



North East and North Cumbria

Our Reference SD\North East and North
Cumbria ICB\FOI ICB480

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17 August 2023

Dear

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 3 August 2023 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

NENC ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Tees Valley (which covers the 5 councils that make it up – Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees).

Please find the information you requested on behalf of the ICB as follows.

Your Request

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request information on the commissioning of ear wax removal services by North East and North Cumbria integrated care board. Please may you provide me with answers to the questions below.

1. Does the integrated care board currently commission an ear wax removal service or services within primary care or community ear care services, available to all patients registered with GP practices within the ICS's boundary, as per [NICE guidance](#)?
2. If it does, how can a patient access this service or services when it is considered clinically necessary and/or self-care advice, if appropriate, has been unsuccessful?
3. If the integrated care board does commission this service or services within primary care or community ear care services, please provide the name or names of those commissioned providers and their address or addresses.
4. Does the integrated care board have a policy or guidance on ear wax removal and/or referral pathways for its primary care providers for patients for whom the benefit of ear wax removal is clinically indicated?
5. If the integrated care board has issued such guidance, please provide a copy.

Our Response

County Durham place

1. Durham has a Local Improvement & Integration scheme (LIAISE) and one of the requirements in the block element of this contract is Ear Care as below. Ear Care, in line with NICE Guidance. Practices must demonstrate that they are offering in house Aural irrigation, where this is indicated. Some PCN areas are looking to set up PCN level Ear Care services. All Practices have confirmed they offer ear care where required in line with NICE guidance.
2. Patient accesses services in line with [NICE guidance](#)
3. Please find a link to and spreadsheet showing GP names and addresses: [GP names and addresses](#)



GP and Address.xlsx

4. No there is no policy; ear wax removal is in line with [NICE guidance](#)
5. Not applicable

Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland and South Tyneside places

1. The service is commissioned for Newcastle and South Tyneside patients only.
2. Patient would self-refer to the service.
3. In Newcastle, the provider is the Grove Medical Practice, 1 The Grove, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 1NU. In South Tyneside, the provider is Farnham Medical Practice, 435 Stanhope Road, South Shields NE33 4QY.
4. This information is not held.
5. This information is not held.

North Cumbria place

1. A Community Ear Wax Service is provided by North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT for patients that live within or are registered permanently or temporarily at a GP practice that is within North Cumbria.
2. Patients can be referred to the Community Ear Wax service via ICE electronic referral system.
3. The commissioned provider name and address is North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT, Trust Headquarters, Pillars Building, Cumberland Infirmary, Infirmary Street, Carlisle, CA2 7HY.
4. There is a Community Health Pathway for ear wax.
5. The Community Health Pathway guidance can be found below



Ear Wax -
Community HealthPat

Sunderland place

1. Yes, the ICB does commission an ear wax removal service in Sunderland place.
2. The service is provided by General Practices – patients would access via General Practice.
3. The list of GP surgeries in Sunderland is available on the NHS Choices website.
4. Sunderland place does have a process.
5. The document is shown below.



CSI - Ear Wax.pdf

Tees Valley place

1. The ICB commissions all GP Practices within Tees and Darlington to provide an ear wax removal service.
2. Patients would contact their GP Practice to access the service.
3. All GP Practices across Tees and Darlington are commissioned to provide this service. A list of practices can be found online using the link [NHS Digital – CSV downloads](#)
4. The ICB follows NICE guidance for ear wax removal.
5. Please see answer 4.

In line 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 make a complaint or 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 complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. 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