

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\  
FOI ICB 24-113

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By Email

18 June 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 13 June 2024 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (the ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley (which covers the five local authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees).

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

**Your Request**

1. Please would you share with us your current medicines optimisation (or equivalent) team structure?
2. Please would you share with us your current medicines optimisation (or equivalent) team roles and functions?
3. Is there any further staff reorganisation planned in the financial year 2024/25 that may change your current medicines optimisation (or equivalent) team structure?

**Our Response**

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

1. 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. However, it is exempt from disclosure because it is intended for future publication. It is considered it is reasonable to withhold the requested

information prior to publication because structures will once finalised and approved for publication following the conclusion and review of ICB2.0. Job descriptions are available for some posts but not all and may be subject to change depending on employing organisation and ongoing HR processes.

We believe that following the established date of publication is sensible, in line with accepted practices, and fair to all concerned. It is acceptable to manage the availability of this information by planning and controlling its publication, as the timetable for publication enables internal consideration of the information prior to its public release.

When considering the application of this exemption we are required to assess the public interest in withholding or disclosing the requested information. There is evidently a public interest in the ICB's structure however this is best served by preventing the disclosure of that information ahead of the ICB's predetermined timescale. It is considered that the public interest is to enable the ICB to finalise, approve and publish this information in the near future. We would therefore argue the public interest is adequately served by the existing publication date, pursuant to the ICB's existing intentions.

Therefore, on this occasion, we consider the public interest in withholding the requested information outweighs the public interest in providing the requested data at this time.

2. As per our response to question 1 the roles and functions of individuals in the team are included in job descriptions only. These remain confidential at this time, due to ongoing HR process following ICB 2.0 and NECS ICB review. Overall team functions are:
  - To support NENC ICB in delivery of its vision to get the best outcomes from health services in the North East and North Cumbria in its use of medicines. We will do this by:
    - Focus NHS contribution on clinical priorities which have the greatest impact on health and wellbeing and help to reduce health inequalities,
    - Provide overarching principles for the use of medicines in the development, implementation and maintenance of integrated care,
    - To support the achievement of longer healthier lives, fairer outcomes, providing the best start in life and improving health and care services.
3. No further staff reorganisation that may change the current team structure is planned during the financial year 2024/25.

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](http://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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) . This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours sincerely

*S Davies*

**S Davies**  
**Information Governance Officer**