

Our Reference

HM\ North East & North
Cumbria ICB\ FOI ICB227

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Your Reference

16 February 2023

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

Thank you for your request received by North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) on 22 January 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.

For information Clinical Commissioning Groups ceased to exist on 30 June 2022. Services that were previously delivered by the CCG are now being delivered by the successor organisation NHS North East and North Cumbria (ICB).

Details of Request

I would like a detailed response as to when the ICB are going to review the VBC policy to ensure that the access to fertility treatment is in line with the standards outlined by the Women's health strategy?

Also details of what these changes are going to be and when they will take effect?

Response

The Women's Health Strategy (August 2022) sets out a 10-year ambition, to improve health outcomes for women, whilst radically improving the way in which the health and care system engage and listen to what women want and need. Fertility is a significant element of this strategy.

There will be a focus on:

- 1) Removal of non-clinical access criteria to fertility treatment, such as one partner having a child from a previous relationship, to create more equality in access to fertility services.*
- 2) Same sex-couples – The strategy recognises that the interpretation and implementation by the NHS of the access criteria for female same-sex couples has been variable, placing greater financial burdens on female same-sex couples. The strategy sets out to relieve those additional burdens, so that there is no requirement for self-funding and the NHS treatment pathway for female same-sex*

couples will start with 6 cycles of artificial insemination, prior to accessing IVF services if necessary.

The North East and North Cumbria Value Based Clinical Commissioning Policy Steering Group, understand that this work is ongoing, and as such, will await further guidance from NHSE and NICE, prior to making any amendments to the current VBC Policy. It is expected that this work will conclude during 2024.

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.gov.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