

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 25-372

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

5 January 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 9 December 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 writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information from your ICB:

1. Information about completing this FOI request
 - a. Who has contributed to this FOI response? Please provide job titles, not names.
2. Information about children and young people
 - a. Do you have an Executive Lead for Children and Young People (0-25)? [Y/N]. If yes, what is their name and email address?
 - b. Please can you share your ICB's plans or strategies relating to children and young people?
 - c. Within these plans or strategies, please can you highlight where therapeutic play (sometimes referred to as health play) or play is featured?
 - d. Do you have any guidance/policies on how play should be delivered in the healthcare settings in your ICB? [Y/N] If yes, please share it with us if you can.
3. Information about play budgets
 - a. Does your ICB have an annual budget/fund specifically for play in healthcare? [Y/N]
 - b. If yes:

- i. How much was this budget/fund in FY24-25 (from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025)?
- ii. What percentage/proportion of funding in paediatric services was allocated to play services in FY24-25 (from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025)?

4. Information about the Play Well Toolkit

- a. Has your ICB adopted or committed to adopt the Play Well guidelines (NHS England, 2025) in your commissioning of paediatric services? [Y/N]
- b. If not, please say why not.
- c. Does your ICB follow the NICE guideline on Babies, children and young people's experience of healthcare (NICE, 2021)? [Y/N]
- d. If yes, what measures has your ICB put in place to implement that part of NICE's guidance specifically on play in healthcare? [Y/N]

5. Information about measurement tools for 0-17 year olds

- a. Do any of the non-mental healthcare settings in your ICB collect any data on children and young people's mental health? [Y/N]. If yes, please share the measurement tools if you can.
- b. Do any of these data relate to mental health indicators arising from patients' healthcare experiences? [Y/N]

6. Information about your ICB's Neighbourhood Health Service

- a. Does your ICB's Neighbourhood Health and Care Model feature or mention play in healthcare? [Y/N]. If yes, please share where it is featured if you can.
- b. Does your ICB host any of the Neighbourhood Health Service pilot areas? [Y/N]
 - i. If yes, how many?
 - ii. If yes, do these pilot areas include children and young people's multi-disciplinary teams? [Y/N]
 - If yes, do these children and young people's multi-disciplinary teams include health play professionals (e.g., community health play specialists)? [Y/N]
 - If yes, within these pilot areas, does the integration with wider services include the involvement of any play services or projects? [Y/N]

If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, we would be very grateful if you could provide advice and assistance, under the Section 16 obligations of the Act, on how we can refine our request.

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. Information to complete this FOI was provided by Finance, Contracting and Delivery Teams.
2. Information about children and young people
 - a. Dr Hilary Lloyd is the ICB's chief nurse and AHP officer. Please direct all queries to Hilary Lloyd using the ICB's generic mailbox nencicb-sun.reception@nhs.net marked for her attention. Alternatively, please telephone the ICB's Switchboard on 0191-512-8484.
 - b. NENC ICB strategies can be found on the ICB's website at [Strategies | North East and North Cumbria NHS](#).
 - c. Please refer to response to question 2b. References to therapeutic or health play are detailed within the strategy on the ICB's website.

- d. No, NENC ICB does not have any guidance/policies on how play should be delivered in the healthcare settings in the ICB.

3. NENC ICB commission the providers to deliver core healthcare services like CAMHS/Hospice Care (for example) based on the outcomes we expect the service to deliver. How the providers choose to deliver those outcomes is for them to determine. As guidelines these are not mandated as part of the NHS standard contract.

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 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.

NENC Acute Hospital FTs	Email/Online portal
County Durham and Darlington NHS FT	cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net
Gateshead Health NHS FT	ghnt.foi.enquiries@nhs.net
North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT	foirequest@cumbria.nhs.uk
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS FT	nth-tr.foi@nhs.net
Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT	foi@northumbria.nhs.uk
South Tees Hospitals NHS FT	stees.foi.admin@nhs.net
South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT	stsft@infreemation.co.uk
The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT	https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/help/foi/

- 4. Please refer to the response to question 3.
- 5. Please refer to the response to question 3.
- 6. The ICB's Neighbourhood Health and Care Model does not feature or mention play in healthcare. The ICB hosts Neighbourhood Health Service pilot areas in Sunderland and Stockton (within Tees Valley ICB place).

The ICB does not have play in healthcare in Sunderland. Nursery nurses are based on the children's ward within Sunderland Royal Hospital. There is currently no CYP included in the Neighbourhood Health Service pilot. The pilot areas in Stockton do not include children and young people's multi-disciplinary teams.

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