Freedom of Information request: 2019/0041 M

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 8th February 2019 in which you requested the following:

Your Request:

Previously you sent me a breakdown of your mental health portfolio in the format of the xls attached. Please could you do the same, or as similar as you are able to provide within the provisions of the Freedom of Information act request, for your neurological conditions for the last 5 years available. I look forward to hearing from you.

Our response:

The information requested, an analysis of UKRI-funded neurological research by condition, over a five year period, is not held. No such analysis has been undertaken either by UKRI as a whole or by individual UKRI councils.

Information that might be relevant to the request would be held, in the form of information contained in awarded research proposals. However, this is not easily accessible and to provide the information requested would require a new report to be developed by UKRI to identify, extract and analyse any information that might be potentially relevant to neurology and neurological conditions or disorders. To develop the appropriate reports and undertake an analysis to identify, extract and validate the relevant information would significantly exceed the appropriate limit of the FOIA.

Section 12 of FOIA allows a public authority to refuse to deal with a request where it estimates that it would exceed the appropriate limit to: - either comply with the request in its entirety or; - confirm or deny whether the requested information is held. The estimate must be reasonable in the circumstances of the case. The appropriate limit is £450 for UKRI (18 Hours*£25= £450).

In considering your request we have developed an estimate of how long it might take to identify and extract the information you have requested for one UKRI council. We have selected the MRC as the only council which undertakes an annual analysis of its portfolio using the UK Clinical Research Collaboration Health Research Classification System (HRCS). The classification system includes a category for neurological research, which would form the basis of any further analysis by condition.

Based on an initial review of the MRC’s portfolio it has been estimated that to develop a new report, which identifies all relevant neurological conditions, undertake an analysis to classify against condition and validate the results would take 55 hours for a five-year period and 26 hours for one year, which would be in addition to the 6 hours already used to provide this response.
To extend the analysis to information held on awards made by other UKRI councils that might also be relevant to neurological research would increase the estimate significantly as this would involve further analysis as the starting point for the MRC report, an annual HRCS analysis, is not undertaken by other councils.

As a new report would need to be prepared and as the request relates to the whole of UKRI we are unable to suggest ways in which the request might be refined to be brought within the appropriate limit.

We have also considered whether there may be other information relating to your request that you might find helpful. Information relating to UKRI council research relating to neurology can be found in the UK Clinical Research Collaboration series of Health Research Analysis Reports.

As explained in response to your previous requests for information on health research spending, this series of reports provides an overview of UK health research spend and an analysis by funder across all areas of biomedical and health research. Information relating to neurological research spending can be found in these reports, while this does not include a breakdown by condition the overall value may be of interest.

The most recent report, UK Health Research Analysis 2014 (https://www.ukcrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/UKCRCHealthResearchAnalysis2014-WEB.pdf) included data from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, the Economic and Social Research Council, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, the Medical Research Council, the Natural Environment Research Council and Innovate UK. The Health Research Analysis has been undertaken four times since 2004.

If you have any queries about this response please contact me, or if you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request a review of our decision, please write to:

 Complaints Officer
 UK Research and Innovation
 Polaris House
 North Star Avenue
 Swindon
 SN2 1FL
 Email: foi@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the review, you may apply to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by UKRI. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

 Information Commissioner
 Wycliffe House,
 Water Lane
 Wilmslow
 Cheshire
 SK9 5AF

Enquiry/Information Line: Between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745
Further information about the Office of the Information Commissioner can be found at http://www.ico.gov.uk/

Yours sincerely,

UK Research and Innovation, Information Governance Team
Email: foi@ukri.org