

Correspondence regarding my request to QMUL about the number of FOIA requests on the PACE trial – August 2014

My request on 01/08/2014

I would be grateful if you would provide me with the following:

- 1. The total number of FOIA requests you have received each year since January 2010 which relate directly to the PACE Trial*
- 2. The number of those requests each year where the information sought was provided by QMUL*
- 3. The number of requests each year where the information sought was not provided by QMUL*
- 4. The number of requests each year where the information was provided in part by QMUL*
- 5. The number and dates of the requests which were appealed to the Information Commissioner/First-Tier Tribunal and the outcome of those appeals (with reasons, where the appeal was unsuccessful).*

Thank you for your assistance.

Reply on 27/08/2014

Thank you for your email of 1st August about PACE-related FOIA requests to Queen Mary University of London.

I am pleased to provide the following responses. None of the figures include this present request and these are the basic figures logged centrally. Please bear in mind that most of these requests are multi-part (and some had follow-ups) and that Prof. White receives other enquiries directly, including FOIA requests made for example to the MRC, not to mention the appeals. If taking these in to account the total is over 150 since 2011.

*1. 2010 = 0
2011 = 9
2012 = 9
2013 = 10
2014 = 6*

*2. 2010 = 0
2011 = 3
2012 = 2
2013 = 3*

2014 = 0

3. 2010 = 0

2011 = 3 (+1 where information requested was not held)

2012 = 5 (+2 where information requested was not held)

2013 = 2 (+4 where information requested was not held)

2014 = 4

4. 2010 = 0

2011 = 2 (1 exemption; 1 where some information was supplied and the rest was not held)

2012 = 0

2013 = 1 (0 exemptions; 1 where some information was supplied and the rest was not held)

2014 = 2 (0 exemptions; 2 where some information was supplied and the rest was not held)

5. This information is refused under s.21 of FOIA since it is readily accessible to you by other means by searching

at <http://search.ico.gov.uk/ico/search/decisionnotice> (where you will see that all the Decision Notices, except those from 2010, concern the PACE trial)

and <http://www.informationtribunal.gov.uk/Public/search.aspx> (where you will see that all three cases concern the PACE trial).

And anecdotally:

"PDW [*Peter White at the 2014 Bristol seminar said*].....that he had received 164 FOI's, that he had to do one himself to find out that no."

Obviously the number of requests may have increased by now (Dec 2015).

Conclusion

It is important to note that the total number of *actual* requests appears from the first question to be 34. It is not clear how the figures of "over 150" mentioned in the response or the anecdotal figure of "164" were calculated. Paragraph 27 of a decision notice from 2014 provides the following clues:

"Since March 2011, following the publication of the trial results in the Lancet, QMUL has received 35 requests for information about the trial. These requests have asked for 160 pieces of information. QMUL states that it has never experienced such quantities of requests on any one subject previously or since and cannot see an end to these requests." https://ico.org.uk/media/action-weve-taken/decision-notices/2015/1043579/fs_50558352.pdf

Valerie Eliot Smith
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