

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria
ICB\FOI ICB771

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08 March 2024

By Email

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 15 February 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

We are keen to understand the extent to which diagnostic tests for heart failure are being used in Community Diagnostic Hubs. This information is to be used as part of our campaign to improve early diagnosis and uptake of NICE guidance, and positively benefit patient outcomes.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

Availability of NT-proBNP testing

- How many Community Diagnostic Centres are currently operational in your area?
- Is NT-proBNP testing for suspected heart failure currently available within local Community Diagnostic Centres? (please specify if any local Community Diagnostic Centres do not offer NT-proBNP testing)

- If NT-proBNP testing for suspected heart failure is not currently available, are there any plans to introduce it in future?

Testing Volume

- How many NT-proBNP blood tests have been performed by the local Community Diagnostic Centre between January 2021 to August 2023?
- How many BNP blood tests have been performed by the local Community Diagnostic Centre between January 2021 to August 2023?
- How many patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure have accessed the local Community Diagnostic Centre between January 2021 to August 2023?

Guidelines

- What guidelines are in place for the local Community Diagnostic Centre to follow in relation to administering BNP and or NT-proBNP tests for patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure?
- What referral pathways should be followed by the local Community Diagnostic Centre in relation to patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure?

Targets/metrics

- What assessment has the local Community Diagnostic Centre made of local population need and the likely demand for BNP and/or NT-proBNP testing for patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure?
- Based on local demographics, what assessment has the local Community Diagnostic Centre made of the number of patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure that should be seen by the centre on an annual basis?

Scaling up

- What assessment has the local Community Diagnostic Centre made of the need to increase access to BNP and/or NT-proBNP testing – including projections of growing need and increases in the number of people at risk of heart failure?
- What assessment has been made of the barriers that may impact the ability of local Community Diagnostic Centres to meet future demands for access to BNP and/or NT-proBNP testing?
- What assessment has been made of additional resources required by local Community Diagnostic Centres to meet rising demand for BNP and/or NT-proBNP testing over the next 12 months; 18 months; and 5 years?

- What resource has been allocated to local Community Diagnostic Centres for the acquirement of point of care testing capabilities and administration of BNP and/or NT-proBNP tests?

I would like you to provide this information in the following format:

- In an Excel spreadsheet with information broken down by each CDC in your area

Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB holds some of the information you have requested.

In response to the first question about the number of CDCs - we currently have seven CDC sites, four of these are hubs and three are spokes.

We have checked the data and none of our CDCs are offering BNP or NTpro- BNP testing, these tests are offered in the acute sites as this is the current heart failure pathway.

Regarding the rest of the information about the specific tests and the number of tests this information will need to come from the Trusts running the CDCs as follows:

- *Tees Valley – North and South Tees, contact Charlotte Bourke at NHS England - england.contactus@nhs.net*
- *Bishop Auckland – Richard Morris at County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust*
- *Blaydon – Michael Graham at Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust*
- *Penrith – Yvonne Fairburn at North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust*

The Trust contact details are as follows:

NENC Acute Hospital FTs	Email
<i>County Durham & Darlington NHS FT</i>	<i>cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net</i>
<i>Gateshead Health NHS FT</i>	<i>ghnt.foi.enquiries@nhs.net</i>
<i>North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT</i>	<i>foirequest@cumbria.nhs.uk</i>
<i>North Tees & Hartlepool NHS FT</i>	<i>foi@nth.nhs.uk</i>
<i>Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT</i>	<i>foi@northumbria.nhs.uk</i>
<i>South Tees Hospitals NHS FT</i>	<i>foi@stees.nhs.uk</i>
<i>South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT</i>	<i>stsft.freedomofinformation@nhs.net</i>
<i>The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT</i>	<i>nuth.freedom.information@nhs.net</i>

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

Pamela Coxon

Pamela Coxon
Information Governance Officer