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By email

Emmanuel Freudenthal
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Our ref: 25/09/gs/482

20 October 2017

Dear Mr Freudenthal

Re: PHE involvement in Ebola response

Thank you for your email dated 22 September 2017. Your email has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act.

In accordance with Section 1(1)(a) of the FOI Act, I can confirm that Public Health England (PHE) holds some information falling within the scope of a number of your questions.

I have set out your questions below using your numbering which follows from your earlier request.

9 - Please provide all documents with aggregate information about the samples that you have, including the following information: the number of samples in the UK and their nature (swabs, blood samples etc.); laboratory of origin; Date of hospitalisation; Laboratory ID number; Symptom onset; Facility from where the patient was referred; Date tested; Patient age; Clinical chemistry results; Gender; Viral load; Original or follow up sample; Malaria test results; Ebola test result. What class of laboratory they are currently stored in; what institution owns them; what institution manages them; who has access to them; to what end are they currently used.

10 - What personal information on patients (apart from those listed in question #9 above) does PHE's database contain?

11 - Does PHE have a copy of agreements between the UK and the government of the affected countries? If yes, please send them.

12 - What were the "partner agencies" that supplied PHE with samples (cf. your reply to my question #8 on consent in the previous FOI)? Please send your contracts or agreements with them.

13 - What were the companies contracted to ship, store and/or transport the samples? Please send all the contracts with the companies contracted to transport, store and/or transport ebola samples.

14 - What processes did PHE implement to keep tracks of the samples in its possession? Please send any documents that outline those processes.

15 - How many samples, and of what kind (swabs, blood etc) did each of these agencies provide to PHE? From what countries?

16 - Where are the samples that PHE processed and are not currently in the Biobank? For each sample, please provide their location, agency that took them from PHE, date they were given, Materials Transfer Agreement (MTA) or other paperwork, etc.

17 - If any samples were destroyed, please send us the number, location of destruction, date of destruction and SOP.

18 - How were samples transported from the affected countries to the UK? Please send us the contract/agreements between PHE and the transport companies

19 - Please send us the filled tables that researchers have submitted to request samples from PHE's Ebola biobank.

20 - Is the PHE aware of any license or patent applications resulting from the research done on the Ebola sample? If yes, can you provide a list of those applications and the patents/licences that have been granted?

Other than the information previously disclosed to you and the information that is in the public domain - which you make reference to your request - no further information can be made available.

As previously stated, these data are owned by the Ministry of Health of Sierra Leone on whose behalf we provided these diagnostic services. We cannot release these data to you without their permission. We understand that the World Health Organization is currently working with the Ministry of Health in Sierra Leone to analyse these data with an intention to publish a detailed analysis in due course.

I can confirm under Section 1(1) (a) of the Act that PHE does not hold information which would address most of the questions raised. Under the Act PHE is not obliged to create new information in response to a request nor seek it from third parties.

In our response of 22 September we advised that the Ebola virus is a dangerous pathogen and any samples or cultures are managed under appropriate security arrangements to prevent misuse. As such, access is limited to research scientists operating within Biosafety Level (BSL) 4 facilities.

Under the Section 24, *National Security*, exemption of the Freedom of Information Act we must decline to provide any further information on this matter.

If you have any queries regarding the information that has been supplied to you, please refer your query to me in writing in the first instance. If you remain dissatisfied and would like to request an internal review, then please contact us at the address above or by emailing foi@phe.gov.uk

Please note that you have the right to an independent review by the Information Commissioner's Office if a complaint cannot be resolved through the PHE complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner's Office can be contacted by writing to Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Leigh Hopkins

Freedom of Information Officer