

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria
ICB\FOI ICB828

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By Email

25 March 2024

Dear Applicant

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 20 March 2024 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).

Please find the information you requested on behalf of the ICB as follows.

Your Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I request the following information about the virtual wards capacity held by North East and North Cumbria ICB, subject to FOIA. In the ICB monthly submission to NHSE on virtual ward capacity, the ICB submitted the following:

22nd Sep: 472
20th Oct: 500
17th Nov: 500
29th Dec: 490
25th Jan: 440
23rd Feb: 443

1. Could you please confirm if the provided capacity has declined over the past few months or if this is just a data quality issue?
2. If capacity is in decline, could you please confirm the reasons/issues or challenges that resulted in reduced capacity?

3. Could you please confirm if the ICB has a trajectory date for meeting the NHSE target of 40-50 virtual ward beds per 100,000 population and if so, over what period of time?

Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB does hold the information requested.

The capacity plan was revised following a request in November 2023, from one of the Foundation Trusts (FTs) for a reduction in their trajectories following an in-house review of their virtual wards programme. The request was submitted by the ICB on behalf of the FT to NHSE for approval. The reduction was not reflected in the national reporting until December 2023.

The ICB is focused on improving the utilisation rate within their current virtual ward programme with the aim of achieving 80% utilisation. Plans are in development for 2024/2025 towards optimising the potential of virtual wards in line with the national ambition.

In accordance 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 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 review, you do have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. 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

S Davies

S Davies
Information Governance Officer