



Ministry  
of Defence

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 4 April 2018 requesting the following information:

*"I would also be grateful to know if there might also be some data available from DMRC about the numbers of personnel which as you relate have been treated there for spinal cord injuries before discharge."*

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that the information in scope of your request is held.

Between 1 January 2007 and 1 March 2018 **85** UK Armed Forces personnel had at least one read code for spinal cord injury entered onto their electronic primary health care record (DMICP) at DMRC Headley Court. Of which, **69** personnel were no longer in Service at 1 March 2018.

The number of personnel treated at DMRC Headley Court for spinal cord injury is a minimum as personnel with multiple conditions including a spinal cord injury may not have a separate read code for the spinal cord injury record on DMICP. Additionally, any data entered as free text only in the patients' medical record will not be included in the figures presented as this information is not available in the data warehouse.

Please note, the reason for discharge may or may not be related to the spinal cord injury.

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it useful to note:

The peak conflict period in Iraq and Afghanistan was between 2009 and 2011 where the greatest number of spinal cord injuries due to conflict was seen. Normal medical practice was for patients with significant injuries to be aeromedically evacuated from theatre and admitted to an NHS spinal cord injury unit first. Once they were stabilised and had received appropriate NHS care, patients were then transferred to the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC) for care that aimed to maximise function through rehabilitation, provide the best quality of mobility and aids for daily living (ADL) available, and to consider future accommodation and vocational options. Patients were discharged from care when their rehabilitation potential had been realised, and the accommodation and vocational situations had been arranged to an appropriate level. The length of this process varied dependant on spinal cord injury severity.

Data are compiled by Defence Statistics Health from the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP) data warehouse. The DMICP programme commenced during 2007 and comprises an integrated primary Health Record (iHR) for clinical use and a pseudo-anonymised central data warehouse. Prior to this data warehouse, medical records were kept locally, at each individual medical centre. By 2010, DMICP was in place for the UK and the majority of Germany. Rollout to other overseas

locations commenced in November 2011. The data between 2007 and 2010 may be incomplete due to the rollout of the electronic medical record system, therefore numbers presented are a minimum.

Medical data is stored in the DMICP data warehouse using read codes.

The following read codes were used to identify spinal cord injury from DMICP:

SJz - Nerve and spinal cord injury NOS

SJz - Peripheral nerve injury NOS

SJz - Cord/nerve root injury NOS

Please note, any data entered as free text only in patients' medical record will not be included in the figures presented as this information is not available in the data warehouse.

DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change. Date of extract 25 April 2018.

Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the most accurate source for demographic information for UK Armed Forces personnel and has been used to identify if personnel had been discharged from Service prior to 1 March 2018.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering medical discharges in the UK Armed Forces and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing: [DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk](mailto:DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk)

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, <https://ico.org.uk>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Defence Statistics Health Head (B1)