

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 24–207

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By Email

11 September 2024

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 by North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) on 13 August 2024 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, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley (which covers the five local authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees).

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

Your Request

Under the [Freedom of Information Act/Environmental Information Regulations], I would like to request the following information:

For the financial year of 2022/2023 what did the ICB/ICS spend on repatriating patients (moving patients who have fallen ill in your ICB/ICS back to their "home" ICB/ICS) from their region/ ICB/ ISC to another ICS/ICB in the country.

Please contact me if you need me to clarify my 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. However, we have estimated that to provide you with the required information, would exceed the cost limit of £450 for the NHS as specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

S.12(1) of the FOIA provides that a public authority is not obliged to respond to a request for information if the cost of locating, retrieving, and extracting information and preparing the response can be included in the costs for these purposes.

It is estimated that it would averagely take a member of staff approximately 168 hours to obtain the requested information from the financial ledger. Allocating 2 minutes per transaction, the NENC ICB estimates 630 records for each ICB place x 2 minutes = 1,260 minutes divided by 60 = 21 hours to extract the level of detail requested for one ICB place. There are 8 ICB places, so the full time taken to obtain this information would be 168 hours. NENC ICB is therefore unable to provide the requested information within the prescribed limit.

As repatriation is not coded out separately in the ledger, the above calculation is based on the number of invoices coded to the Acute Cost Centre of PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICES, however, there may be patient transport invoices in other services lines for example Continuing Care, Mental Health, which would further increase investigation and the time taken for the request.

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 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 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 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 faithfully

S Davies

S Davies
Information Governance Officer