

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 25–486

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

9 March 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 24 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

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding NHS dental provision within North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB). Please provide the following information:

1. Workforce Data
 - a. The total number of NHS dentists currently commissioned within North East and North Cumbria ICB.
 - b. The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) NHS dentists currently practising in the region.
 - c. The equivalent figures for the financial year 2019/2020 for comparison.
2. Funding Allocation
 - a. The total annual funding allocation for NHS dentistry within the North East and North Cumbria ICB area for the current financial year.
 - b. The total annual funding allocation for NHS dentistry in the financial year 2019/2020.
 - c. If available, a breakdown of funding by locality/place within the ICB footprint.
 - d. Any real-terms adjustment (if held) showing change in funding between 2019/2020 and the current year.

3. Complaints and Access Issues

- a. The total number of complaints received relating to lack of NHS dental provision, inability to access NHS dental appointments, or removal from NHS dental lists for:
 - The current financial year (to date)
 - Each financial year from 2019/2020 onward.
- b. A categorisation of these complaints, where recorded (e.g., inability to register, long waiting times, urgent care access, contract withdrawal, service closure, geographic inequity, etc.).
- c. Any internal analysis, reports, or summaries identifying trends in complaints or access issues over this period.

4. Access and Recovery Planning

- a. Details of any current strategy, action plan, or commissioning framework intended to address:
 - The shortage of NHS dental appointments
 - Geographic disparities in access
 - Waiting times for routine and urgent NHS dental care
- b. Any measurable targets or KPIs associated with improving NHS dental access.
- c. Copies of relevant board papers, strategy documents, or business cases discussing the dentistry access crisis from 2021 onwards.

5. Comparative and Trend Data

- a. Any workforce, activity (UDA delivery), or patient access data held that enables comparison between 2019/2020 and the most recent complete financial year.
- b. Any documented contextual commentary explaining changes in provision, funding, or demand over this period.

Where possible, please provide the information in electronic format (PDF or spreadsheet). If any of the requested information exceeds cost limits under Section 12 of the Act, I would be grateful if you could advise how the request may be refined.

If any information is withheld, please specify the exemption relied upon and provide the appropriate public interest test reasoning where applicable.

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. Workforce Data

- a. 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. However, dental workforce statistics are publicly available on the NHS England website: [Statistics » Dental Workforce](#). In accordance with s.21 of the FOIA, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is reasonably accessible to you by other means.
- b. Please refer to the response to question 1a.
- c. Please refer to the response to question 1a.

2. Funding Allocation

- a. Funding allocations:

2023/24	£217,195,000.00
2024/25	£225,727,078.00
2025/26	£214,902,000.00

- b. 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. Dental was managed by NHS England in 2019/20, and we have determined that the information is held by them.

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 NHS England: england.contactus@nhs.net. Please write "Freedom of Information" in the subject line.

- c. 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.
- d. Please refer to the information provided in response to question 2a noting the funding increases due to DDRB/Inflation increases.

3. Complaints and Access Issues

- a. The total number of complaints received relating to lack of NHS dental provision, inability to access NHS dental appointments, or removal from NHS dental lists for the current financial year (to date) is 143. Due to the change in the system used to log complaints, we are unable to provide the data for each financial year from 2019/2020 onward. On this basis, we do not hold the information you have requested.
- b. The complaints fall under the categories 'Appointment – Access/location' and 'Removal from list'.
- c. The ICB Quality and Safety Committee receive quarterly complaints reports which highlight trends in complaints. Copies of confirmed Quality and Safety Committee minutes are presented to the Board; the link to the meetings is [NHS NENC ICB Board meetings](#).

4. Access and Recovery Planning

- a. 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. NENC ICB's Oral Health and Dental Strategy is publicly available on the ICB's website: [Oral Health and Dental Strategy](#).
- b. Performance targets are included within the integrated delivery reports presented during Board meetings. The link to the meetings is [NHS NENC ICB Board meetings](#).
- c. Board papers are publicly accessible on the ICB's website. The link was provided in response to question 4b. The Dental Access Recovery Plan was presented to the board on 3 June 2025. The link to the report is: [item-15-urgent-dental-care-board-report-june-2025-final.pdf](#).

In accordance with s.21 of the FOIA, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is reasonably accessible to you by other means.

5. Comparative and Trend Data

- a. 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. Dental statistics are published by the NHS Business Services Authority: [Dental statistics – England 2024/25 | NHSBSA](#).

- b. Changes in provision, funding, or demand discussed are available Board papers. Links to those papers were provided in response to question 4b.

In accordance with s.21 of the FOIA, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is reasonably accessible to you by other means.

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**