

3 August 2022

Our ref: NIC-665327-X3T0J

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Information Request – Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000

Thank you for your email dated 11 July 2022 requesting the following information:

“Please can you provide the total annual (last financial year for full years costs) cost of providing the Data Access Request Service (DARS) - This should include staff and non staff costs and any other associated cost in order to run the service.”

We have considered your request and in accordance with S.1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) I can confirm that we do hold the information that you have requested.

The information relating to DARS is provided by our “fees and charges” disclosure in our [Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21](#)¹ with the detail you require appearing on page 83.

For 2021-22, this will be published in our Annual Report and Accounts in the autumn of 2022 as it is still subject to audit. We are therefore withholding this information under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 22 is a qualified exemption. This means that we are required to consider whether the public interest is in favour of maintaining the exemption (i.e., withholding the information), or releasing the information.

As this is part of a routine publication, there are established processes and procedures associated with the production of the information. Early disclosure would result in a piecemeal dataset, perhaps not reflective of the final product. This would also cause unnecessary confusion and disruption. We have also considered whether there is any particular public interest which could only be met by the early release of this information. As disclosure is scheduled the Autumn, we do not find it to be in the public interest to release earlier in the year.

We are therefore satisfied that the public interest is in favour of withholding the information.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-digital-annual-report-and-accounts-2020-to-2021>

Disclosure log

In line with the Information Commissioner's guidance on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the NHS Digital website.

I trust you are satisfied with our response to your request for information. However, if you are not satisfied, you may request a review from a suitably qualified member of staff not involved in the initial query, via the enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk email address or by post at the above postal address.

If following an internal review, you remain unsatisfied with the way in which we have handled your request you are entitled to ask the Information Commissioner to assess whether we have complied with our obligations under FOIA by writing to them at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Email: icocasework@ico.org.uk

NHS Digital values customer feedback and would appreciate a moment of your time to respond to our Freedom of Information (FOI) Survey to let us know about your experience. Please access the survey through this link [here](#)

Yours faithfully,

Information Governance Advisor