NHS
North East and North Cumbria

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\ FOI ICB 26–291

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

23 September 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 10 September 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

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB):

Guidance for GP practices

1. Copies of any current guidance, protocols or information provided to GP practices about the healthcare and registration of Children Looked After (children in care). This could be circulars issued to GPs or general guidance.
2. Within your area, which trusts are responsible for providing the following services;
   - Child Protection Medicals?
   - Looked After Children Initial Health Assessments?
   - Looked After Children Review Health Assessments?
3. Any guidance issued to GPs about children in your care whose corporate parent is not within your ICB area but are placed inside your ICB
4. Copies of any guidance for a GP on how to code a child is looked after by social care or subject to safeguarding mechanisms.

If the request would exceed the cost limit under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act, please provide the information for items 1 and 2 first and advise me how I could narrow the remaining request as per section 16.

Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB does hold the information requested.

Relevant ICB-held information
The ICB holds the NHS England NHS Safeguarding Child Protection Information System (CP-IS) with integrated care boards – January 2025 protocol. It records that CP-IS securely shares social-care status, including looked-after status and child protection plans, and provides relevant contextual information. It is not a substitute for locality-specific GP guidance.

The ICB's 2025/26 safeguarding records also evidence system oversight of safeguarding in general practice and the development and sharing of guidance and training through Named GP and safeguarding networks.

The sections below reflect locality responses and ICB-held information received up to 22 September 2026. Where a completed locality response or current guidance document has not been identified, this is stated expressly.

North Cumbria
1. A local guidance document is held and was last updated by North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust (NCIC); the recorded response identifies the Named GP as the document owner. Obtain and attach a current copy before disclosure.
2. Within the NENC footprint, Child Protection Medicals are provided by NCIC. For South Cumbria, the recorded response identifies University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust. Children Looked After Initial Health Assessments are provided by NCIC. Children Looked After Review Health Assessments are provided by NCIC.
3. Where a notification is received and the child is registered with a local GP, the notification is forwarded to the practice. When notified of a non-Cumbrian child, the service writes to the carer advising registration with local health services, including a GP.
4. Local notification forms advise GP practices which SNOMED codes to use when a child becomes cared for, adopted or a care leaver. Attach current forms.

Northumberland and North Tyneside
1. The ICB holds a process for notifying primary care when a cared-for child aged 17 is registered with a practice and is approaching care-leaver status. This process is implemented in both Northumberland and North Tyneside. There is a local document: The process of notifying Primary Care regarding Care Leavers in the practice.
2. Child Protection Medicals are provided by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHCFT). Children Looked After Initial Health Assessments are provided by NHCFT. Children Looked After Review Health Assessments are provided by NHCFT.
3. No separate recorded guidance for GPs concerning children placed locally by an out-of-area corporate parent was identified in the response received.
4. No separate recorded GP coding guidance was identified in the response received.

Newcastle and Gateshead
1. GP safeguarding training packs include a Children in Care handout. The guidance states that every looked-after child should be registered with a GP as soon as possible after entering care or moving placement and should normally be registered permanently, to reduce the risk of loss to follow-up by therapies and specialist services.

2. Child Protection Medicals are provided by Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust and The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, according to local arrangements. Children Looked After Initial Health Assessments are provided by the same trusts, according to local arrangements. Children Looked After Review Health Assessments are provided by the same trusts, according to local arrangements.
3. The ICB does not hold separate specific guidance for GPs on this issue. Information may be shared operationally by the relevant NHS foundation trust Children in Care Team.
4. The Children in Care handout advises practices to flag records using appropriate clinical coding. Attach the relevant extract and check current codes against the source handout before disclosure.

Sunderland and South Tyneside

1. The locality response identifies the following guidance: Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked-After Children (DfE/DH, 2015); Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026); NICE Guideline NG205 (2021); and the RCPCH/RCN Intercollegiate Competency Framework (2025).
2. Child Protection Medicals are provided by South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (STSFT). Children Looked After Initial Health Assessments are provided by STSFT. Children Looked After Review Health Assessments are provided by the STSFT Children in Care Health Team for Sunderland and South Tyneside children living locally and within the radius described in the locality response.
3. The locality response refers to Applying Corporate Parenting Principles to Looked-After Children and Care Leavers (DfE, 2018).
4. An agreed SNOMED code list is shared through GP TeamNet and includes Children in Care coding. When a child enters care, the Children in Care Health Team informs the GP practice and provides the SNOMED code to add to the child's record. The latest SNOMED codes supplied are under review.

Supporting material:

- SNOMED Codes

County Durham and Darlington

1. No County Durham-specific GP guidance document solely relating to the registration and healthcare of Children in Care has been identified. Regular GP lead learning sessions are provided, with Children in Care as an annual theme. Relevant national guidance includes Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked-After Children (DfE/DH, 2015), NICE Guideline NG205 (2021), and the RCPCH/RCN competency framework (2025).
2. Child Protection Medicals are provided by County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT). Children Looked After Initial Health Assessments are provided by CDDFT. Children Looked After Review Health Assessments are provided by CDDFT. The locality response also identifies Harrogate and District Foundation Trust within the review assessment arrangements described for Durham children in care.
3. No separate County Durham-specific guidance has been identified for children whose corporate parent is outside the ICB area, but who are placed within the ICB. The commissioned Children in Care service operates under national statutory guidance and NHS commissioning arrangements.
4. The CDDFT Children in Care Health Team records SNOMED codes on SystmOne and the hospital record once notified by local authorities that a child is in their care. This includes children from other areas living in Durham.

Supporting material:

- DCS Template LAC auto populate.
- DCS Safeguarding System/SystmOne coding for frontline workers.
- EMIS Web Safeguarding Template coding for frontline workers.
- Primary Care Must Dos for CLA, last promoted in February 2026.

Tees Valley

1. The ICB is not aware of a Tees Valley-specific GP guidance document solely relating to the registration and healthcare of Children Looked After (CIC). GP practices are guided through national statutory and professional guidance, including:
   - Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked-After Children (DfE/DH, 2015)
   - NICE Guideline NG205: Looked-after Children and Young People (2021)
   - RCPCH/RCN Safeguarding Children and Young People and Children and Young People in Care: Roles and Competencies for Healthcare Staff (2025)

   In addition, the Named GP facilitates quarterly learning sessions for GP practices which incorporate learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), Rapid Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs).

2. Trusts responsible for services are noted in the tables below:

   Child Protection Medicals are provided as follows:

Local Authority Area	Provider
Middlesbrough	Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Redcar & Cleveland	Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Stockton-on-Tees	Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Hartlepool	Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Darlington	County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT)

   Initial Health Assessments for Children Looked After are provided by:

Local Authority Area	Provider
Middlesbrough	Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Redcar & Cleveland	Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Stockton-on-Tees	Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Hartlepool	Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Darlington	County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT)

   Review Health Assessments for Children Looked After across Tees Valley are provided by Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT).

3. Guidance issued to GPs regarding children placed within the ICB area whose corporate parent is located elsewhere; no separate Tees Valley-specific guidance has been identified. The commissioned Children in Care service operates in accordance with national statutory guidance and NHS commissioning arrangements, including responsibilities for children placed out of area and those whose responsible local authority is located elsewhere.
4. Guidance for GPs on coding Children Looked After or children subject to safeguarding arrangements

The Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust Children in Care Health Team records appropriate SNOMED codes on SystmOne once notified by local authorities that a child has entered care. This includes children from other areas who are living within Tees Valley.

The North East and North Cumbria ICB advises that, within Tees Valley, there are no specific local guidance documents issued to GP practices solely relating to the healthcare and registration of Children Looked After. Practice support is provided through national statutory guidance and regular safeguarding learning sessions delivered by the Named GP.

Child Protection Medicals and Initial Health Assessments are provided primarily by Tees University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, with Darlington services provided by CDDFT. Review Health Assessments are provided by Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust. No separate guidance exists for children placed in the area by another corporate parent, with services operating in accordance with national statutory requirements. SNOMED coding for Children Looked After is applied by the Children in Care Health Team following notification from local authorities.

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 the foundation trusts (FTs) referenced above, should you wish to redirect your questions.

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/
Other Acute Hospital FTs	**Email/Online portal**
Harrogate and District NHS FT	https://www.hdft.nhs.uk/freedom-of-information/make-a-foi-request/
University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS FT	freedom.information@mbht.nhs.uk

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