NHS
North East and North Cumbria

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\ FOI ICB 26–302

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

12 October 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 16 September 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 2000, I would like to request the following information.

I am seeking to establish how widely ICBs use block contracts for care-home or nursing-home beds that can be used for people eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC), and whether their use has changed since ICBs were established.

For this request, a “block contract” means an arrangement under which a specified number or volume of beds is purchased, reserved or guaranteed, including arrangements where payment is made regardless of whether every bed is occupied.

Please include contracts:
- held directly by the ICB;
- jointly commissioned with a local authority; or
- commissioned through a pooled budget or other partnership arrangement.

1. Did your ICB have any such block contracts on:
   a. 31 March 2023; and
   b. the date of this request, 16 September 2026

2. For each date, please provide:
   a. the number of block contracts; and
   b. the total number of beds purchased, reserved or guaranteed under those contracts.

3. For the contracts in place on the date of this request, please provide:
   a. the name of each provider;
   b. the number of beds purchased, reserved or guaranteed;
   c. the total value of the contract for the current financial year;
   d. whether payment is guaranteed for all or part of the contracted capacity when beds are unoccupied; and
   e. the number of these beds that were unoccupied on the most recent month-end date for which figures are available, while remaining covered by the contract.

4. Please state the date used for the occupancy figure in question 3(e).

If the term “block contract” is not used by your organisation, please include any equivalent arrangement involving guaranteed volume, reserved capacity, minimum payment or payment for beds regardless of occupancy.

Please include mixed-use contracts where some or all of the contracted beds can be used for people eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare, even if the beds are not reserved exclusively for them.

If the information is held by a local authority or another organisation acting on the ICB’s behalf, please identify that organisation. Where the information is also held by the ICB, please provide it.

If information is not held for 31 March 2023, please provide the nearest available snapshot and state the date used.

If complying with any part of this request would exceed the appropriate cost limit, please fulfil the remaining parts and, under your duty to advise and assist under section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act, explain how the request could be refined to obtain the relevant information within the cost limit.

If the information is not held in exactly this form, please use your duty to advise and assist to provide the closest equivalent information you hold that would establish the ICB's use of block contracts for care-home or nursing-home beds that can be used for people eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC).

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.

1. NENC ICB held such block contracts on 16 September 2026. However, 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 dated 31 March 2023.
2. As of 16 September 2026, the ICB holds 2 block contracts. The total number of beds is 77 beds.
3. For the contracts in place on the date of this request please find information below:

Provider name and contract reference	Number of beds	Current contract value per year	Is payment guaranteed?
Everyturn (QHM-2025-8819)	64	£4,996,656	Yes
Aspire (QHM-2025-8731)	13	£157,154	Yes

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 on the number of beds occupied/ unoccupied.

4. Please refer to the response to question 3.

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, 4th Floor, No. 3 Circle Square, 5 Hawkshaw Street, Manchester, M1 7BL 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