

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 24-432

NECS – John Snow House
Durham University Science Park
Durham
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Tel: 0191 301 1300
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By Email

7 February 2025

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 6 February 2025 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

Please provide the number of complaints made to NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB that relate to or mention pressure care (including, but not limited to, pressure sores, pressure ulcers, or bed sores) during the following calendar years: 2023, 2024.

Of the above complaints, also specify how many were brought as patient safety issues by healthcare workers or trust administrators, also categorised by year.

To clarify, I'm referring to complaints made via the information (email, post, or phone) provided on your website, here: <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-compliments/>. The first question listed says "However, you are also entitled to complain to the ICB as the commissioner of these services if that is your preference. Complaining to the commissioner may be the right option if you are not comfortable complaining directly to your healthcare provider."

Could you please double check that no complaints mentioning pressure care, pressure injury, bed sore, bedsore, pressure ulcer, or pressure wound have been filed there?

Our Response

www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk 

NorthEastandNorthCumbriaNHS 

NENC_NHS 

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.

The ICB does not directly provide clinical care therefore complaints referencing tissue viability issues would relate to provider organisations. This is noted on our website at [Complaints and compliments | North East & North Cumbria NHS](#) within the 'Should I complain to the provider or commissioner of an NHS service?' section.

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 addresses for acute hospital providers in the region, to follow up your request.

NENC Acute Hospital FTs	Email
County Durham and Darlington NHS FT	cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net
Gateshead Health NHS FT	ghnt.foi.enquiries@nhs.net
North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT	foirequest@cumbria.nhs.uk
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS FT	foi@nth.nhs.uk
Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT	foi@northumbria.nhs.uk
South Tees Hospitals NHS FT	foi@stees.nhs.uk
South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT	stsft.freedomofinformation@nhs.net
The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT	nuth.freedom.information@nhs.net

Complaints received by NENC ICB are not categorised using the terminology referenced in the FOI and, even if an issue relating to tissue viability may have been mentioned in a complaint, the summary recorded on the complaints database would not specifically reference this. The only way to identify these cases is by manually reviewing all complaints received by NENC ICB since its inception on 1 July 2022.

S.12(1) of the FOIA provides that a public authority is not obliged to respond to a request for information if the cost of locating, retrieving, and extracting information and preparing the response can be included in the costs for these purposes.

To put this into context, the Complaints Team managed 827 new complaints during the financial year 2023/24 and can identify 237 that can easily be ruled out as having no link with tissue viability. This leaves 590 cases which potentially could reference tissue viability concerns brought as patient safety issues by the staff noted in the question.

It is estimated that it would averagely take a member of staff approximately 3 minutes to obtain the requested information for this year from the Complaints system. Allocating 3 minutes per record, the NENC ICB estimates that 590 records x 3 minutes = 1770 minutes divided by 60 = 29.5 hours to extract the level of detail requested from our complaints system. NENC ICB is therefore unable to provide the requested information within the prescribed limit.

Regarding the supplementary question, (Of the above complaints, also specify how many were brought as patient safety issues by healthcare workers or trust administrators, also categorised by year), the same response applies. However, where a patient safety concern is raised by a member of staff, this is ordinarily reported via the incident management process, not via the

complaints process. Any such cases received erroneously by the Complaints Team would usually be redirected to the Clinical Quality Team for follow-up and not necessarily recorded on the complaints database.

Based on the number of hours 29.5 at a rate of £25 per hour the estimated cost of providing the information is **£737.50 for financial year 2023/04**. Should you wish to proceed we will be able to comply with your request upon receipt of payment. Alternatively, you may wish to reduce the scope of your request so that it comes in under the appropriate limit.

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