

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\  
FOI ICB 26-014

North East and North Cumbria ICB  
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By Email

1 May 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 14 April 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 make a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as part of my data collection efforts for personal educational studies. Please treat this as a formal request for recorded information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB

I am requesting information relating to your organisation's IT infrastructure, digital maturity, staffing, contracts and technology spend. To assist in processing this request efficiently, I have structured it into clearly numbered sections below.

**Section 1 – IT Budget and Spend**

1. What is your organisation's total annual IT / digital technology budget for the current financial year (or most recently completed financial year)? Please break this down into:
  - a. Capital expenditure (CapEx)
  - b. Operational expenditure (OpEx)
2. What proportion of your total organisational budget does IT / digital technology represent (as a percentage)?
3. Is there a separate cyber security budget? If so, what is its value?
4. Please provide the name(s) of any Commissioning Support Units (CSUs) or managed service partners that manage IT expenditure on your behalf, if applicable.

## Section 2 – IT Staffing

1. How many whole-time equivalent (WTE) staff are directly employed in IT, digital or technology roles within your organisation?
2. Please provide a breakdown of IT staff by job role or band (e.g. Agenda for Change band or equivalent). Specific names are not required.
3. Does your organisation have the following named roles in post? (Please answer Yes / No / Vacant for each):
  - a. Chief Information Officer (CIO) or equivalent
  - b. Chief Digital Officer (CDO) or equivalent
  - c. Chief Technology Officer (CTO) or equivalent
  - d. Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) or equivalent
  - e. IT Director / Head of IT
  - f. Digital Transformation Lead or equivalent
4. How many IT staff are employed via third-party contractors or agency arrangements? What is the approximate annual spend on these arrangements?

## Section 3 – Server and Compute Infrastructure

1. Does your organisation operate on-premise server infrastructure? If yes:
  - a. What is the approximate number of physical servers in operation?
  - b. What server vendors / manufacturers does your organisation use (e.g. Dell, HPE, Lenovo, Cisco UCS)?
  - c. What is the approximate age profile of your server estate (e.g. percentage under 3 years, 3–5 years, over 5 years old)?
2. Does your organisation use virtualisation technologies? If yes, which platform(s) (e.g. VMware, Microsoft Hyper-V, Nutanix)?
3. Does your organisation use hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI)? If yes, which vendor(s)?
4. Does your organisation use cloud computing services (not including office 365)? If yes:
  - a. Which cloud provider(s) do you use (e.g. AWS, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud, other)?
  - b. Approximately what proportion of your workloads are cloud-hosted vs on-premise?
  - c. What is the approximate annual cloud spend?

## Section 4 – Storage Infrastructure

1. What storage platform(s) does your organisation use (e.g. NetApp, Dell EMC, Pure Storage, HPE, IBM)?
2. What is the approximate total usable storage capacity across your estate (in TB or PB)?
3. What is the approximate age of your primary storage estate?

## Section 5 – Backup, Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity

1. What backup software solution(s) does your organisation currently use (e.g. Veeam, Commvault, Veritas NetBackup, Cohesity, Rubrik, Zerto)?
2. What is your backup target infrastructure (e.g. on-premise disk, tape, cloud)?
3. Does your organisation have a documented Disaster Recovery (DR) plan? When was it last tested?
4. What is the current Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) for your critical clinical systems?
5. Does your organisation use an offsite or cloud-based backup solution? If yes, which provider?

## Section 6 – Networking and End-User Computing

1. Who provides your Wide Area Network (WAN) and/or internet connectivity services?
2. What network equipment vendors does your organisation use (e.g. Cisco, Juniper, Aruba, Palo Alto)?
3. What is the approximate number of end-user devices (laptops, desktops, tablets) in your organisation?

## Section 7 – Software, Licensing and Key Clinical Systems

1. What is your current Electronic Patient Record (EPR) / Electronic Health Record (EHR) system? Please provide the vendor name and product.
2. What Patient Administration System (PAS) does your organisation use?
3. Does your organisation use a Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) / radiology imaging system? If yes, which vendor and product?
4. Does your organisation have a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (or equivalent) in place? When is this due for renewal?
5. What is the approximate annual spend on software licences across the organisation?
6. Please list any other significant enterprise IT contracts (by contract type / system category — e.g. HR, finance, workforce management) with approximate annual values where held.

## Section 8 – Warranties, Contracts and Procurement

1. For your primary server, storage and network infrastructure, are vendor warranties and/or third-party maintenance contracts in place? Please provide:
  - a. The type of coverage (vendor warranty, third-party maintenance, or both)
  - b. The name of the maintenance provider(s), if applicable
  - c. Approximate contract expiry dates where held
2. What procurement frameworks does your organisation use for IT hardware and services (e.g. Crown Commercial Service, NHS Shared Business Services, G-Cloud, Tech Products 4)?
3. Are any significant IT contracts due for renewal within the next 24 months? Please provide contract category (not necessarily full commercial detail).

## Section 9 – Digital Maturity and Strategy

1. Has your organisation completed a Digital Maturity Assessment (DMA) or equivalent framework in the last two years? If so:
  - a. Which assessment framework was used (e.g. NHS England DMA, HIMSS EMRAM, Other)?
  - b. What overall maturity score or rating was achieved?
2. Does your organisation have a current Digital / IT Strategy? If so, what is the publication or approval date?
3. Has your organisation achieved or is actively working towards any recognised digital accreditations (e.g. HIMSS Level, NHS Digital aspirant status, Cyber Essentials Plus)?
4. What are the top three stated digital priorities for your organisation in the current or next financial year?

## Format and Clarification

I would be grateful to receive the response in electronic format (e.g. Microsoft Word, PDF or Excel as appropriate). Where information is readily available in an existing published document, a reference or a link to that document would be acceptable.

If you need any clarification about the scope of this request, or if you believe that any element of it would exceed the appropriate limit under Section 12 of the Act, please contact me before the 20-working-day deadline so that I may prioritise or narrow the questions accordingly.

If any information requested is considered exempt, please specify the relevant exemption for each withheld item and confirm whether the public interest test has been considered.

## **Our Response**

### Section 1 – IT Budget and Spend

1. Details of the ICB's IT budget and spend are as follows:
  - a. The ICB does not have a capital budget for IT/digital technology. We receive a capital allocation for GPIT, which is used to provide equipment, hardware, etc. to GP practices. However, this is accounted for via NHS England rather than the ICB.

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 contact for NHS England – [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net) – to make your request. Please write “Freedom of Information” in the subject line.

- b. The operational expenditure was £17,846,672.
2. The proportion of the budget was 0.19%.
3. There is no separate cyber security budget.
4. NHS North of England Care System Support (NECS) manages IT expenditure on behalf of NENC ICB.

### Section 2 – IT Staffing

1. There are 9.4 wte staff directly employed in IT, digital or technology roles.
2. The staff breakdown is:

AFC Band 3 – 1.0 wte  
AFC Band 6 – 2.2 wte  
AFC Band 8b – 1.9 wte  
AFC Band 8c – 2.0 wte  
AFC Band 8d – 2.0 wte  
Ad Hoc – 0.3 wte

3. The following are in post:
  - a. Chief Information Officer (CIO) or equivalent – yes
  - b. Chief Digital Officer (CDO) or equivalent – no, vacant/post not in structure
  - c. Chief Technology Officer (CTO) or equivalent – no, vacant/post not in structure
  - d. Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) or equivalent – no, vacant/post not in structure
  - e. IT Director / Head of IT – no, vacant/post not in structure
  - f. Digital Transformation Lead or equivalent – no, vacant/post not in structure
4. There are no agency/third party contractors for IT staff.

### Section 3 – Server and Compute Infrastructure

1. The ICB commission, as a managed service, all network infrastructure, end user compute, back-up and recovery and data storage via our strategic IT delivery partner (NECS). Therefore, we do not operate, run or manage any of these products or services.

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 contact for NECS – [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net) – to make your request. Please write “Freedom of Information” in the subject line. To note, NECS freedom of information requests are managed by NHS England.

2. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
3. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
4. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.

**Section 4 – Storage Infrastructure**

1. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
2. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
3. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.

**Section 5 – Backup, Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity**

1. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
2. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
3. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
4. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
5. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.

**Section 6 – Networking and End-User Computing**

1. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
2. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
3. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.

**Section 7 – Software, Licensing and Key Clinical Systems**

1. 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. However, we have determined that the information is held by the acute and mental health hospital NHS foundation trusts (FTs) 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 contacts for those foundation trusts to make your request.

<b>NENC Acute Hospital FTs</b>	<b>Email/Online portal</b>
County Durham and Darlington NHS FT	<a href="mailto:cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net">cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net</a>
Gateshead Health NHS FT	<a href="mailto:ghnt.foi.enquiries@nhs.net">ghnt.foi.enquiries@nhs.net</a>
North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT	<a href="mailto:foirequest@cumbria.nhs.uk">foirequest@cumbria.nhs.uk</a>

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS FT	<a href="mailto:nth-tr.foi@nhs.net">nth-tr.foi@nhs.net</a>
Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT	<a href="mailto:foi@northumbria.nhs.uk">foi@northumbria.nhs.uk</a>
South Tees Hospitals NHS FT	<a href="mailto:stees.foi.admin@nhs.net">stees.foi.admin@nhs.net</a>
South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT	<a href="mailto:stsft@infreemation.co.uk">stsft@infreemation.co.uk</a>
The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT	<a href="https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/help/foi/">https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/help/foi/</a>

<b>NENC Mental Health Hospital FTs</b>	<b>Email</b>
Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS FT	<a href="mailto:foi@cntw.nhs.uk">foi@cntw.nhs.uk</a>
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS FT	<a href="mailto:tewv.foi@nhs.net">tewv.foi@nhs.net</a>

2. Please refer to the response to section 7, question 1.
3. Please refer to the response to section 7, question 1.
4. Yes, NENC ICB has a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (or equivalent) in place. This is due for renewal on 1 October 2026.
5. There was a spend of £1.868m against computer software licence in 2025/26.
6. There are no specific enterprise IT contracts. ESR and ISFE2 are national contracts.

#### Section 8 – Warranties, Contracts and Procurement

1. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
2. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.
3. Please refer to the response to section 3, question 1.

#### Section 9 – Digital Maturity and Strategy

1. Yes, NENC ICB has completed a Digital Maturity Assessment in the last two years.
  - a. The NHS England assessment framework was used.
  - b. The link to the framework and results is published and publicly accessible on the NHS England website: [Report - NHS England Digital](#) 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.
2. NENC ICB has the following Digital strategies. These are available on the ICB's website:

Digital, Data and Technology Strategy, ICB Board approved, 30/01/2024

<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/media/p5hhd25x/digital-data-and-technology-2023-26.pdf>

Digital Inclusion Strategy, ICB Board approved, 30/06/2025

[https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/media/vt0p2ha3/nenc-ics\\_digital-inclusion-strategy\\_2024-26\\_v1.pdf](https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/media/vt0p2ha3/nenc-ics_digital-inclusion-strategy_2024-26_v1.pdf)

3. Please refer to the response to section 9, question 2.
4. Please refer to the response to section 9, 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](http://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](http://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**