



Medicines & Healthcare products
Regulatory Agency

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Our Ref: **FOI2024/00799**

14 January 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FoI) request received on 12 December. You wrote:

I contacting today regarding the advice given to Wes streeting the Health Secretary regarding the indefinite ban on puberty blockers for people under the age of 18.

It is my understanding that a consultation has taken place and advice has been given. Would it be possible to find out the exact nature of this advice as the terminology used on the government press release is sensationalised and non specific to the field of medicine and care.

It was my understanding that the current position was to approach the use of puberty blockers from a position of neutrality.

After contacting the British Medical Association I have been informed that the evaluation into the Cass Review is underway and is yet to be complete. The Cass Review has already been reviewed internationally and has been found to have several major flaws and if this is the basis of the indefinite ban this is rather concerning

The effect of GNRH agonists are reversible and this has been the case for many years according to NICE guidelines. The science cannot just change overnight without significant evidence. If that is the case can I please see the evidence.

If actions are taking place without the complete evaluation of evidence then this is unconstitutional and against human rights. If this is the case then this is a public issue and must be reported as such.

Can I have the relevant information I am requesting and receipt of my request.

MHRA Response

On 20 August 2024, a targeted [consultation](#) was issued on proposals to make an indefinite statutory order to prevent new patients aged under 18 from being supplied with puberty blockers for the purposes of gender incongruence and/or gender dysphoria, under the care of private or non-UK prescribers.

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Minister of Health for Northern Ireland, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) consulted with representative groups likely to be affected by the proposed order, as well as the independent Commission on Human Medicines for their expert view, in line with legislative requirements.

We can confirm that the MHRA holds some of the information you are seeking. The MHRA holds a copy of the independent expert advice provided by the Commission on Human Medicines (CHM). However, we are engaging an exemption from disclosure under Section 22(1) of FoI Act as the information is intended for publication by DHSC at a future date.

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 this information and that release of the information would provide greater transparency on the outcome of the consultation. However, when considering arguments against disclosure, there is a strong public interest in permitting public authorities, to publish information in a manner and form and at a time of their own choosing. It is a part of the effective conduct of public affairs that the general publication of information is a conveniently planned and managed activity within the reasonable control of public authorities. This will enable the information to be published alongside additional information to aid interpretation and minimise the risk of misinterpretation.

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 at this time.

Furthermore, as the consultation was led by the DHSC, we suggest you contact them regarding the remainder of your request regarding the nature of any further advice given. Aside from the independent expert advice provided by the CHM referenced above, no further information is held by the MHRA.

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.

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