

Our Reference     North East and North Cumbria  
ICB\FOI ICB788

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Applicant  
By Email

05 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 Freedom of Information (FOI) request received by the North East and the North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) on 23 February 2024.

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).

We have dealt with your request in accordance with your “right to know” under section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (subsequently referred to as FOIA2000) which entitles you to be provided with information “held” by a public authority unless an appropriate exemption applies.

**Details of Request and Response**

1. I would like to know if your ICB has commissioned a Virtual Wards system?

*Virtual Wards is a national two-year programme commissioned by NHS England with funding devolved into FT baselines lines via ICBs. ICBs are responsible for performance oversight with regards to virtual ward bed capacity and utilisation rates at provider level and therefore not commissioned locally.*

2. If so, could you please advise the commencement and the end date of the agreement?

*The National Programme comes to an end on 31 March 2024. It is anticipated that virtual wards will continue as 'business as usual' from April 2024, and to be included in FT baseline budgets via ICB allocations (awaiting National Guidance).*

3. What budget was allocated to the Virtual Wards system?

*Funding was set nationally with allocations to FRs based on a weighted population scale. The total value for the national two-year funded programme for this ICB totalled around £25m.*

4. Who are the Virtual Wards leads at the ICB and what are their contact details?

*Tom Dunkerton - [T.dunkerton@nhs.net](mailto:T.dunkerton@nhs.net)*

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 make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to the Senior Information Governance Officer 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](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

*Hilary Murphy*

**Hilary Murphy**  
**Information Governance Officer**