

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 26-066

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

27 May 2026

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 on 15 May 2026 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, Newcastle Gateshead, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley.

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

Your Request

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) concerning NHS funding frameworks, and patient access to specialist assessment and treatment for complex trauma and dissociative disorders, such as Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) – a current mental health 'postcode lottery'.

Public Interest Context & Purpose of Request

This request seeks vital transparency regarding how local healthcare systems commission services for patients navigating severe, trauma-related conditions. Equitable access to specialist trauma-informed care is a fundamental matter of health equality and human rights.

In keeping with the statutory purpose of the FOIA and the NHS's overarching commitment to transparency, the disclosure of data regarding Individual Funding Requests (IFRs) and Out-of-Area Placements (OAPs) is essential. Clarifying these pathways will support researchers and policymakers in mapping local commissioning parity.

Information requested

Clarification regarding Section 21 (Information Accessible by Other Means):

www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk 

NorthEastandNorthCumbriaNHS 

NENC_NHS 

For Part 1, I am requesting direct “Yes/No” answers to factual questions regarding your internal clinical commissioning processes. Because the application of generic mental health policies to specific complex conditions is rarely explicit in published documents, providing direct Yes/No answers will satisfy this request without requiring document retrieval or website redirection.

Part 1: Clinical Decision-Making Frameworks

Please provide a “Yes” or “No” answer to the following six questions regarding how the ICB assesses funding for Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) and other dissociative conditions:

1. Does the Integrated Care Board (ICB) hold a written policy, clinical pathway, or bespoke criteria specifically tailored for assessing funding requests for dissociative disorders? (Yes/No)
2. If no, are funding requests for dissociative disorders evaluated solely against the ICB’s generic IFR “clinical exceptionality” policy? (Yes/No)
3. When evaluating funding requests for dissociative disorders, does the ICB explicitly require clinical input or panel representation from a specialist with formal expertise in complex trauma and dissociation? (Yes/No)
4. When evaluating funding requests for dissociative disorders, does the ICB apply a specific clinical effectiveness and/or cost-effectiveness criterion to the decision? (Yes/No)
5. Does the ICB explicitly classify specialist treatments for dissociative disorders as a “Low Priority” treatment, or include them within a “Procedures of Limited Clinical Value” (PLCV) or “Not Routinely Commissioned” policy list? (Yes/No)
6. Does the ICB currently hold a block contract or formal commissioning arrangement with a local NHS mental health trust that specifically includes a dedicated, specialist diagnostic and treatment pathway for Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)? (Yes/No)

Part 2: IFR Statistics & Specialist Provider Approvals (Time-period: 1 July 2022 – 1 May 2026)

Section 11 (Format of Disclosure): Under Section 11(1) of the FOIA, I formally request that this data be provided in an electronic spreadsheet format (.xlsx or .csv). ICO's statutory guidance on Section 11 states: providing tabular data in an un-editable PDF when a spreadsheet is requested does not satisfy Section 11 obligations. Please provide the following data fields, structured with separate columns for the following years:

- 2022 (1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022)
- 2023 (1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023)
- 2024 (1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024)
- 2025 (1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025)
- 2026 (1 January 2025 to 1 May 2026)

Assessment and Treatment Data:

7. Total number of IFR/Prior Approval requests received for specialist dissociative disorder assessments.
8. Total number of these assessment requests approved.
9. Total number of IFR/Prior Approval requests received for specialist dissociative disorder treatments.
10. Total number of these treatment requests approved.
 - a. Common reasons stated when IFR/Prior Approval requests for specialist dissociative disorder assessments and/or treatments are refused funding.

Funded Specialist Providers:

11. Of the approved treatment requests identified in Question 10, please provide a numerical breakdown of how many were funded for the following specialist independent clinics and NHS services:
- Clinic for Dissociative Studies (CDS)
 - CTAD Clinic / Cheshire Psychology
 - The Pottergate Centre
 - South London and Maudsley (SLaM) Trauma and Dissociation Service (TDS)
 - Other external/independent providers (grouped total)

Further Data:

12. Total combined number of IFR/Prior Approval requests received across ALL medical and mental health conditions.
13. Total combined number of IFR/Prior Approval requests approved across ALL medical and mental health conditions.

Guidance for Processing and Statutory Exemptions:

Section 40(2) (Personal Data): If any exact figure in Part 2 falls between 1 and 4, and you believe disclosure risks identifying a patient, please apply standard statistical disclosure control by using the symbol "<5" for that specific cell. Do not refuse the wider request.

Section 12 (Cost Limit): For questions 12 and 13, please provide the top-level aggregate figures exactly as they are recorded in your central reporting system. There is no need to manually review files to separate "IFRs" from standard "Prior Approvals." If compiling any single data point still exceeds the Section 12 cost limit, please omit only that specific data field and provide the remaining information in the requested spreadsheet format, in accordance with your Section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance.

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. Yes
2. Not applicable as the ICB responded yes to question 1.
3. Yes
4. No
5. No
6. Yes
7. Please refer to the attached spreadsheet for total number of IFR/Prior Approval requests received for specialist dissociative disorder assessments. Please note also that there is no clear distinction made between request for assessment and request for treatment.
8. Zero requests were approved.
9. Please refer to the response to question 7.
10. Please refer to the response to question 8.
 - a. The NHS commissioned mental health providers for the specialist diagnostic and treatment for dissociative identity disorder agrees to provide the service locally.

11. Please refer to the response to questions 8 and 10a.
12. IFR/Prior Approval requests received across ALL medical and mental health conditions are detailed in the attached spreadsheet.
13. IFR/Prior Approval requests approved across ALL medical and mental health conditions are detailed in the attached spreadsheet. Please note that all prior approvals numbers are approved.

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 Information 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 ICB's complaints procedure.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or 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 faithfully

Information Governance Support Officer

**Information Governance Support Officer
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board**