



Ministry
of Defence

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Ministry of Defence
Main Building (01/D/06)
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0)30679 84423

E-mail: DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 23 January 2020 requesting the following information:

“Please provide the detail's of the number of UK armed forces personnel who have had a diagnostic read code entered into their electronic health record for a sexually transmitted infection in 2018 and 2019 (full calendar years)

Please break down by service and infection and infection type and by year”

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. Some of the information falls within the scope of the absolute exemption provided for at section 40 (personnel data) of the FOI Act and has been withheld.

Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. In line with JSP200 Statistics Disclosure Guidance, numbers fewer than five have been suppressed to reduce the possible inadvertent disclosure of individual identities. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Tables 1 to 4 display the numbers of personnel with at least one Read code for a sexually transmitted infection (STI) entered in their electronic medical record between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2019. This information is presented by service, year, infection type and infection.

Table 1: UK Armed Forces personnel¹ with an STI Read code by year², infection type³ and infection, numbers

1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019

	All	2018	2019
All	4,099	2,194	2,269
Bacterial	2,716	1,387	1,440
Chlamydia	1,678	839	885
Gonorrhoea	63	33	31
Mycoplasma Genitalium	~	0	~
PID and epididymitis	992	524	524
Syphilis	25	9	18
Parasitic	21	11	11
Pediculosis Pubis	11	6	6
Trichomonas	10	5	5
Viral	1,436	829	841
Genital Herpes	677	393	409
Genital Warts	627	345	324
Hepatitis	68	41	46
HIV	81	59	68
Unspecified	~	~	~
Non-specific genital infection	~	0	~
Unspecified STD	~	~	~

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained Regular and Reservist Personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per year and only once overall; thus, the sum of each year does not equal the total of all years. i.e. if personnel had a Read code for 2018 and 2019, they would be counted once in 2018 and 2019 in the table above but only once in the total for all years.

³ Personnel were counted once per infection, once per infection type, and once overall; thus, the sum of each infection in a type does not equal the infection type, and the sum of infection types does not equal the total personnel with a Read code for an STI. i.e. if someone had Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis they would be counted once each for Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis, once each for Bacterial and Viral, and once in the total personnel with a Read code for an STI.

Table 2: UK Armed Forces Naval Service¹ personnel² with an STI Read code by year³, infection type⁴ and infection, numbers

1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019

	All	2018	2019
All	916	467	516
Bacterial	620	304	331
Chlamydia	390	194	201
Gonorrhoea	6	~	~
Mycoplasma Genitalium	0	0	0
PID and epididymitis	225	108	127
Syphilis	~	0	~
Parasitic	~	~	~
Pediculosis Pubis	~	~	~
Trichomonas	~	0	~
Viral	305	165	188
Genital Herpes	135	73	86
Genital Warts	149	79	85
Hepatitis	7	~	5
HIV	17	11	14
Unspecified	0	0	0
Non-specific genital infection	0	0	0
Unspecified STD	0	0	0

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Naval Service includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

² Includes trained and untrained Regular and Reservist Personnel.

³ Personnel were counted once per year and only once overall; thus, the sum of each year does not equal the total of all years. i.e. if personnel had a Read code for 2018 and 2019, they would be counted once in 2018 and 2019 in the table above but only once in the total for all years.

⁴ Personnel were counted once per infection, once per infection type, and once overall; thus, the sum of each infection in a type does not equal the infection type, and the sum of infection types does not equal the total personnel with a Read code for an STI. i.e. if someone had Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis they would be counted once each for Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis, once each for Bacterial and Viral, and once in the total personnel with a Read code for an STI.

Table 3: UK Armed Forces Army personnel¹ with an STI Read code by year², infection type and infection³, numbers

1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019

	All	2018	2019
All	2,459	1,344	1,353
Bacterial	1,617	839	855
Chlamydia	1,063	534	566
Gonorrhoea	50	26	25
Mycoplasma Genitalium	0	0	0
PID and epididymitis	522	288	267
Syphilis	19	7	12
Parasitic	13	5	8
Pediculosis Pubis	5	~	~
Trichomonas	8	~	~
Viral	877	521	506
Genital Herpes	396	234	234
Genital Warts	379	215	189
Hepatitis	58	36	39
HIV	56	43	47
Unspecified	~	~	~
Non-specific genital infection	~	0	~
Unspecified STD	~	~	~

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained Regular and Reservist Personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per year and only once overall; thus, the sum of each year does not equal the total of all years. i.e. if personnel had a Read code for 2018 and 2019, they would be counted once in 2018 and 2019 in the table above but only once in the total for all years.

³ Personnel were counted once per infection, once per infection type, and once overall; thus, the sum of each infection in a type does not equal the infection type, and the sum of infection types does not equal the total personnel with a Read code for an STI. i.e. if someone had Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis they would be counted once each for Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis, once each for Bacterial and Viral, and once in the total personnel with a Read code for an STI.

Table 4: UK Armed Forces RAF personnel¹ with an STI Read code by year², infection type and infection³, numbers

1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019

	All	2018	2019
All	727	384	400
Bacterial	481	245	254
Chlamydia	225	111	118
Gonorrhoea	7	~	~
Mycoplasma Genitalium	~	0	~
PID and epididymitis	247	129	130
Syphilis	~	~	~
Parasitic	~	~	~
Pediculosis Pubis	~	~	~
Trichomonas	~	~	0
Viral	255	143	147
Genital Herpes	147	86	89
Genital Warts	99	51	50
Hepatitis	~	~	~
HIV	8	5	7
Unspecified	~	0	~
Non-specific genital infection	0	0	0
Unspecified STD	~	0	~

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained Regular and Reservist Personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per year and only once overall; thus, the sum of each year does not equal the total of all years. i.e. if personnel had a Read code for 2018 and 2019, they would be counted once in 2018 and 2019 in the table above but only once in the total for all years.

³ Personnel were counted once per infection, once per infection type, and once overall; thus, the sum of each infection in a type does not equal the infection type, and the sum of infection types does not equal the total personnel with a Read code for an STI. i.e. if someone had Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis they would be counted once each for Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis, once each for Bacterial and Viral, and once in the total personnel with a Read code for an STI.

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

Personnel include all UK Armed Forces Regular and Reservist personnel. This does not include entitled or non-entitled civilians. This response relates to all personnel who had a DMICP record and served between 1 January 2018 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 Defence policy that Service personnel can choose to attend NHS and private sexual health clinics. Therefore, these figures may not represent all personnel who have had an STI within the time period.

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. Medical data is stored in the DMICP data warehouse using Read codes. Data on Service personnel with codes entered on their medical record relating to STIs has been sourced from DMICP.

Please see the Annex A for a list of the Read codes that have been searched for STIs.

The STI conditions for inclusion were identified from the Sexual Health and HIV Activity Property Type (SHHAPT) coding. This is the way in which Public Health England have directed that Sexual Health and HIV activity be recorded both within Sexual Health clinics and within Defence Primary Health Care.

For some of the conditions searched for, sexual transmission is not the only route of transmission, therefore these figures may overestimate the number of personnel with an STI.

Please note that if information was entered as free text in the patient record then it was not available in the DMICP data warehouse and was not retrieved using the search for Read codes.

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.

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