

FOI 23/269 – reviews of AI use since January 2020

REQUEST

08 April 2023

Have you since 01/01/2020 conducted any reviews into the use of AI? If so can you publish the findings along with methodology used?

MHRA RESPONSE

11 May 2023

Thank you for your recent FOI request relating to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), specifically whether we have conducted any reviews since 01/01/2020 and whether we can publish the findings of the methodology used. We interpret this request to be in relation to the use of AI in the processing of suspected Adverse Drug Reaction (ADRs) reports to COVID-19 vaccines.

To begin with it may be useful to give you some background to the work we have done in relation to AI. The MHRA awarded the AI contract in September 2020 with the aim to support processing of suspected ADR reports to COVID-19 vaccines.

The AI tool has helped us by reducing the amount of manual coding for each report, thereby saving resource in processing cases and ensuring they are rapidly available for scientific analysis. The tool is not used for assessment of data, but to help ensure that all the information provided in narrative text from the reporter is well captured to support analysis. Reports that have been processed by the AI are subject to routine review and robust quality assessment and reports will be reclassified, if required.

We have not published details on the methodology used for the implementation of AI however throughout the pandemic, the MHRA published details of all suspected reactions reported in association with available COVID-19 vaccines, along with our assessment of the data, in our summary of Yellow Card reporting. This includes those processed with support from the AI software. In the future we hope to publish a paper on the implementation of the AI tool.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of this response; and can be addressed to this email address.

Yours sincerely,

FOI Team,
Safety and Surveillance

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