

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 26–268

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

2 September 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 25 August 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 making this request in my own name and in a personal capacity, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This request is addressed to the authority named above only. If your team handles Freedom of Information for more than one organisation, please answer for that authority alone. If your team does not handle Freedom of Information for it, I would be grateful if you could pass this on internally rather than close it – it was sent to the address that authority publishes for Freedom of Information requests.

Please provide the following recorded information about ambient voice technology (also called AI scribes or ambient documentation tools - software that listens to clinical consultations and drafts notes or letters). Questions 1 and 2 cover use by GP practices in your area as well as by the ICB itself.

1. Does the ICB currently use, pilot, commission, fund, or approve for use any ambient voice technology product, including any product approved for use by practices in your area whether or not the ICB commissioned it? If yes, which product(s) and supplier(s)?
2. Whether the ICB holds any of the following recorded information about the use of such products by practices in its area: (a) a register or list of practices using them; (b) a DPIA or

DTAC assessment; (c) an information governance sign-off or approval decision; (d) a funding or reimbursement decision; (e) guidance or a position statement; (f) correspondence with suppliers. Please state for each whether it is held. If the ICB holds none of them, please confirm that explicitly.

If the ICB holds no contract of its own, questions 3 to 8 can simply be answered "not applicable".

3. For each product the ICB holds a contract for: the contract start date, end date, and total contract value. If the exact value cannot be disclosed in full, a banded figure or the Contracts Finder notice reference is sufficient.
4. For each product: the number of licences or seats procured. If the contract is priced by consumption rather than by seat, the units purchased instead (for example hours per year).
5. For each product, and separately from question 4: (a) the number of clinicians trained to use it, and (b) the number of clinicians who actively used it in the most recent month for which you hold data.
6. The number of patient safety incidents recorded in your incident reporting system (for example LFPSE or Datix) in which an ambient voice technology product is referenced, from 1 January 2024 to the date of this request. A count is sufficient. If your system cannot break incidents down to product level, please say so.
7. For each product: whether it records audio, processes it locally, or transmits it to a third party, and where it is processed and stored (UK, EEA, other); and the retention period for (a) the audio recordings and (b) the transcripts, stated separately, as recorded in a DPIA or contract.
8. Whether patients are informed the technology is in use, and by what mechanism (verbal consent, implied consent, posters, opt-out, other), as recorded in a DPIA or SOP. If recorded, the number or proportion of patients who declined its use in any period for which you hold data. A single figure or "not recorded" is sufficient.

For transparency: I publish an open data series on the adoption of clinical AI in the NHS, and responses to this request will be aggregated across organisations and published.

I would prefer a response by email, and any structured data in Excel or CSV format. If any part of this request would exceed the cost limit, please answer the remaining parts and indicate which part was excluded.

Our Response

1. NENC ICB does not currently hold any contracts for, nor does it centrally commission, fund, pilot, or operate an ambient voice technology product for use across the ICB.

Individual GP practices, primary care contractors, and provider organisations are independent data controllers and may make local decisions regarding the procurement and use of digital technologies in accordance with applicable NHS, information governance, clinical safety, procurement, and contractual requirements. The ICB does not maintain a definitive record of all technologies procured independently by such organisations.

2. In terms of recorded information:

Information Requested	Held by NENC ICB
Register or list of practices using ambient voice technologies	No
DPIA or DTAC assessments relating to practice deployments	No
Information governance sign-off or approval decisions	No

Funding or reimbursement decisions	No
Guidance or position statement specific to ambient voice technologies	No
Correspondence with suppliers regarding ambient voice technologies	No

3. Not applicable, as per the response to question 2.
4. Not applicable, as per the response to question 2.
5. Not applicable, as per the response to question 2.
6. Not applicable, as per the response to question 2.
7. Not applicable, as per the response to question 2.
8. Not applicable, as per the response to question 2.

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**