



North East and North Cumbria

Our Reference HM\North East and North
Cumbria ICB\FOI ICB596

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26 November 2023

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information – NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)

Thank you for your request received by North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) on 31 October 2023 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

NENC ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Tees Valley (which covers the 5 councils that make it up – Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees).

Your Request and our Response

As part of the plans to reduce the elective backlog, NHS England has made a number of policy announcements to enable patients currently waiting a long time for care to choose to change provider and be treated further from home if they can be seen faster.

In order for this choice to be meaningful for all, NHS England have acknowledge that some patients (and their families if providing carer support) will need support with transport and accommodation to support patients to travel for treatment. NHS England have said that patients are able to apply for support under the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme - [Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme \(HTCS\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#). NHS England have specifically confirm that ICBs are the one responsible for approving these requests and they will make them on a case by case basis.

Under the Freedom of Information Act I would like to make a formal request for the following information:

1. How many applications for support under the HTCS were made to your ICB (or predecessor collective CCGs) for each of the following financial years:
 - 2019/20
 - 2020/21
 - 2021/22

- 2022/23
- 2022/24 (to the end of October)

The applications for support under HTCS are sent directly to the Business Services Authority who will approve or reject the application. The applications are sent through to our department once approved so therefore we cannot provide the detail requested above.

2. How many HTCS support requests were approved by your ICB (or predecessor collective CCGs) for each of the following financial years:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of approved claims</u>	<u>Comments</u>
2019/20	103	
2020/21	NIL	No claims processed due to COVID-19
2021/22	139	
2022/23	120	
2023/24 (Apr-Oct)	89	

3. How much did your ICB (or predecessor collective CCGs) collective spend to support HTCS requests for each of the following financial years:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Value of spend on HTCS</u>	<u>Comments</u>
2019/20	£6,063.91	
2020/21	NIL	No claims processed due to COVID-19
2021/22	£8,249.98	
2022/23	£4,976.64	
2023/24 (Apr-Oct)	£2,570.96	

4. If it does not exceed the time limits for compiling the response, and the information is available, please can you confirm how many of the above requests for support under the HTCS were for travel to receive treatment at NHS services outside of your ICB area. Please break this response down by each of the following financial years.
- 2019/20
 - 2020/21
 - 2021/22
 - 2022/23
 - 2022/24 (to the end of October)

Unfortunately we do not capture/hold the information to provide the detail requested.

I appreciate that ICBs have only existed as legal entities since the middle of 2022 but please provide any data that you are able to provide under this request including any data that was collected under the CCGs across the patch as the predecessor organisations.

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the NHS ICB website <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/>.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to the Senior Governance Manager using the contact details at the top of this letter quoting the appropriate reference number.

If you are not content with the outcome your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the North of England Commissioning Support Unit.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

www.ico.org.uk

Any information we provide following your request under the Freedom of Information Act will not confer an automatic right for you to re-use that information, for example to publish it. If you wish to re-use the information that we provide and you do not specify this in your initial application for information then you must make a further request for its re-use as per the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 www.legislation.gov.uk . This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours sincerely

Hilary Murphy

Hilary Murphy
Information Governance Officer