

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 25–399

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

22 January 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 December 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, 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

Carers Leave Act 2024 – One year on

On 6 April 2024, the Carer's Leave Act came into force, which entitled employees a right of to up to 5 days unpaid leave for planned occasions to give or arrange care for a 'dependant' who has:

- a physical or mental illness or injury that means they're expected to need care for more than three months
- a disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010)
- care needs because of their old age

A link to guidance in understanding the law is here <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/work-and-career/the-carer-s-leave-act-2023/> You may need to copy & paste the URL to your web browser

A year ago, NHS England's carers' network wrote to NHS commissioning organisations and acute providers to check compliance with the new legislation. Of the replying organisations, only a shade over 25% had planned carer's leave in their current Special Leave policy. Full results, including copies of policies supplied, can be found on the FutureNHS Collaboration Platform – Commitment to Carers workplace – NHS Special Leave Policies Pre 06/04/2024 – Commitment to Carers Folder. You may need to copy & paste the following URL to your web browser and to seek permission from the administrator to join <https://future.nhs.uk/committocarers>.

www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk 

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On the 1st anniversary of the act, the network has teamed up with Carers UK to see the progress made by NHS organisations, as well as 'what good looks like' for special leave and carer's policies. This is an important exercise to protect carer's rights, promote equitable, fair and consistent treatment of carers, and ensure that the law is enacted, not just to the letter, but in a real, meaningful, kind and supporting way.

1. What is the organisation's ID code (ODS)
2. What is the organisation's name
3. What is the best e-mail address to contact the organisation in the future regarding working carers.
4. Does the organisation have a carers' staff network or peer support group
5. If yes, what is the network/group's e-mail address
6. Is the organisation a member of Carers UK/Employers for Carers (EfC)
 - Yes
 - No, but we plan to in the future
 - No, and we have no plans to in the future
7. If yes, has the organisation undertaken the Carer Confident Assessment:
file:///C:/Users/NM2.J4RLFC5M/Downloads/carer_confident_guidance_low-res.pdf
 - Yes
 - No – but we plan to in the future
 - No, and we have no plans to in the future
8. If yes, at which level is the organisation
 - Level 1 – Active
 - Level 2 – Accomplished
 - Level 3 – Ambassador
9. What is the organisation's employee Headcount total (Not FTE or WTE)
10. How many of the organisation's employees have formally identified (on ESR) as a working carer
11. What is the organisation's Working Carer percentage (%), based on the latest NHS Staff Survey (Question 32b)
12. How has the organisation communicated to staff about their rights under Carers Leave Act.
13. What training has been given to line managers about the Carers Leave Act
14. How many staff have booked Carers Leave for planned events in the last 12 months
15. What was the average number of days taken
16. Please attach a copy of the organisation's current Special Leave policy
17. In the organisation's Special Leave/Leave policy, is planned Carer's leave paid, unpaid or both
 - Paid
 - Unpaid
 - Both
18. How many days are paid (maximum) in a 12-month period.
19. How many days are unpaid (maximum) in a 12-month period.
20. Are any paid days repayable to the organisation, via payroll deduction or additional time worked.
21. Do managers have discretionary authorisation to go beyond the policy in appropriate circumstances.
22. If yes, what are they allowed to do.

23. In the organisation's Special Leave/Leave policy, is unplanned Carer's (Emergency Domestic / Dependant) leave paid, unpaid or both
 - Paid
 - Unpaid
 - Both
24. How many days are paid (maximum) in a 12-month period
25. How many days are unpaid (maximum) in a 12-month period
26. Does the organisation's Compassionate Leave allowance include paid Terminal Care leave
27. If paid Terminal Care is allowed, what's the maximum number of days allowed in a 12-month period.
28. The NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook (section 33.23) requires that all NHS employers have a carer's policy to address the needs of people with caring responsibilities – please confirm
 - The organisation has a separate carer's policy.
 - The organisation doesn't yet have a carer's policy.
29. Please attach a copy of your current carer's policy.

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. The organisation's ODS code is QHM.
2. The organisation is NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB).
3. The email to use regarding working carers is nencicb.hr@nhs.net.
4. NENC ICB does not have a carers' staff network or peer support group.
5. Please refer to the response to question 4.
6. NENC ICB is not a member of Carers UK/Employers for Carers.
7. Please refer to the response to question 6.
8. Please refer to the response to question 6.
9. NENC ICB's employee headcount as at 29/12/2025 is 1010.
10. 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. To clarify, this is not reportable on ESR as the ICB does not currently use this function.
11. The current information from the latest staff survey is embargoed nationally at this moment and time. However, from the previous survey, details from the questions are:
 - Do you have any children aged from 0 to 17 living at home with you or who you have regular caring responsibility for? 38.52%
 - Do you look after or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of either: long term physical or mental ill health / disability, or problems related to old age? 39.80%
12. The relevant policy is available widely through the ICB's intranet page. The People Team work with managers to provide advice, as and when needed, on support offers to employees.
13. The ICB is in the process of developing 'Manager Essential' training which will be delivered in the new year (2026), supporting managers with all issues which impact employees. Carers leave has been incorporated into this programme.
14. 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. To clarify, the ICB does not log carers leave in this way and therefore we are unable to separate this from other unpaid leave approved in the system.

15. Please refer to the response to question 14.
16. Please find attached a copy of NENC ICB's current Special Leave policy.
17. In the organisation's Special Leave/Leave policy, is planned Carer's leave is unpaid.
18. There are zero days are paid (maximum) in a 12-month period.
19. There are 5 days unpaid (maximum) in a 12-month period.
20. Please refer to the response to question 18.
21. No, managers do not have discretionary authorisation to go beyond the policy in appropriate circumstances.
22. Please refer to the response to question 21.
23. In the organisation's Special Leave/Leave policy, is unplanned Carer's (Emergency Domestic / Dependant) leave is paid.
24. Two days are paid, one for the day emergency occurs and one to respond to the emergency.
25. Please refer to the response to question 24
26. NENC ICB's Compassionate Leave allowance does not include paid Terminal Care leave.
27. Please refer to the response to question 26.
28. NENC ICB's has a separate Carer's Policy.
29. Please find attached a copy of NENC ICB's current Carers Leave policy.

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**