



[REDACTED]

15 November 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2021/00450

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 7 October and clarification received 18 October in which you requested the following:

Your request:

Could you please release to me details of any MRC funded research published findings, into human harm caused by SSRI drugs over long term prescribing to patients, covering the results period 1990 to 2020?

Clarification received 18 October:

"Human harm" means to me both physical and mental health injury and damage and suffering caused by prescribed SSRI drugs.

I am directly asking for copies of published findings prior to 2003 AND the Gateway to Research published findings also.

Our response:

I can confirm UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) hold some information relevant to your request. Please see the information below and attached.

In order to identify projects that may fall within scope of your request, MRC records were initially filtered by searching project title, project text and keywords for the terms 'SSRI' and 'serotonin uptake inhibitor'. The results were then reviewed by the MRC programme manager to identify those that may contain information within scope of your request and have reference to harm caused by SSRI drugs over the long term. This produced a final list of 19 funded research projects. A detailed list of these can be found in attachment "*FOI2021_00450 Research into the effects of SSRIs on human health*".

Eight of these projects (noted below as "On GtR") are listed on the [UKRI Gateway to Research](https://gtr.ukri.org/)¹ (GtR) with details on publications and outcomes. Five of the studies (marked below as "On GtR (but still active)") are listed on the GtR but are still active projects and have varying amounts of information available. Final published findings are therefore not held by UKRI but will be updated on GtR once the studies have been completed.

Under Section 21 of the FOIA, information already reasonably accessible, as information on these thirteen projects is already available in the public domain it is exempt from disclosure, however, to aid you in accessing this information the table below and detailed attachment includes a direct link to each project, from which you can then select the 'Publications' tab.

Section 21 is an absolute exemption which means that there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test.

¹ <https://gtr.ukri.org/>

Of the remaining six projects that are not recorded on the GtR, physical files were retrieved and reviewed in detail. Information is not held on the published findings of three (marked below as “Information Not Held”). Copies of final and annual reports for the remaining three grants (G0000744, G81427, and G844279) have been reviewed by the MRC programme manager who has concluded that none of the information held is within scope of your request, as they do not address harm, either mental or physical, caused by SSRI drugs.

Please note that for G81427 only copies of the 1st and 2nd year annual reports are held, the final report is not held.

Project ID	Grant Title	Published Findings/Notes
G0802403/1	Developing methodologies for use in observational studies of drug effects using computerised clinical data.	On GtR²
MR/R00630X/1	Determination of optimal medication to support efficacy of hESC-derived transplants for Parkinson's disease and assessment of side effect risk.	On GtR³
MR/S035761/1	Targeting the serotonergic pathway in humans to treat metabolic disease	On GtR (but still active)⁴
MR/T033320/1	Impact of early life SSRI exposure on neural circuit formation and function	On GtR (but still active)⁵
G81/427/1	Emotional processing and monoamine function	Information not in scope. Interim fellowship reports include detail on anti-depressant and anti-anxiety effects of SSRIs, not harm.
G0200243/1	Genetic clinical and ENdocrine Predictors of treatment Outcome in Depression (GENPOD)	On GtR⁶
G0701421/1	Clinical Psychopharmacology of 5-HT	On GtR⁷
MR/K024280/1	TUNING THE NEURAL CIRCUITRY OF AFFECTIVE BIASES IN DEPRESSION	On GtR⁸
G84/4279/1	An Investigation of the action of 5HT, 1A antagonists on the speed of onset f action of anti-depressants	Information not in scope. This project was looking at drugs targeting 5HT1A, not SSRIs. One study included looking at the effect of targeting 5HT1A to increase the efficacy of SSRIs in rats, but does not detail any harm caused and is looking at acute SSRI use, rather than long term.
G0501223/1	Can we integrate cognitive-behavioural and pharmacological theories of anxiety?	On GtR⁹
MR/K022202/1	Clinical Psychopharmacology of Depression	On GtR¹⁰
MR/L014815/1	MICA: Immuno-psychiatry: a consortium to test the opportunity for immunotherapeutics in psychiatry	On GtR¹¹
MR/P012604/1	MICA: 5-HT4 receptor activation as a novel mechanism of antidepressant action	On GtR (but still active)¹²
MR/S035648/1	fMRI investigation of the neural mechanisms of Emotional Cognitive	On GtR (but still active)¹³

² <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=G0802403>

³ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MR%2FR00630X%2F1>

⁴ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MR%2FS035761%2F1>

⁵ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MR%2FT033320%2F1>

⁶ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=G0200243>

⁷ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=G0701421>

⁸ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MR%2FK024280%2F1>

⁹ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=G0501223>

¹⁰ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MR%2FK022202%2F1>

¹¹ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MR%2FL014815%2F1>

¹² <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MR%2FP012604%2F1>

¹³ <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MR%2FS035648%2F1>

	Bias Modification as an adjunct therapy to SSRIs in depression.	
G9431070/1	Anxiety on acute SSRI administration: effects of treatments likely to accelerate antidepressant response	Information Not Held
G9403437-E01/1	The role of 5-HT2 receptors in the clinical actions of selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors	Information Not Held
MC_U105197215	Structure of medically-important membrane proteins	On GtR (but still active)¹⁴
G9329936/1	Development of functional polymorphisms in the 5HT2a and 5HT2c Serotonin receptor genes.	Information Not Held
G0000744/1	Does serotonin transporter genotype influence the sleep-disrupting effects of SSRIs	Information not in scope. The final report was filed before data analysis was completed. The impacts listed are all methodological.

If you have any queries regarding our response or you are unhappy with the outcome of your request and wish to seek an internal review of the decision, please contact:

Head of Information Governance
Email: foi@ukri.org or infogovernance@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by UKRI. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

If you wish to raise a complaint regarding the service you have received or the conduct of any UKRI staff in relation to your request, please see UKRI's complaints policy: <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/complaints-policy/>

Yours sincerely,


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¹⁴ https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=MC_U105197215