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

[redacted]

Our Ref: **FOI2026/00357**

20 April 2026

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FoI) request received on 30 March. You wrote:

> *Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request copies of all internal correspondence (including emails, instant messages, notes, memos, and minutes of meetings) held by Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, regarding the processing of my previous request FOI2026/00232 submitted on 1 March 2026, regarding meetings and correspondence between the MHRA and the organisations Sex Matter and the LGB Alliance.*
>
> *Specifically, I am interested in:*
>
> * *Emails and correspondence discussing the interpretation or scope of the request.*
> * *Internal debates regarding the application of exemptions (e.g., Section 36, Section 40, etc.).*
> * *Drafts of the final response and any related internal briefing notes.*
>
> *I understand that this request is for recorded information and I would prefer to receive this in electronic format. If this request is too broad, I would be grateful for your advice and assistance under section 16 of the Act to refine it.*

**MHRA Response**

We can confirm the Agency holds the information you have requested, however we are engaging several exemptions in relation to personal information contained in the email chain. For ease we have addressed each exemption separately.

**Section 40(2)**

Section 40(2) exempts information in response to a request if it is personal data belonging to an individual other than the requester and it satisfies one of the conditions listed in the legislation. In this case the condition contained in section 40(3A)(a) applies - that disclosure would breach one of the data protection principles, specifically that “Personal data shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner...”.

We do not consider that disclosing this information is necessary or justified in order to satisfy your information request and the requirements of the FoI Act. In relation to this request, we

consider that there is no strong legitimate interest that would override the prejudice to the rights and freedoms of the data subject.

Personal data are subject to UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

**Section 40(1)**

Your name has been mentioned in the context of an internal official asking who the request was submitted by with the details provided in the email on 03 March 2026 at 08:36. To protect your personal information we have withheld this reference under section 40(1) of the Act as we consider responses to FoI requests to be to the world at large rather than to an individual (and indeed we publish on our website all our FoI responses).

**Section 38(1)(a)/(b)**

We are withholding the information under Section 38(1)(a) as releasing it would/would likely to endanger the physical or mental health of any individual and Section 38(1)(b) as releasing it would would/likely endanger the safety of any individual.

As required by the FoI Act the use of this qualified exemption requires the public interest for and against disclosure to be assessed.

We recognise that there is a public interest in greater transparency around the decision-making processes relating to the King's College Pathways clinical trial on puberty blockers. Disclosure could contribute to public understanding of how the Agency reaches regulatory decisions and how internal scientific and regulatory discussions are conducted. This, in turn, may enhance accountability and public confidence in the regulation of clinical trials and medical products in the United Kingdom.

However, when considering arguments against disclosure we must balance this against the overall health and safety of the individual(s) that this information pertains to. It is only fair and proper that we protect these people from potentially being targeted in some way that could endanger their physical and/or mental health. We are aware of several instance over the past 12 months of officials being targeted and harassed as a result of their involvement in the regulatory and decision-making aspects of the trial.

On balance MHRA is satisfied that in this instance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Therefore, the information you seek will not be released.

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

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**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/