

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 24-204

[NECS – John Snow House](#)
Durham University Science Park
Durham
DH1 3YG

Tel: 0191 301 1300
E-mail: necsu.icbfoi@nhs.net

By Email

4 September 2024

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 9 August 2024 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

I would be most grateful if you would provide me, under the Freedom of Information Act, details in respect to the below relating to the provision of Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS), Pathology Specimen Courier, Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Transport and Mental Health Transport to your ICB.

The details I require are:

1. Do you currently use external suppliers for:
 - a. NEPTS? If not, do you plan on using them in the future?
 - b. Pathology Specimen Courier? If not, do you plan on using them in the future?
 - c. SEND Transport? If not, do you plan on using them in the future?
 - d. Mental Health Transport? If not, do you plan on using them in the future?
2. For the financial years (April – March) 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24:
 - a. What was your annual spend on the following services, split by internally or externally provided:

Supplier	Internally provided	Externally provided
NEPTS		
Pathology Specimen Courier		
SEND Transport		
Mental Health Transport		

- b. How many journeys were provided for following services, split by internally or externally provided:

Supplier	Internally provided	Externally provided
NEPTS		
Pathology Specimen Courier		
SEND Transport		
Mental Health Transport		

3. The following information regarding the current provision of the following services:

- a. NEPTS:

- Name of the current NEPTS provider(s)
- Total contract value
- Start date
- End date

- b. Pathology Specimen Courier:

- Name of the current Pathology Specimen Courier Service provider(s)
- Total contract value
- Start date
- End date

- c. SEND transport:

- Name of the current SEND transport provider(s)
- Total contract value
- Start date
- End date

- d. Mental health transport:

- Name of the current mental health transport provider(s)
- Total contract value
- Start date
- End date

4. If applicable, the following information regarding the previously used provider for the following services:

- a. NEPTS:

- Name of the previous NEPTS provider(s)
- Reason for change

- b. Pathology Specimen Courier:

- Name of the previous Pathology Specimen Courier provider(s)

- Reason for change
- c. SEND transport:
- Name of the previous SEND transport provider(s)
 - Reason for change
- d. Mental health transport:
- Name of the previous Mental health transport provider(s)
 - Reason for change

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. For some responses, we have determined that the information is held by NHS hospital foundation trusts (FTs) or local authorities 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 email addresses for those hospitals and local authorities to make 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

NENC Mental Health Hospital FTs	Email
Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS FT	foi@cntw.nhs.uk
Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS FT	tewv.foi@nhs.net

NENC Local Authorities	Email
Cumbria County Council	information.governance@cumbria.gov.uk
Darlington Borough Council	freedomofinformation@darlington.gov.uk
Durham County Council	foi@durham.gov.uk
Gateshead Council	informationrights@gateshead.gov.uk
Hartlepool Borough Council	freedomofinformation@hartlepool.gov.uk
Middlesbrough Borough Council	foi@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Newcastle City Council	freedomofinformation@newcastle.gov.uk
North Tyneside Council	foiofficer@northtyneside.gov.uk
Northumberland County Council	foi@northumberland.gov.uk
Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council	informationgovernance@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk
South Tyneside Council	foi@southtyneside.gov.uk

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	foiandcomplaints@stockton.gov.uk
Sunderland City Council	freedom.information@sunderland.gov.uk

1. External providers used:

- Yes, NENC ICB commissions non-emergency patient transport, some NEPTS is commissioned through FTs and therefore not held by NENC ICB. This request should be redirected to NHS FTs.
- The Pathology Specimen Courier service is commissioned through FT contracts and information would need to be obtained direct with the FT
- Information on SEND Transport is not held by NENC ICB – the request should be redirected to Lod from the Local Authority.
- Yes, NENC ICB commissions Mental Health Transport, some mental transport is commissioned through Mental Health FTs and this information would need to be obtained direct from them.

2. For the financial years (April – March) 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24:

a) Annual spend, split by internally or externally provided:

Supplier	Internally provided	Externally provided	Year	Spend
NEPTS	X	✓	2018/19	Not available
			2019/20	Not available
			2020/21	£172,572
			2021/22	£343,658
			2022/23	£648,177
			2023/24	£540,702
Pathology Specimen Courier	X	X	See response to question 1.	
SEND Transport	X	X	See response to question 1.	
Mental Health Transport	X	✓	2018/19	£151,831.36
			2019/20	£121,411.00
			2020/21	£389,710.62
			2021/22	£602,014.21
			2022/23	£418,140.91
			2023/24	£854,128.01

Note, the NEPTS spend information in the table above is excluding North East Ambulance Services FT and North West Ambulance Services FT as these are included within the block contract figures noted.

b) Journeys were provided, split by internally or externally provided:

Supplier	Internally provided	Externally provided	Year	Journeys
NEPTS	X	✓	2018/19	Not available
			2019/20	Not available
			2020/21	400,183
			2021/22	539,362
			2022/23	591,248

			2023/24	667,186
Pathology Specimen Courier	X	X	See response to question 1.	
SEND Transport	X	X	See response to question 1.	
Mental Health Transport	X	✓	2018/19	864
			2019/20	710
			2020/21	1757
			2021/22	1826
			2022/23	1319
			2023/24	1672

The NEPTS information in the table above does include the number of journeys for North East Ambulance Services Foundation Trust and North West Ambulance Services Foundation Trust

3. Service provision information:

a) NEPTS:

- Provider 1: **North East Ambulance Services Foundation Trust**
- Total contract value included within the block
- 1st April 2024
- 31st March 2027 option to extend for a further 2 years
- Provider 2: **North West Ambulance Services Foundation Trust**
- Total contract value Included within the block
- Commenced in 2016 for 5 years with option to extend for two years. It has been necessary to extend the existing contract following procurement advice for one year.
- Current contract end date is now 31 March 2025.
- Provider 3: **Specialist Medical Transport**
- Total contract value is approximately £208,000
- 1st April 2024
- 31st March 2025
- Provider 4: **ERS Medical**
- Total contract value is approximately £361,000
- 1st April 2024
- 31st March 2025

b) Pathology Specimen Courier: Not applicable

c) SEND transport: Not applicable

d) Mental health transport

- Provider 1: **ERS Medical**
- Total contract value (annual) £396,255
- 1st April 2024
- 31st March 2025
- Provider 2: **Specialist Medical Transport**
- Total contract value (annual):

- Northumberland – no value attached – activity based
- Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside & South Tyneside - £118,754
- Sunderland - £60,360
- Various start dates
- 31st May 2026

4 There are no previous providers, so this is not applicable.

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 faithfully

S Davies

S Davies
Information Governance Officer