



Ministry  
of Defence

Defence Statistics (Health)  
Ministry of Defence  
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Reference: FOI [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: 1 December 2014

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 1 November 2014 requesting the following information:

*"I would like to know how many service personnel have been diagnosed with Ulcerative Colitis and/or Crohn's Disease since 2004 (broken down year by year per disease type). How many of those diagnosed since 2004 served in Afghanistan prior to their diagnosis. How many service personnel with Ulcerative Colitis have been medically discharged and how many of these receive a war pension (as from 1-11-2014 and as far back as possible)."*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am writing to confirm that MOD holds the information on the subject you have requested. However, I have to advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit. This is because to locate, retrieve and extract information in scope of your request would involve the manual search of all patient medical records for all members of the UK Armed Forces who served between 2004 and 2007, at least one year of effort.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

The MOD may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you reduce or refine your request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit.

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) I can advise that Defence Statistics hold raw data from which we could consider providing the following information if requested:

**The number of UK Armed Forces personnel who had Read codes relating to Ulcerative Colitis or Crohn's Disease entered in their electronic patient medical record between 1 January 2007 and 1 November 2014.**

From 2007 onwards the MOD introduced a new electronic patient record (DMICP) which has a centralised data warehouse from which searches for codes can be run. Please note that the data between 2007 and 2010 may be incomplete due to the rollout of the electronic medical record system therefore numbers would be a minimum.

If information is entered as free text in the patient record then it is not available in the centralised data warehouse.

The rollout of DMICP began in 2007 and by the end of 2010 was largely completed for the UK fixed base. Data between 2007 and the end of 2010 are incomplete. Rollout of DMICP to deployed and overseas locations is ongoing.

Once UK Armed Forces personnel who have had diagnoses of the specified conditions have been identified we can then consider providing for these personnel:

- **How many of those with codes since 2007 served in Afghanistan prior to code being entered.**
- **How many UK Armed Forces personnel code entered with Ulcerative Colitis or Crohn's Disease since 2007 have been medically discharged and how many of these receive compensation under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS).**

Please note the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) came into force on 6 April 2005. It replaced the previous compensation arrangements provided by the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) and the attributable elements of the Armed Forces Pensions Scheme. Individuals with an injury/illness on or after 6 April 2005 will be considered under the AFCS for compensation. Individuals with an injury / illness prior to this date will be considered under the WPS.

Please contact me if you would like to refine your request or require advice on doing so.

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 me 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 Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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 Freedom of Information Act. 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.gov.uk>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

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