



How to make a Freedom of Information request to SBRI Healthcare

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides a right of access to a wide range of information held by public authorities, including the SBRI Healthcare programme. The purpose is to promote greater openness and accountability.

Our duty to you

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 requires us to:

- Provide information to you about SBRI Healthcare through a publication scheme
- Provide a guide to this information
- Respond appropriately to requests for information

Before you request information from SBRI Healthcare

Check whether the information you seek is already available. SBRI Healthcare publishes information on this [website](#) and you may well find the answer to your question is already here.

If you request information from SBRI Healthcare that is already published, we will simply refer you to the published source.

Who can request information?

Anyone, anywhere in the world, can make a FOI request to SBRI healthcare.

What can I request?

You can seek any recorded information that you think SBRI Healthcare may hold.

If the information is environmental, we will respond according to the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004. You do not have to know whether the information you want is covered by the EIR or the FOI Act. When you make a request, we will decide which law applies.

If the information is your own personal data, then you should make a subject access request under the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998, and not under the FOI Act.

How do I request information?

Your request must be in writing and can be either posted or emailed to SBRI Healthcare.

For postal requests, please send to the following address:

SBRI Healthcare
c/o Health Enterprise East
Milton Hall, Ely Road, Milton
Cambridge

Email requests should be sent to: sbrienquiries@hee.co.uk

Please write "Freedom of Information" in the subject line.

What information must I include in my request?

The FOI Act requires certain information to be supplied before SBRI Healthcare can respond to your request:

- your real name – we do not have to respond to requests submitted under a pseudonym;
- your address (email addresses are acceptable);
- a description of the information you wish to obtain; and
- any preferences for the format in which you wish to receive the information e.g. electronic or hard copy. We will endeavour to meet your preferences but cannot guarantee that we will be able to.

What you do not need to do:

- explicitly mention the FOI Act, although it may help to do so;
- know whether the information is covered by the FOI Act or the EIR as we will decide this;
- say why you want the information; or
- specify particular documents. You have a right to information, however it is recorded.

How should I word my request?

Comprehensive guidance on submitting effective requests for information is available from the Information Commissioner's Office. However, to frame an effective request for the information you need:

Do:

- do clearly identify the information you want. Be clear about date ranges or timescales. If it is not clear what you are requesting, we may need to seek further clarification;
- do be as specific as possible. If your request is too general, it may be refused on the grounds that replying would exceed the cost limit laid down in the Fees Regulations, which is equivalent to one person working for three and a half days. If this happens, we will ask you to re-submit a narrower, more specific request which could be met within the cost limits and give you advice and assistance to do so;
- do ask questions such as "what" or "how much" as this is much more likely to result in a useful response;
- do use straightforward, polite language.

Don't:

- don't use open-ended questions such as "why". We do not have to answer your question if this would mean creating new information or giving an opinion or judgment that is not already recorded;
- don't base your request on assumptions or opinions;



- don't mix your request with complaints or comments.

What happens when my request is received?

SBRI Healthcare has a legal obligation to reply to your FOI request and must do so within 20 working days of receipt. We will do one of the following:

- supply you with the information you requested;
- inform you that we don't hold the information and, if we are able, advise you who does;
- inform you that your request will exceed the cost limit specified in the Fees Regulations and invite you to submit a narrower request;
- inform you that we hold the information requested but refuse to provide all or part of it and explain why, citing one or more of the exemptions from the FOI Act;
- inform you that we are refusing your request on the basis it is repeated or vexatious; or
- inform you that we need more time to consider the public interest test in relation to your request and let you know when to expect a further response. This should not be later than 40 working days after receipt of your request.

What can I do if I am unhappy with the reply I receive or the way my request was handled?

You can ask SBRI Healthcare for an internal review of your FOI request. When you write to us requesting an internal review, we will acknowledge your letter and tell you how long we think the review will take. We aim to complete internal reviews within 20 working days, although more cases that are complex may take longer. Where internal reviews go over 20 working days, we will keep you informed of progress.

If, after an internal review, you are still not satisfied you can then complain to the Information Commissioner (ICO). Details of how to do this are available at the [ICO website](#).

Full details of how to ask SBRI Healthcare for an internal review will be included in our initial reply to your FOI request. Details of how to complain further to the Information Commissioner will be included in our response to your internal review request.

September 2018