equates to a time limit of 18 staff hours.

Under the terms of the FOIA 2000 you are entitled to refine the information that you are seeking. The County Council would then reconsider the request to determine whether it could provide the information within the appropriate limit.

Under Section 16 of the FOIA we have a duty to provide advice and assistance to enable requests to be fulfilled within the law. If you wish to discuss this further or submit another request, please let me know.

The reason this information is captured this way is because in many cases there is no organisation associated with the safeguarding enquiry, so it is not a mandatory requirement. In addition, there are so many different service providers and organisations in any given area that to list them all and keep that list up to date is not yet possible. However, work is underway to improve how we capture details of service providers associated with safeguarding concerns, as well as referrer organisations, which will enable us to report on certain groups in future, such as care homes, home care providers and our statutory partners.

