Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

MHRA
Regulating Medicines and Medical Devices

[redacted]

MHRA

10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
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www.gov.uk/mhra

04 March 2024

Dear [redacted]

RE: FOI 24/175

Thank you for your information request, dated 21st February 2024, where you asked for *"the latest number of deaths from the covid vacine".*

Firstly, I thought it would be helpful to give some context on what the Yellow Card scheme is and subsequently the information we hold. The Yellow Card Scheme is the UK system for collecting and monitoring information on suspected Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs) and incidents in association with medicines, vaccines and medical devices. The Scheme is run by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) on behalf of the Commission on Human Medicines (CHM), and currently relies on voluntary reporting of suspected ADRs by health professionals and patients. It's vital to note that Yellow Card reports are made based on suspicion and are therefore not conclusive evidence that the medicine or vaccine caused the suspected reaction(s).

Whilst anyone can report their suspicions of a safety concern or incident, a reported reaction does not necessarily mean it has been caused by the vaccine, only that the reporter had a suspicion it may have. As such, any information provided should not be used to determine incident rates or be taken as proven side effects. A list of the recognised adverse effects of the COVID-19 vaccines is provided in the information for healthcare professionals and the recipient information here.

The MHRA does not hold information on the number of patients that have a COVID-19 vaccine listed as a cause of death on their death certificate, as this falls outside of our remit. The MHRA do not determine causality of individual reports, and this includes reports of fatalities. You may wish to contact the Office for National Statistics (ONS) here FOI.Team@ons.gov.uk as they may hold this information.

Whilst we cannot give certified side effects and deaths, I can confirm that we do hold information around suspected side effects that have been reported to us via the Yellow Card scheme. This information however is exempt from release under Section 21 of the FOIA

(Information accessible by other means), as this is already publicly available. The MHRA publishes this information in the form of interactive Drug Analysis Profiles (iDAPs) which can be accessed here on the Yellow Card website. You will be able to access a complete listing of all suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) that have been reported to the MHRA via the Yellow Card scheme for all of the COVID-19 vaccines. This includes all reports received from healthcare professionals, members of the public, and pharmaceutical companies. You will be able to find information here about the number of reports of suspected ADRs with a fatal outcome on the overview page for each vaccine.

When reviewing the data within an iDAP it is important to do so in the context of the essential guidance at the bottom of the report to ensure that you do not misinterpret the data. The data shown in these interactive profiles can be very useful in helping to identify possible medicine safety issues. However, this information does not present a complete overview of the potential side effects associated with specific medicines. Conclusions on the safety and risks of medicines cannot be made on the data shown in the Interactive Drug Analysis Profile alone.

Please be aware that vaccination and surveillance of large populations means that, by chance, some people will experience and report a new illness or events, including fatalities, in the days and weeks after vaccination. The presence of older age groups and chronic underlying illnesses make it more likely that coincidental adverse events, including those with a fatal outcome, will occur, especially given the millions of people vaccinated.

I hope the information provided both here and in the iDAPs is helpful, however 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

If you have a query about the information provided, please reply to this email

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you were to remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you would have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please bear in mind that the Information Commissioner will not normally review our handling of your request unless you have first contacted us to conduct an internal review. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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MHRA
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