

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 26–259

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

24 August 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 20 August 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 make a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the assessment and prescribing of testosterone replacement therapy (TRT) for adult men within your NHS Trust/ICB.

Please could you provide the following information, based on your current policies, clinical pathways, prescribing guidelines or protocols:

1. The total testosterone level(s) used when determining whether an adult male may have testosterone deficiency/hypogonadism and be considered for TRT.
2. Whether one or two separate low testosterone blood tests are required before TRT can be considered.
3. The required timing of testosterone blood tests, including whether they must be taken in the morning and/or while fasting.
4. Whether SHBG and calculated free testosterone are routinely required, and what thresholds are used for these measurements.
5. Whether LH, FSH and prolactin are routinely required before TRT is considered.
6. Whether the presence of symptoms is required in addition to a biochemical finding of low testosterone.
7. The testosterone thresholds used for:

- a. testosterone below 8 nmol/L;
 - b. testosterone between 8 and 12 nmol/L; and
 - c. testosterone above 12 nmol/L.
8. Whether a man with confirmed testosterone levels below 8 nmol/L would normally meet the biochemical criteria for consideration of TRT, subject to clinical assessment.
 9. Whether a man with confirmed testosterone levels between 8 and 12 nmol/L can be offered a trial of TRT where appropriate symptoms are present.
 10. What symptoms or clinical features are considered relevant when determining whether TRT is appropriate.
 11. Whether factors such as obesity, diabetes, medication use or other medical conditions affect eligibility for TRT or require additional investigation.
 12. What investigations are required before TRT can be initiated, including (where applicable) full blood count/haematocrit, PSA, liver function, lipid profile, blood pressure and prostate assessment.
 13. What contraindications or exclusion criteria would prevent TRT from being prescribed.
 14. Which NHS specialty is normally responsible for initiating TRT in adult men — for example GP, endocrinology, urology or another specialist service.
 15. The testosterone preparations currently available/prescribed within your service for male hypogonadism, including whether testosterone gel, short-acting injections and/or long-acting testosterone undecanoate injections are used.
 16. The monitoring requirements following initiation of TRT, including the timing and parameters of follow-up blood tests.
 17. Please provide copies or links to the current clinical guideline, prescribing protocol, referral pathway or policy used by your service when assessing adult men for testosterone replacement therapy.
 18. If available, please provide the number of adult men referred to your service for suspected testosterone deficiency/hypogonadism in each of the last three completed financial years, and the number subsequently commenced on TRT.

I am requesting information about the criteria and processes used by the NHS service and am not requesting personal medical advice or an assessment of an individual patient.

If any part of this request exceeds the appropriate cost limit, please provide the information that can be supplied within the limit and advise which parts would need to be refined.

Our Response

1. 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 hospital NHS foundation trusts (FTs) 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.

NENC Acute Hospital FTs	Email/Online portal
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	nth-tr.foi@nhs.net
Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT	foi@northumbria.nhs.uk
South Tees Hospitals NHS FT	stees.foi.admin@nhs.net
South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT	stsft@infreemation.co.uk
The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT	https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/help/foi/

2. Please refer to the response to question 1.
3. Please refer to the response to question 1.
4. Please refer to the response to question 1.
5. Please refer to the response to question 1.
6. Please refer to the response to question 1.
7. Please refer to the response to question 1.
8. Please refer to the response to question 1.
9. Please refer to the response to question 1.
10. Please refer to the response to question 1.
11. Please refer to the response to question 1.
12. Please refer to the response to question 1.
13. Please refer to the response to question 1.
14. Please refer to the response to question 1.
15. All services within NENC ICN should follow the formulary for testosterone products available at [North East and North Cumbria Formulary](#). Therefore, the ICB considers this element of your request exempt from disclosure by way of s.21 as the information is readily accessible by other means.
16. Please refer to the response to question 1.
17. Please refer to the response to question 1.
18. Please refer to the response to question 1.
19. Please refer to the response to question 1.

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**