



North East and North Cumbria

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria
ICB\FOI ICB708

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9 February 2024

By Email

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 16 January 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.

Your Request

The information we are requesting is:

- The number of doctors currently registered/approved to receive payment for undertaking MHA assessments?
- Do you hold a contract with any of these doctors/companies for undertaking a set number of MHA assessments (as opposed to spot payments for each assessment undertaken)?
- Do you capture the total number of assessments as opposed to number of claims (as one assessment may give rise to claims from two doctors)? If so, what was the total number of assessments in 2022 and what was the total number of assessments in 2023?
- How many claims for payment for MHA assessments were received from doctors relating to assessments undertaken in 2022? If different, how many claims for MHA assessments were paid to doctors for assessments undertaken in 2022?

- How many claims for payment for MHA assessments were received from doctors relating to assessments undertaken in 2023? If different, how many claims for MHA assessments were paid to doctors for assessments undertaken in 2022?
- Do you make use of the s12 app? If so, approximately what % of doctors' claims are made through this app?
- In 2023 what was the number of claims made in relation to patients who are registered with a GP in your geography but were assessed within the boundaries of another ICB (out of area patients)?
- In 2023 what was the number of claims made in relation to patients registered with a GP within the boundaries of another ICB but currently located within your geography (assessments undertaken under reciprocal arrangements)?
- Where doctors undertake MHA assessments what is the standard fee (in 2023) you pay them?
- Do you make payment to the doctor where an assessment cannot be completed (but the doctor attends the arranged location)? (if so, is this at the same rate?)
- Do you make payment for mileage incurred to undertake assessments? If so, what is the rate (in 2023)?
- Is the same mileage rate paid to doctors under contract (if you have any) as for ad hoc assessments?

If there is any other information that you believe would help to contextualise the above or provide greater clarity, this would be very gratefully received and will hopefully ensure the resulting output (which we are happy to share with you) will be more useful.

Our Response

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.

- NENC ICB holds information from April 2023 on the number of doctors approved to receive payment for undertaking MHA assessments. This number is 188 doctors.
- There is no contract held with any of these doctors/companies for undertaking a set number of MHA assessments; they are all spot payments.
- NENC ICB does not capture assessment totals, only claim totals.
- In the 2022/23 financial year, 4855 claims were paid and 110 were unpaid.
- For financial year 2023/24 (year to date), 2915 claims were paid and 218 were unpaid.
- NENC ICB does make use of the s12 app. 48% of doctors' claims are made through this app.
- NENC ICB does not capture information on the number of claims made in relation to patients who are registered with a GP the NENC ICB geography but were assessed within the boundaries of another ICB (out of area patients). On this occasion it is not possible to provide the requested information. In line with your rights under section 1(1)(a) of the Act to be informed whether information is held, we confirm the ICB does not hold any of the information requested.
- NENC ICB does not capture information on the number of claims made in relation to patients registered with a GP within the boundaries of another ICB but currently located within the NENC ICB geography (assessments undertaken under reciprocal arrangements). On this occasion it is not possible to provide the requested information. In line with your rights under section 1(1)(a) of the Act to be informed whether information is held, we confirm the ICB does not hold any of the information requested.
- Where doctors undertake MHA assessments, the claim rate differs depending on locality:

North Cumbria – 8AM – 5PM = £230, 5PM – 1AM = £250, 1AM – 8AM = £300

Northumberland – £186.59

Newcastle/Gateshead – £186.59

North Tyneside – £186.59

South Tyneside – £186.59

Sunderland – claims are made through Sunderland City Council

County Durham – £173.37

Tees Valley – £173.37

The North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) does not hold the records which you have sought for Sunderland ICB Place. However, we have determined the records are held by Sunderland City Council. In accordance with our duty under s.16 of the FOIA to provide reasonable advice and assistance to an individual requesting information, we have provided the FOI email address for the Council to make your request freedom.information@sunderland.gov.uk

- Doctors are paid full fee if they attend an assessment, but the assessment cannot be completed.
- Payments are made for mileage incurred to undertake assessments. Rates vary dependent on NENC ICB place and are listed below.

North Cumbria – £0.45 per mile

Northumberland – £0.24 per mile

Newcastle/Gateshead – £0.24 per mile

North Tyneside – £0.24 per mile

South Tyneside – £0.24 per mile

Sunderland – claims are made through Sunderland City Council

County Durham – £0.40 per mile

Tees Valley – £0.40 per mile

The North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) does not hold the records which you have sought for Sunderland ICB Place. However, we have determined the records are held by Sunderland City Council. In accordance with our duty under s.16 of the FOIA to provide reasonable advice and assistance to an individual requesting information, we have provided the FOI email address for the Council to make your request freedom.information@sunderland.gov.uk

- On this occasion it is not possible to provide the requested information. In line with your rights under section 1(1)(a) of the Act to be informed whether information is held, we confirm the ICB does not hold any of the information requested. NENC ICB is unaware of any payments to doctors under contract.

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

Yours sincerely

S Davies

S Davies
Information Governance Officer