

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 24-419

NECS – John Snow House
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By Email

6 February 2025

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 29 January 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, 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

1. When a patient changes to a different surgery within the same town, who is responsible for ensuring that the regular prescriptions the patient has been receiving are continued (without any gaps)? Is it,
 - a. The patient's ex surgery? Or
 - b. The patient's new surgery?
2. After researching the NHS Choices website, I discovered that a patient has the right to be referred to a private Psychiatrist. What are the rules/procedures the patient has to follow, in order to be seen by a private Psychiatrist?

Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB holds some of the information requested.

1. Once a patient completes the new patient registration form, they are considered registered with the new practice, and instantly become the responsibility of the practice for any repeat or acute meds. However, please note that there may be delays as the receiving practice may need to contact the patient's prior practice if immediate treatment is required as they will not have the clinical details for the patient at this point. Also, the issuing of medication would be based upon clinical judgement.

To note: Providing the patient has not left a gap between leaving/registering practices there should be no gap in care. Transfer can take a few days – to a couple of weeks and the original practice would remain responsible up to that point.

If the patient has registered directly with a new surgery and records have moved over the original practice will no longer have access to clinical records and may not even be aware the patient has left. All this information would transfer to the new practice, becoming their responsibility. The patient may be advised to contact the new practice to ensure everything is set up correct or check on their online record if they have one.

2. 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, the rules/procedures are available on the NHS Choices website you referred to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-choice-framework/the-nhs-choice-framework-what-choices-are-available-to-me-in-the-nhs>

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.

To note: A patient can ask to be referred to any NHS commissioned service registered. Referral would need to be made by a clinician at the patients local GP practice. GP practice can offer more advice on what is available and what restrictions there are.

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 sincerely

S Davies

S Davies
Information Governance Officer