



Medicines & Healthcare products
Regulatory Agency

MHRA Central Freedom of
Information Team
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU

foi.request@mhra.gov.uk.

[MHRA Website](https://www.mhra.gov.uk)

Our Ref: **FOI2026/00960**

22 September 2026

Dea [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request received on 26 August. You wrote:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I have checked the MHRA's published advertising investigations series and the MHRA FOI disclosure log and have not been able to locate the information below, so I do not believe section 21 applies.

For each of the periods 1 January to 31 December 2023, 1 January to 31 December 2024, 1 January to 31 December 2025, and 1 January to 26 August 2026, please provide the number of occasions on which the MHRA took each of the following steps in relation to the advertising or promotion of a medicinal product indicated for weight loss or weight management, or of a service supplying such a product (e.g., Voy, Juniper etc):

- (a) issued a notice under the statutory determination procedure described in chapter 9 of the Blue Guide (that is, a notice informing a person that the MHRA is minded to make a determination, and inviting written representations);*
- (b) made, or asked Health Ministers to make, a determination as to whether a breach of the advertising provisions of the Human Medicines Regulations 2012 had occurred;*
- (c) referred a matter to, or received an application to, an Independent Review Panel;*
- (d) applied for, or sought counsel's advice on applying for, an injunction;*
- (e) required or requested an advertiser to publish a corrective statement;*
- (f) required an advertiser to submit future advertising to the MHRA for vetting;*
- (g) referred a case to the MHRA's Inspection, Enforcement and Standards Division for consideration of legal action, as contemplated by Appendix 6 of the Blue Guide;*
- (h) referred a case to another regulator, and if so to which regulator.*

Where the figure for any item is nil, please confirm that it is nil rather than omitting the item.

If any part of this request would exceed the cost limit in section 12, please tell me which part, and I will narrow it. I would be grateful for your assistance under section 16 in identifying a form of the request that can be answered within the limit. If you consider any part of the information exempt, please disclose the remainder.

MHRA Response

We can confirm that we do hold the information you have requested. See our response to each part of your request below.

Note that we are engaging an exemption from disclosure under **Section 30 (1)** of the FOI Act, which protects information as part of any ongoing Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities.

We recognise that there is a public interest in releasing information as part of any ongoing investigations early, given the benefits of greater transparency and the public interest. However, on this occasion, we feel that these factors when balancing the public interest are outweighed by the need to protect the integrity of any investigations, and to avoid the risk of reduced compliance from organisations by releasing information early.

A response is provided to your enquiry below for completed advertising investigations.

For each of the periods 1 January to 31 December 2023, 1 January to 31 December 2024, 1 January to 31 December 2025, and 1 January to 26 August 2026, please provide the number of occasions on which the MHRA took each of the following steps in relation to the advertising or promotion of a medicinal product indicated for weight loss or weight management, or of a service supplying such a product (e.g., Voy, Juniper etc):

(a) issued a notice under the statutory determination procedure described in chapter 9 of the Blue Guide (that is, a notice informing a person that the MHRA is minded to make a determination, and inviting written representations);

Nil

(b) made, or asked Health Ministers to make, a determination as to whether a breach of the advertising provisions of the Human Medicines Regulations 2012 had occurred;

Nil

(c) referred a matter to, or received an application to, an Independent Review Panel;

Nil

(d) applied for, or sought counsel's advice on applying for, an injunction;

Section 42(1) – Legal Professional Privilege

This exemption applies when disclosure would contravene the protections in place on legal advice. In this case, the exemption applies to the withheld sections which contain confidential communications for the purpose of giving legal advice.

This section of the FOI Act is not an absolute exemption; rather it is subject to a public interest test. We have considered the application of the public interest test to Section 42 in the circumstances of your request.

There is a public interest that decision-making processes of a public authority should be open to scrutiny. There is a countervailing public interest that staff should be able to seek legal advice, and that lawyers should be able to provide that advice without concern that it should be released into the public domain; this maintains the important principle of legal professional privilege. After weighing the factors for the engagement of Section 42 it is our view that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(e) required or requested an advertiser to publish a corrective statement;

Nil

(f) required an advertiser to submit future advertising to the MHRA for vetting;
Vetting is one of a number of activities undertaken by the MHRA to regulate the advertising of medicinal products. For the period requested, the MHRA asked Marketing Authorisation Holders to submit materials for vetting in relation to medicinal products for weight management on 2 occasions, in 2023 and 2026 respectively.

(g) referred a case to the MHRA's Inspection, Enforcement and Standards Division for consideration of legal action, as contemplated by Appendix 6 of the Blue Guide;
See below

(h) referred a case to another regulator, and if so to which regulator.

Section 12 (1) – Over cost threshold

We are engaging an exemption from disclosure under Section 12 (1) of the FOI Act. This is because we estimate the cost of checking if we hold the requested information or not would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. This represents the estimated cost of at least one person spending 3½ working days (equivalent to 24 staff-hours) in determining whether the Agency holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

Under Section 12(1) of the FOI Act the Agency is not therefore obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing it further. The reason being that to provide a breakdown of figures for the number of referrals as you have requested would require us to search across several mailboxes and records across over 3 years, identify and compile the numbers of relevant complaints, and to perform the relevant data checks. We estimate that to do this would take longer than 24 working hours.

Under Section 16 of the FOI Act we should help you narrow your request so that it may fall beneath the cost limit. We advise that you limit your request to a smaller time period, for example a few months, so we have a smaller number of emails to search through and compile.

Note that Section 30(1) of the FOI Act shall apply to any information relating to ongoing considerations. Note that information concerning referrals may trigger sections of the FOI Act, such as Section 30(1) regarding ongoing considerations of matters, Section 31(1) concerning the prevention, and detection of crime and Section 42(1) concerning legal professional privilege.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

MHRA Central Freedom of Information Team
Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing foi.request@mhra.gov.uk or by writing to: MHRA Central Freedom of Information Team, 10 South, Colonnade, Canary Wharf, London, E14 4PU

Any request for an internal review must be received by us within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please note we are not obliged to provide a review if it is requested after more than 40 working days.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Website: [ICO FOI and EIR complaints](#) or telephone 0303 123 1113.

Re-use of our information

The MHRA information supplied in response to your request is subject to Crown copyright. Information created by the MHRA which is disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act is made available for re-use under the Open Government Licence (OGL) v3.0, except where this is otherwise stated. There are some restrictions on re-use under the OGL and these can be viewed here:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>