

Private & Confidential

[REDACTED]

24 March 2022

Our Ref. FOIR 028 022

Dear [REDACTED],

I refer to your request dated 4 February 2022 made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for records held by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA).

Your request was amended to the following:

Records containing up-to-date evidence-based risk assessments and up-to-date risk/benefit analysis/analyses regarding the imposition of mask mandates in retail and other settings. I want to see the scientific justification for mask mandates in these settings compared to all other settings where there are no mask mandates e.g. evidence that the alleged virus is prevalent in these settings and not others.

Records containing up-to-date evidence-based risk assessments and up-to-date risk/benefit analysis/analyses with regard to the continuing imposition of face mask wearing by children in schools. I want to see the scientific justification for mask mandates in the school setting compared to all other settings where there are no mask mandates for children e.g. evidence that the alleged virus is prevalent in these settings and not others.

Records containing up-to-date reports on the continuing imposition of face mask wearing on children in school settings and on adults in other settings. I want to see the scientific justification for mask mandates in these settings compared to all other settings where there are no mask mandates e.g. reports reporting that the alleged virus is prevalent in these settings and not others.

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I have now made a final decision to grant your request on 24 March 2022.

All relevant reports are included in the documents released. However, the reports are not risk assessments or risk-benefit analyses, but rather sought to summarise the published data and evidence available at the time. These reports encompass a range of settings and population groups, and the publications that underpin the evidence are cited in the reports.

Right of appeal

If you are unhappy with this decision you may seek an internal review. In the event that you wish to do so, please e-mail foi@hiqa.ie. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of HIQA. Please note that a fee of €30 (€10 for medical card holders) applies in the case of an internal review of non-personal FOI requests.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks, from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding, the weekend and public holidays. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

Publication

It is the policy of HIQA to make decisions on non-personal FOI requests, including this decision letter and a copy of the records released, available to the public on our website <https://www.hiqa.ie/about-us/freedom-of-information>. Any personal information relating to you, such as your name etc., will be removed from the decision letter before this happens. This decision letter and the records released under FOI, will be added to our website approximately one week after today's date.

If you have any queries in relation to this decision, please feel free to contact the FOI Administrator, Sean Lynch, on foi@hiqa.ie or 085 8050586.

Yours sincerely,

Conor Teljeur
Chief Scientist

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