

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 24–284

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By Email

31 October 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 11 October 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

I am seeking information on 'Independent Investigations' please as a member of the public I seek information from your trust. NHS England has advised through a similar FOI that they only hold data directly related to NHS England cases not individual trusts so have advised me to make FOI to individual trusts & ICBS for the information they would not hold. So, can you kindly review my Freedom of Information request for information which I am seeking as a member of the public.

The following questions I would like you to answer please under 'Freedom of Information Act'.

1. Since 2014 how many independent investigations were sanctioned by your ICB and how many of those sanctioned were allocated to specifically to an organisation called 'NICHE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CONSULTING LIMITED', please?
2. How many investigations carried out by Niche since start of 2014 were 'Paediatric' cases please?

3. Please can you tell me the total ICB spend on NICHE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CONSULTING LIMITED by financial year from 2014 to date. For the current financial year please just give me the total spend so far.

NHS England has provided a 10-year breakdown only for NHS England held data. They have stated this doesn't include individual trust & ICBS as each one runs as their own entity so I must contact the trust/ICB myself making a freedom of information request seeking data from them. So, I seek data specific to your trust please.

To clarify, I would like this information from July 2022, when NENC ICB came into being.

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. One independent investigation was sanctioned by NENC ICB. This was allocated to Niche Health and Social Care Consulting Limited (Niche).
2. No investigations carried out by Niche were paediatric related.
3. The ICB has paid £28,950 to Niche in the 2024/25 financial year. There was nothing paid in earlier financial years.

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