

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 25–334

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

2 December 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 on 18 November 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, 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 requesting Freedom of Information about return-to-work (RTW) provisions or interventions available to NHS staff employed within your system (ICB/ICS) who are out of work or at risk of long-term sickness absence due to long-term health conditions. This request concerns staff support not patient services.

I understand that a return-to-work meeting is typically held after a staff member has been on sick leave for more than 14 days. Please provide:

1. Documents

Copies/links for any policies, pathways, SOPs, service specifications, hub pages, or staff-intranet content that describe Return to Work support offered to your staff (including eligibility, access/referral routes, components, delivery model, and any KPIs/monitoring you use).

2. Data

For any Return-to-Work programme(s) either previously operating and still operating, in your system. Please provide annual totals for each available year (e.g., 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25 to date):

- Provision name
- Referrals/contacts, eligible, started, completed

- RTW rate at 3 months; retention at 6 months (if recorded)
- Sickness-absence days (pre vs post) among staff (if recorded)
- Any routine breakdowns (e.g., staff group/band, site, condition group)
- Approximate programme cost (staffing WTE/band mix; external tariffs), if available.

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.

1. Documents

All episodes of sickness, no matter length of time would have a return-to-work meeting following the employees return, this would be managed locally by the line manager. KPI's and reasonable adjustments would be down to an individual's own needs; this would be arranged on a case-by-case basis with Occupational Health input.

Documents and staff support offer templates are attached, please see details of titles below:

- Staff Support Offer
- Health and Wellbeing
- Confidential support and advice
- Return to Work form
- Self-certification form
- Supporting attendance policy

2. Data

NENC ICB does not currently have a return-to-work programme in place and has not had one in the past. On that basis, the ICB does not hold the reporting figures you have requested.

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**