

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\  
FOI ICB 25–463

North East and North Cumbria ICB  
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By Email

19 February 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 11 February 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 am requesting information regarding audits of invoices submitted to the ICB by private sector ophthalmology providers.

I am requesting information for the past three financial years, not calendar years: 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25. Please provide the following information:

1. Please state the name of the company/organisation that conducts audits if this is not done by the ICB.
2. How many audits of private sector ophthalmology invoices were conducted in each year?
3. For each audit, how many invoices were reviewed, or what proportion of total invoices were audited?
4. Were audits conducted on all invoices or a sample only?
5. For each audit, which of the following aspects of the invoices were checked:
  - Verification of clinical coding
  - Review of supporting clinical documentation
  - Verification that billed procedures match contracted activity
  - Financial accuracy only
6. For each audit, how many invoices resulted in adjustments or queries due to errors detected?

Please provide the information in an Excel or CSV format in tabular form, broken down by financial year.

## **Our Response**

1. 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.

North-East and North Cumbria ICB does not undertake formal audits of invoices submitted to the ICB by private sector ophthalmology providers. However, invoices are checked against activity submissions, and any changes in activity trends are reviewed as part of the activity management process.

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.

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](http://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](http://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**