

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 26-099

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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Sunderland
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By Email

9 June 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 29 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

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

1. If your Talking Therapy Programme is utilizing an AI software and in what capacity.
2. The number of patients who have been treated under a scheme of therapy that involves a communication exchange including the contribution of an Artificial Intelligence system in 2025 and 2026.
3. Please break down the number of users into the following classes:
 - a. age
 - b. ethnicity
 - c. nationality
 - d. genderIf the numbers are less than 5, please merge the figures for 2025 and 2026.
4. The name of the company providing the AI software(s) mentioned in 1 and 2. Please also tell me the name of the system (ex. ChatGPT, Claude, etc).
5. The value of the contract between the AI company and the NHS trust.
6. Investigations, reports and other similar documents that look into:
 - a. the clinical effectiveness of therapy undergone by patients using the therapy mentioned in 1 and 2 above,

- b. any potential risks from the therapy mentioned in 1 and 2 above.
7. The current waiting list for an appointment with a therapist within your NHS Talking Therapy service. I would like to know how many people are currently waiting for a first appointment and how long would a new patient wait if they got referred today.
8. The current waiting list for an appointment with a psychiatrist. I would like to know how many people are currently waiting for a first appointment and how long would a new patient wait if they got referred today.

I would like you to provide the information in the following format: Word or Excel file.

Our Response

1. Three of the talking therapies providers contracted by NENC ICB utilise AI software as digital front doors. Other providers may use this software to support with administrative tasks too, this is not stipulated or required in our NHS contracts.
2. We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB on this occasion is not able 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. However, we have determined that the information is held by the acute and mental health hospital NHS foundation trusts (FTs) and independent providers within the North East and North Cumbria region.

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 contacts for those foundation trusts and website addresses for the independent provider.

Area	Provider and Area	Contact
North Cumbria	Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS FT (CNTW)	foi@cntw.nhs.uk
Northumberland	CNTW (Mental Health Matters subcontract)	foi@cntw.nhs.uk
North Tyneside	Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT	foi@northumbria.nhs.uk
Newcastle	Vita	Vita Health Group
Gateshead	South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT	stsft@infreemation.co.uk
South Tyneside	South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT	stsft@infreemation.co.uk
Sunderland	CNTW (lead alliance provider)	foi@cntw.nhs.uk
Durham and Darlington	Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS FT	tewv.foi@nhs.net
Teesside	Impact (lead provider)	Impact

3. Please refer to the response to question 2.
4. Please refer to the response to question 2.
5. Please refer to the response to question 2.
6. Please refer to the response to question 2.
7. Please refer to the response to question 2.
8. We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB on this occasion is not able 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. However, we have determined that the information is held by the mental health hospital NHS foundation trusts (FTs) within the North East and North Cumbria region. Contact details for those trusts was provided in the response to question 2.

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, Wycliff 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**