Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

[redacted]

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

foi.request@mhra.gov.uk.

MHRA Website

Our Ref: **FOI2026/00721**

5 August 2026

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request received on 6 July 2026. You wrote:

> *Under the FOI Act, please could you provide me with the average time it takes (in days) for the MHRA to evaluate new treatments and drugs for cancer patients?*
>
> *Please could you also share the target average (by days) that MHRA holds internally for evaluating new treatments and drugs for cancer patients?*
>
> *If possible, please cover the latest 12 month data available and any yearly comparisons that may be useful.*
>
> *If any parts of this request may fall under exemptions from freedom of information laws, please redact the smallest amount of information possible (not whole sentences or sections, as is the case here) and label each redacted part with the specific reason for exemption under the act. Please note that this redaction process should not be taken into account when accounting for the costs of carrying out the request.*
>
> *Please note the Information Commissioner's Office guidance that authorities should "Provide as much meaningful information as possible" and "As far as possible, ensure that what you provide makes sense. If you have redacted so much that the document is unreadable, consider what else you can do to make the information understandable and useful for the requester." https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi/guide-to-managing-an-foi-request/responding-to-a-request/refusal-notice/*

MHRA Response
The information requested is exempt from disclosure under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act.

This is because we estimate the cost of searching for and identifying the requested information 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 in order to provide you with the average time in days to evaluate new treatments/drugs for cancer that have been granted marketing authorisations in the last 12 months would require the opening of every marketing authorisation granted in the last 12 months to evaluate if it was a cancer drug and then to evaluate the number of days that it took to assess. As this would run into thousands of marketing authorisation case folders that would need to be opened, Section 12(1) is engaged.

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 restrict your request to a specific cancer drug that you would like this information on. It would also be useful to be more specific in the language used, for example, do you want the time from date of application submission or application validation to the grant of a marketing authorisation.

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 Contact Information 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/