



Ministry
of Defence

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FOI2020/01605

27 February 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 4 February 2020 requesting the following information:

- “1. How many armed forces personnel were prescribed Viagra, or similar drugs, during the year and could the figures be broken down by the services and by officers and non-officer ranks.
2. How many armed forces personnel were prescribed antidepressants during the year and could the figures be broken down by the services and by officers and non-officer ranks.”

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 all the information in scope of your request is held.

Between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019, **1,032** UK Armed Forces personnel had a prescription for Viagra or a similar drug entered into their medical record. **Table 1** presents this information by service and officer/rank status.

Table 1: UK Armed Forces personnel¹ prescribed Viagra or similar drugs by service and officer/rank status, numbers

1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019

	All ²	Officer	Rank
All	1,032	230	803
Naval Service³	275	59	217
Army	518	107	411
RAF	239	64	175

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained Regular and Reservist personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per service and rank but only once in the total for the year. Therefore, the sum of the services and the Officer/Rank Status may not equal the total number of personnel prescribed Viagra or similar drugs in a year. E.g. if personnel had a prescription whilst they were a Rank and another prescription whilst they were an Officer, they would be counted once in Rank and once in Officer but only once in the total.

³ Naval Service includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel.

Between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019, **7,769** UK Armed Forces Personnel had a prescription for an antidepressant drug entered into their medical record. **Table 2** presents this information by service and officer/rank status.

Table 2: UK Armed Forces personnel¹ prescribed antidepressants by service and officer/rank status, numbers

1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019

	All ²	Officer	Rank
All	7,769	945	6,828
Naval Service ³	1,500	252	1,248
Army	4,491	465	4,030
RAF	1,778	228	1,550

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained Regular and Reservist personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per service and rank but only once in the total for the year. Therefore, the sum of the services and the Officer/Rank Status may not equal the total number of personnel prescribed antidepressants in a year. E.g. if personnel had a prescription whilst they were a Rank and another prescription whilst they were an Officer, they would be counted once in Rank and once in Officer but only once in the total.

³ Naval Service includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel.

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

Personnel include all UK Armed Forces Regular and Reserve trained and untrained personnel. This response relates to all personnel who had a DMICP record and served between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019 and is not limited to the currently serving population.

Reservist personnel have been included. However, please note that the majority of Reservist personnel are not entitled to MOD medical care, and instead receive their primary medical care from the NHS. Any codes entered in an NHS record were therefore not included in the figures presented for the number of personnel with a Read code entered into their MOD medical record.

It is not possible to identify from centrally held coded information the condition for which the drugs were prescribed. Viagra can be prescribed for erectile dysfunction, but other similar drugs can be prescribed for benign prostatic hyperplasia or for pulmonary hypertension by a specialist. Additionally, some medications used to treat depression are used to treat other conditions. Amitriptyline, nortriptyline and duloxetine are used much more frequently in the management of neuropathic pain than in depression. Furthermore, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) such as fluoxetine, paroxetine, citalopram, escitalopram and sertraline can be used to treat other medical conditions. Therefore, the numbers provided will contain prescriptions for medical conditions other than erectile dysfunction and depression. To determine the reason for the prescriptions would require a clinician to manually review the medical records of personnel prescribed these drugs which would exceed the cost limit associated with FOI requests.

Information was derived from the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). DMICP has a centralised data warehouse of Read coded information. It is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers from which searches can be run.

The following drug names and brands were used to identify prescriptions for Viagra and similar drugs in DMICP:

Avanafil	Spedra
Cialis	Tadalafil
Levitra	Vardenafil
Nipatra	Viagra
Revatio	Vizarsin
Sildenafil Citrate	

The following drug names and brands were used to identify prescriptions for antidepressants in DMICP:

Agomelatine	Edronax	Optimax	Tranlycypromine
Allegron	Efexor	Optimax Wv	Trazodone Hydrochloride
Alventa XL	Efexor XL	Oxactin	Trimipramine
Amitriptyline Hydrochloride	Escitalopram	Pacitron	Triptafen
Amitriptyline Sr	Faverin	Paroxetine Hydrochloride	Trixat XL
Amitriptyline with Perphenazine	Felicium	Paxoran	Tryptophan
Amoxapine	Feprapax	Phenelzine	Valdoxan
Amphero XL	Fluoxetine Hydrochloride	Politid XL	Vaxalin
Aremis	Fluvoxamine Maleate	Prepadine	Venaxx XL
Asendin	Gamanil	Prothiaden	Vencarm
Besitran	Imipramine	Protriptyline	Venlablue XL
Bolvidon	Imipramine Hydrochloride	Prozac	Venladex XL
Bonilux XL	Isocarboxazid	Prozep	Venlafaxine
Brintellix	Lofepramine	Prozit	Venlafaxine Hydrochloride
Cipralex	Lomont	Ranfexine XL	Venlalic XL
Cipramil	L-Tryptophan	Ranflutin	Venlaneo
Citalopram Hydrobromide	Ludiomil	Reboxetine	Venlasov XL
Citalopram Hydrochloride	Lustral	Rodomel XL	Vensir XL
Clomipramine Hydrochloride	Majoven XL	Seroxat	Venzip XL
Concordin 10	Manerix	Seroxat Cr	Vexarin
Cymbalta	Mentaven XL	Sertraline Hydrochloride	Viepax
Defanyl	Mianserin Hydrochloride	Serzone	Viepax XL
Depefex XL	Mirtazapine	Sinepin	Vivactil
Dosulepin Hydrochloride	Moclobemide	Sinequan	Vortioxetine
Dothapax 25/75	Molipaxin	Sunveniz XL	Winfex XL
Doxepin	Nardil	Tardcaps XL	Yentreve
Doxepin XL	Nefazodone Hydrochloride	Thaden	Zispin
Duciltia	Nortriptyline	Tifaxin XL	Zispin Soltab
Duloxetine	Olena	Tonpular XL	

Please note that DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change. Date of extract 11 February 2020.

Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the most accurate source for demographic information for UK Armed Forces personnel and was used to gather information on a person's service and officer/rank status as at the date of prescription.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely,

Defence Statistics Health