

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 25–225

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

23 September 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 10 September 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

The ICB has set out an efficiencies programme worth £468m for 2025/26, under the following categories:

- Prescribing & MO efficiencies
- Continuing healthcare & packages of care
- Running costs and infrastructure
- Estates
- Service reform
- Internal flexibilities – stretch

<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/media/w1vpqj3a/item-15a-icb-2025-26-finance-report-m02-board.pdf>

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I am requesting the following information:

1. For each of the categories set out above, please state the name of at least one scheme taking place to save money.
2. Please provide a description of how that scheme or schemes work. For example, the ICB says it will save £37m from service reforms. Please outline what these service reforms consist of, the providers involved, and which CSUs and staffing groups will be affected by them.

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3. Please also provide the same information for the wider system efficiencies plan, which has been valued at £126m.

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.

The ICB efficiency programme for 2025/26 amounts to £126m in total, as shown within the finance report referenced above. As requested, an example of schemes within each of the categories is set out below.

£468m reflects the total efficiency plans of all NHS provider trusts within the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS). The ICB does not hold the detail of individual schemes within these plans, this would need to be requested from relevant provider organisations.

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 email addresses for acute and mental health foundation trusts to make your request.

NENC Acute Hospital FTs	Email
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	foi@nth.nhs.uk
Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT	foi@northumbria.nhs.uk
South Tees Hospitals NHS FT	foi@stees.nhs.uk
South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT	stsft.freedomofinformation@nhs.net
The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT	nuth.freedom.information@nhs.net

NENC Mental Health Hospital FTs	Email
Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS FT	foi@cntw.nhs.uk
Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS FT	tewv.foi@nhs.net

ICB Efficiency Plan

- **Prescribing & MO Efficiencies**
This programme includes a number of active interventions as well as digital solutions to provide best value in prescribing within primary care. Plans include a focus on reducing over-supply of drugs, switching from branded to generic drugs and reductions in opiod and antibiotic prescribing for example.
- **Continuing Healthcare & Packages of Care:**
A large area of focus within this programme is to reduce the current number of overdue reviews of individual packages of care. This includes a review of packages in place to ensure the healthcare needs of individual clients continue to be appropriately met.
- **Running Costs and Infrastructure:**

This relates to the remaining full year impact of changes to ICB structures and staffing establishment which were agreed in 2023/24 in order to deliver the nationally mandated real terms 30% reduction in ICB running cost allowance which was phased over the two years 2024/25 and 2025/26.

- *Estates:*
The efficiency plan is focused on reducing the cost of void estate to the ICB. This is space in buildings owned or leased by NHS Property Services and Community Health Partnerships on behalf of the ICB, for which void space is charged to the ICB. Void costs will be reduced by a combination of ending leases (or 'handing back' space) where estate is no longer required by the ICB, or by seeking providers and services to occupy the estate, thus reducing void costs to the ICB.
- *Service Reform Programmes*
This includes a wide range schemes and review of commissioned services across the ICB to identify potential areas for efficiency or potential decommissioning of services which are deemed to be lower priority or not providing value for money. Any potential decommissioning of services would follow the ICB decommissioning policy and would be subject to equality and quality impact assessment with appropriate public engagement and consultation where relevant. Examples of service areas that been the focus of the service reform programme include GP Out of hours, Podiatry, Gluten Free Prescribing and Virtual Wards.
- *Internal Flexibilities – stretch:*
This includes a number of more technical efficiencies and financial adjustments with no impact on commissioned services. This includes for example expected benefits from VAT refunds, drug rebates, review of any balance sheet items and budget slippage.

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**