

Ref. No: 1666
Date: 09/04/25
Subject: Use of Sodium Chloride and Levofloxacin in Ophthalmology

REQUEST & RESPONSE

Use of Sodium Chloride and Levofloxacin in Ophthalmology

I am writing to make an open government request for the following information to which I believe I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

1. **What is your usage of sodium chloride 5% (10ml) units in the last 12 months?**

38

2. **Who have been your suppliers of sodium chloride 5% (10ml) units during the past 12 months?**

Alliance Healthcare

3. **What price does your trust pay for Sodium Chloride 5% (10ml units)?**

Exempted under section 43 FOIA please see below

4. **What is your usage of Levofloxacin preservative free unit dose units in the last 12 months?**

863

5. **Who have been your suppliers of Levofloxacin preservative free unit dose units during the past 12 months?**

AAH/Alliance

6. **What price does your trust pay for Levofloxacin preservative free unit dose?**

Section 43 – Commercial Interests – of the Freedom of Information Act sets out an exemption to disclosure if:

The release of the information is likely to prejudice the commercial Interests of any person. (A person may be an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity.)

Information can only be withheld under this exemption if the public authority is satisfied that to release the information would damage someone's commercial Interests. A commercial Interest relates to a person's ability to participate competitively in a commercial activity

Where a public authority is satisfied that the release of information would prejudice someone's commercial Interests, it can only refuse to provide the information if it is satisfied that the public Interest in withholding the information outweighs the public Interest in disclosing it.

The bias is in favour of disclosure and there will be occasions where Information is released even though it is likely to prejudice someone's commercial Interest. If the public Interest is in favour of disclosure, the FOIA requires the information to be released.

In consideration of this exemption, the public interest test has been undertaken to weigh the public interest in disclosure against the benefits of maintaining the commercial confidentiality of the information. The public interest test is shown below:

| Public Interest Test – Section 43 Commercial Interests | |
|--|---|
| Disclosure | Non-Disclosure |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the accountability of the decision makers and public sector financing • Promoting the transparency of public sector procurement and financing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prejudice the Trust as a purchaser • Prejudice the position of the Trust in future procurements • Prejudice the Trust relations with its suppliers • Prejudice the position of the supplier in future tenders with the Trust and other organisations |
| <p>Outcome – Following the public interest test, the Trust will maintain the confidentiality of the information by applying the section 43 exemption. The information requested in Q3 and Q6 would allow for the price per item to be Known. This is likely to have a substantial impact on negotiations for future purchases of these drugs for the Trust and a third party, and for Alliance Healthcare and AAH/Alliance.</p> | |