



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2014-05868

**Keyword:** Human Resources

**Subject:** Staff with Ankylosing Spondylitis Medical Condition

**Request and Answer:**

### Question

How many:

i) police staff

ii) police officers

Currently serve with the medical condition 'Ankylosing Spondylitis', and how many people have been discharged due to the condition over the last five calendar years.

Please break it down by calendar year for each branch.

### Answer

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit) to provide you the applicant with a notice which states that fact.

It is estimated that the cost of complying with your request for information would exceed the "appropriate costs limit" under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450.

I have been advised by the record holder that they do not hold this information on a specific dropdown or field on their computer system that holds medical notes, therefore, the only way they could retrieve this information would be to look at the narrative notes on every file they hold for any current officers/staff (and only those that would have declared this as part of their assessment). They have advised they have thousands of files so it would not be possible to extract this information within 18 hours as it would take a considerable longer time to complete therefore grossly exceeding the FOI cost threshold.

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, if any part of the request exceeds the cost threshold then the whole request will be excess costs and there is no obligation to answer any part of the request.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice, and the request has therefore been closed.

You may wish to submit a refined request in order that the cost of complying with your request may be facilitated within the 'appropriate limit'. In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, I have considered how your request may be refined to bring it under the appropriate limit. You may wish to refine your request to officers who have retired from the Police Service of Northern Ireland with this condition. These records are held on a different system however are only held from 2013. In relation to police staff PSNI do not hold a similar spreadsheet and would require a manual trawl of all medical notes

Submission of a refined request would be treated as a new request, and considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including consideration of relevant Part II exemptions.

If you have any queries regarding your request or this decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing [foi@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@psni.pnn.police.uk).

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.