



Ministry
of Defence

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FOI2022/04258
[REDACTED]

26 April 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 29 March 2022 requesting the following information:

I would like to request and gain some information from yourselves, under the freedom of information act 2000:

- 1) How many armed forces personnel who are currently serving have ulcerative colitis?
- 2) How many armed forces personnel with ulcerative colitis were given a medical waiver to join the armed forces?
- 3) How many armed forces personnel with any Inflammatory bowel disease were given a medical waiver to join the armed forces?

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

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. Some of the information falls entirely within the scope of the absolute exemptions provided for at section 40 (Personal Data) of the FOIA 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 are 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.

As at 1 March 2022:

1. **487** currently serving UK armed forces personnel had a Read code for ulcerative colitis entered into their electronic medical record.
2. Of those, **fewer than five** personnel had a Read code entered into their electronic medical record for an executive waiver granting them enlistment to the UK armed forces below entry standards.
3. **Fewer than five** serving UK armed forces personnel with a Read code for any inflammatory bowel disease also had a Read code for an executive waiver granting them enlistment to the UK armed forces below entry standards. Please note this figure includes the personnel identified in part 2.

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

It is not possible from centrally held coded data to identify if personnel are currently suffering with a condition. The Read code for ulcerative colitis or inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) could have been entered into the medical record at any point from the start of service.

From the centrally held coded data it is not possible to determine the reason why each executive waiver was granted, therefore the waiver could relate to a medical condition other than ulcerative colitis or IBD. The decision to grant an executive waiver is an employment decision and this information is not always coded into the medical record. Medical waiver information is only available from the medical record for personnel who joined service. It is possible that applicants were awarded a medical waiver to join, but then decided not to enlist and never joined the Armed Forces.

The figures provided in this response are for all UK armed forces trained and untrained, regular and reservist personnel in service as at 1 March 2022. This does not include entitled or non-entitled civilians.

Reservist personnel have been included. However, please note that the majority of reservist personnel receive their primary medical care from the NHS. Any personnel who were only seen by the NHS regarding these conditions and have not informed the MOD were not included in the figures presented for the number of personnel with a Read code entered into their military medical record.

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 read codes were used to identify ulcerative colitis and IBD from DMICP:

Code	Description	Type
J4	Noninfective enteritis and colitis	Other IBD
J4-1	Colitis - noninfective	Other IBD
J4-2	Inflammatory bowel disease	Other IBD
J4-99	Noninfective enteritis/colitis	Other IBD
J40	Regional enteritis - Crohn's disease	Other IBD
J40-1	Crohn's disease	Other IBD
J40-2	Granulomatous enteritis	Other IBD
J40-99	Regional enteritis - Crohn	Other IBD
J400	Regional enteritis of the small bowel	Other IBD
J4000	Regional enteritis of the duodenum	Other IBD
J4001	Regional enteritis of the jejunum	Other IBD
J4002	Crohn's disease of the terminal ileum	Other IBD
J4003	Crohn's disease of the ileum unspecified	Other IBD
J4004	Crohn's disease of the ileum NOS	Other IBD
J4005	Exacerbation of Crohn's disease of small intestine	Other IBD
J400z	Crohn's disease of the small bowel NOS	Other IBD
J401	Regional enteritis of the large bowel	Other IBD
J4010	Regional enteritis of the colon	Other IBD
J4011	Regional enteritis of the rectum	Other IBD
J4012	Exacerbation of Crohn's disease of large intestine	Other IBD
J401z	Crohn's disease of the large bowel NOS	Other IBD
J401z-1	Crohn's colitis	Other IBD
J402	Regional ileocolitis	Other IBD
J40z	Regional enteritis NOS	Other IBD
J40z-1	Crohn's disease NOS	Other IBD
J41	Idiopathic proctocolitis	Ulcerative colitis
J41-1	Mucous colitis and/or proctitis	Ulcerative colitis
J41-2	Ulcerative colitis and/or proctitis	Ulcerative colitis
J410	Ulcerative proctocolitis	Ulcerative colitis
J4100	Ulcerative ileocolitis	Ulcerative colitis

J4101	Ulcerative colitis	Ulcerative colitis
J4102	Ulcerative rectosigmoiditis	Ulcerative colitis
J4103	Ulcerative proctitis	Ulcerative colitis
J4104	Exacerbation of ulcerative colitis	Ulcerative colitis
J410z	Ulcerative proctocolitis NOS	Ulcerative colitis
J411	Ulcerative (chronic) enterocolitis	Ulcerative colitis
J412	Ulcerative (chronic) ileocolitis	Ulcerative colitis
J413	Ulcerative pancolitis	Ulcerative colitis
J41y	Other idiopathic proctocolitis	Other IBD
J41yz	Other idiopathic proctocolitis NOS	Other IBD
J4211	Chronic ischaemic enteritis	Other IBD
J4212	Chronic ischaemic enterocolitis	Other IBD
J43-2	Enterocolitis	Other IBD
J436	Microscopic colitis	Other IBD
J4360	Collagenous colitis	Other IBD
J4361	Lymphocytic colitis	Other IBD
J438	Left sided colitis	Other IBD
J4z4	Non-infective sigmoiditis NOS	Other IBD
14C4-1	H/O: ulcerative colitis	Ulcerative colitis
Jyu4	[X]Noninfective enteritis and colitis	Ulcerative colitis
Jyu40	[X]Other Crohn's disease	Other IBD
Jyu41	[X]Other ulcerative colitis	Ulcerative colitis
Jyu42	[X]Other specified noninfective gastroenteritis+colitis	Ulcerative colitis

The following read codes were used to identify personnel enlisted below entry standards from DMICP:

Code	Description
DMS9107	Limitation status: 1302: Enlisted below entry standards
DMS9108	1302: Enlisted below entry standards

Only information that is Read coded is available for electronic searches. To identify text or scanned information would require an individual review of each patient record. DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change.

Figures for IBD and ulcerative colitis were based on Read codes recorded on DMICP as at 20 April 2022.

Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the most accurate source of demographic information for UK Armed Forces personnel and was used to gather information on when an individual was serving.

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