



Ministry of Defence

Headquarters Surgeon General Secretariat
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Staffordshire
WS14 9PY

Ref: FOI2015/04074

E-mail: SGSecFin-SecGpMailbox@mod.uk

8 May 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request below to the Ministry of Defence (MOD):

Dear Ministry of Defence,

Recent adverse publicity surrounding the MoD's use of Lariam (Mefloquine) as a malaria prophylaxis and the toll it appears to be taking on the mental health of British service personnel (1 in 16 at a conservative estimate) beg the following questions:

- 1. When was the policy to use Lariam (Mefloquine) last reviewed by the Surgeon-General and his advisors?*
- 2. Who are his advisors in regard to tropical medicine?*

Your enquiry has been treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. I can confirm that the MOD holds information within the scope of your enquiry.

The MOD continually keeps under review its policy on the use of all antimalarial drugs in line with advice from the Advisory Committee for Malaria Prevention (ACMP) of Public Health England. This is a panel of national experts that meets at regular intervals, and continually reviews and updates guidance for travellers from the United Kingdom. There has been a military representative on the Committee since 1993.

Antimalarial drugs are licensed in the UK by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, based on the expert guidance of the ACMP. If compelling evidence is produced from the body of global scientific evidence regarding the toxicity of mefloquine or any other antimalarial drug, then it is likely that the UK license would be reviewed and advice from the ACMP, that the MOD follows, would change.

The Medical Director for the Defence Medical Services is the authority for clinical advice to the Surgeon General, and he is supported by subject matter experts (Defence Consultant Advisors, Defence Specialist Advisers and niche recognised clinical experts) from across all disciplines of medicine. This expertise may be nested in the Regular or Reserve forces, and in some niche areas is provided by civilian experts.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact the Headquarters of the Surgeon General in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for

an independent internal review by contacting the Deputy Chief Information Officer, 2nd Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the FOIA. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Headquarters of the Surgeon General