



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Mr Pring
John@disabilitynewsservice.com

10/11/2014

FOI 4584

Dear Mr Pring,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 15/10/2014. You asked for:-

Further to your Fol response 2014-3714 and the subsequent statement made to me by Edward Davies in the DWP press office on 10/10/14: “We take the death of any claimant seriously. Where it is appropriate, we undertake reviews into individual cases but we do not accept the argument of those who seek to politicise people’s deaths by linking them inaccurately to welfare policy. We keep guidance on dealing with vulnerable claimants under constant review.”

I would be grateful if you could tell me:

1 With respect to these reviews into individual cases, can you please tell me what guidance you use to decide whether a death should be reviewed, and what guidance you use to carry out such reviews. Please forward me a copy of these pieces of guidance. Which other public bodies do you ask for information in such cases?

Please find attached a copy of Guidance for all staff which can be viewed on our Intranet pages, and which sets out the circumstances in which a Peer Review should be considered and a copy of the Guidance for Authors of a Peer Review within the email accompanying this request.

As a Peer Review is an internal document, considering the processes within DWP, we do not normally consult with other public bodies. In cases where there has been ATOS involvement on behalf of DWP we can and have obtained comments and evidence from ATOS.

2 Please tell me, for each of the last 10 years, how many such reviews of individual cases have been carried out by DWP?

National records of Peer Reviews have only been compiled since February 2012. Since that time there have been 60 Peer Reviews following the death of a customer. I can confirm DWP may hold Local and District information prior to February 2012 falling within the description specified in your request. However, we estimate that the cost of complying with your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600. The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the

information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing your requests in relation to information prior to February 2012.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

James Breslin

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central FoI Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745