

Redacted Information

Please note that dispenser the information has been withheld under certain circumstances. The following exemptions apply:

Section 38(1) – Health and Safety

In applying this exemption we have balanced the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information. Disclosing dispensing locations of controlled drugs could be used by organised criminals to target those dispensers.

Section 40(2)

Please be aware that I have decided not to release dispenser details where the total number of items falls below five. This is because the patients could be identified, when combined with other information that may be in the public domain or reasonably available.

This information falls under the exemption in section 40 subsections 2 and 3 (a) of the Freedom of Information Act. This is because it would breach the first data protection principle as:

- a) it is not fair to disclose patients personal details to the world and is likely to cause damage or distress.
- b) these details are not of sufficient interest to the public to warrant an intrusion into the privacy of the patients.

Annexes A and B at the end of this letter set out these exemptions in full.

The Remaining Information

A copy of the information you have requested has been published on our website at

https://apps.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/FOI/foiRequestDetail.do?bo_id=7635

Your personal details will be removed from the published response.

Due to the large size of the files we cannot email these to you.

Each monthly data set is large, but can be viewed using add-ons to existing software, such as the Microsoft PowerPivot add-on for Excel, to handle larger data sets. The Microsoft PowerPivot add-on for Excel is available using the link in the 'Related Links' section below.

Once PowerPivot has been installed, to load the large files, please follow the instructions below. Note that it may take at least 20 to 30 minutes to load one monthly file.

1. Start Excel as normal

2. Click on the PowerPivot tab
3. Click on the PowerPivot Window icon (top left)
4. In the PowerPivot Window, click on the "From Other Sources" icon
5. In the Table Import Wizard e.g. scroll to the bottom and select Text File
6. Browse to the file you want to open and choose the file extension you require e.g. CSV

NHSBSA Prescription Services process prescriptions for Pharmacy Contractors, Appliance Contractors, Dispensing Doctors and Personal Administration with information then used to make payments to pharmacists and appliance contractors in England for prescriptions dispensed in primary care settings (other arrangements are in place for making payments to Dispensing Doctors and Personal Administration). This involves processing over 1 billion prescription items and payments totalling over £9 billion each year. The information gathered from this process is then used to provide information on costs and trends in prescribing in England and Wales to over 25,000 registered NHS and Department of Health users.

The data source is the NHSBSA Information Services Data Warehouse.

The time period covered is January 2015 through to December 2017 dispensed prescriptions (inclusive).

This information is derived from products prescribed on NHS prescriptions from English pharmacies and dispensed in the community. The data retrieved from these prescriptions is processed to capture the Prescriber, drugs and drug costs before being summarised where applicable and then held on a database.

Please note this means that if a prescription was issued, but not presented for dispensing or was not submitted to NHS Prescription Services by the dispenser, then it is not included in the data provided.

The data is restricted to items dispensed in England and presented by dispensing organisation code.

The data excludes items:

- * not dispensed, disallowed and those returned for further clarification,
- * prescribed and dispensed in prisons, hospitals and private prescriptions
- * items prescribed but not presented for dispensing or not submitted to NHS Prescription Services by the dispenser.

The BNF_CODE is a 15 digit code in which the first seven digits are allocated according to the categories in the BNF and the last 8 digits represent the medicinal product, form, strength and the link to the generic equivalent product. The NHS Prescription Services has created pseudo BNF chapters, which are not published, for items not included in BNF chapters 1 to 15. The majority of such items are

dressings and appliances, which the NHS Prescription Services has classified into four pseudo BNF chapters (20 to 23).

The BNF_CODE and PRESENTATION_BNF_DESCR reflect the product that was dispensed rather than prescribed.

The ITEM_COUNT shows the number of times a product appears on a prescription form, not the quantity prescribed.

E.g. If a doctor prescribes 28 tablets of Paracetamol. The number of items would be 1.

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Annex A

Section 38 – Health and Safety

- (1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act, would, or would likely to-
- (a) endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or.
 - (b) Endanger the safety of any individual
- (2) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that, compliance with section 1(1)(a) would, or would be likely to, prejudice the interests mentioned in subsection (1).

Factors for disclosure

Factors for withholding

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disclosure would mean staff will be at a higher risk of physical attack from persons seeking to obtain controlled drugs by force or intimidation.• Such attacks could be damaging to mental health as well as physical health.• Patient safety may also be put at risk by the above.
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Reasons why public interest favours withholding information

- I consider that the public accountability in releasing this information is outweighed by the potential detrimental affect on the physical and mental health of pharmacy staff and their patients.

Annex B

Section 40 - Personal information

(1) Any information to which a request for information relates is exempt information if it constitutes personal data of which the applicant is the data subject.

(2) Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if -

- a. it constitutes personal data which do not fall within subsection (1), and
- b. either the first or the second condition below is satisfied.

(3) The first condition is -

- a. in a case where the information falls within any of paragraphs (a) to (d) of the definition of "data" in section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998, that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act would contravene -
 - i. any of the data protection principles, or
 - ii. section 10 of that Act (right to prevent processing likely to cause damage or distress), and
- b. in any other case, that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act would contravene any of the data protection principles if the exemptions in section 33A(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998 (which relate to manual data held by public authorities) were disregarded.

(4) The second condition is that by virtue of any provision of Part IV of the Data Protection Act 1998 the information is exempt from section 7(1)(c) of that Act (data subject's right of access to personal data).

(5) The duty to confirm or deny -

- a. does not arise in relation to information which is (or if it were held by the public authority would be) exempt information by virtue of subsection (1), and
- b. does not arise in relation to other information if or to the extent that either -
 - i. the giving to a member of the public of the confirmation or denial that would have to be given to comply with section 1(1)(a) would (apart from this Act) contravene any of the data protection principles or section 10 of the Data Protection Act 1998 or would do so if the exemptions in section 33A(1) of that Act were disregarded, or
 - ii. by virtue of any provision of Part IV of the Data Protection Act 1998 the information is exempt from section 7(1)(a) of that Act (data subject's right to be informed whether personal data being processed).

(6) In determining for the purposes of this section whether anything done before 24th October 2007 would contravene any of the data protection principles, the exemptions in Part III of Schedule 8 to the Data Protection Act 1998 shall be disregarded.

(7) In this section -

"the data protection principles" means the principles set out in Part I of Schedule 1 to the Data Protection Act 1998, as read subject to Part II of that Schedule and section 27(1) of that Act;

"data subject" has the same meaning as in section 1(1) of that Act;

"personal data" has the same meaning as in section 1(1) of that Act.

Data Protection Act 1998 Schedule 1 First Principle

- (1) Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless-
- (a) at least one of the conditions in [Schedule 2](#) is met, and
 - (b) in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in [Schedule 3](#) is also met.