Twitter Thread by Philip Watson

Philip Watson
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State of play with NI CMO situation:

Nov 24 - BBC quote him as saying there were "some sizeable outbreaks associated with gyms"

Initially it was suggested this was a misquote until I managed to track down the video.



Myself and colleagues scoured social media and careerist media outlets for any reports of such outbreaks and could find none. We spoke with many private gyms who claimed to be unaware of any such outbreaks. My colleague emailed Dr McBride & was ignored so I decided to take over.

I emailed him on 4th Dec and 7 days later (11th) having received no response I emailed again informing him that failure to respond to my request for information, that should already be in the public domain would result in a FOI being submitted and

the ICO being made aware.

That would be enough to get a response from his chief of staff a few short hours later. I was told my request would be responded to. I would email again on the 22/12, which went unanswered, then on the 7/1 informing them the next step was a FOI.

This again would get me a response almost immediately. His dept asked for more time to 'get the evidence'. I felt another 7 days was sufficient which takes us to today. They are aware that after 5pm today my communication with them will cease on the matter and a FOI will be made.

I asked Dr McBride the following:

1. Could you share with me the exact data you were referring to on the BBC when you said there'd been "some sizeable outbreaks associated with gyms"?

2. Which gyms have been affected and what are the numbers you are you referring to?

3. What is the totality of the evidence the Executive have been presented with as to why gyms needed to be closed and why indoors sports and classes have been banned?

(There were other questions posed)

This information is in the public interest and should have been provided as a matter of course. It is unclear why it is proving extremely difficult to obtain. It is also power for the course that the careerist media simply took the claim from McBride at face value.

If there have been "sizeable outbreaks associated with gyms" then it should be a very straight-forward case of saying what gyms had these outbreaks, when they occurred and how many people were affected. If they wish to withhold the names of gyms, then locations should be offered.

The definition of an "outbreak" is 2 or more people testing +ve via PCR. A "significant outbreak" is obviously more than 2 and likely to be 'significantly higher'.

According to a FOI to the Scottish gov it is 'near impossible to ascertain when and where someone was infected.'

Information requested

You asked for the data in relation to the number and percentage of COVID 19 infections that have been transmitted or traced back to gyms and exercise classes since the reopening of these facilities on the 31st August in Scotland.

The detail should also include a breakdown by local authority area to highlight where in the country any transmissions are occurring.

Response

While our aim is to provide information whenever possible, in this instance the Scottish Government does not have the information you have requested. It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty where or when a person contracts Covid-19, so it is not possible to provide information you requested.

Yet Dr McBride seems very certain, and adamant, transmissions "associated with gyms" have been ascertained. It is therefore very important this information is released to the public. I will not give up until it is or until he clarifies his claim further.