

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria
ICB\FOI ICB793

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01 March 2024

By Email

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 27 February 2024 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

NENC ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley (which covers the 5 councils that make it up – Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees).

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

Your Request

I am writing to you with a freedom of information request around the care of transgender people and the NHS right to choose.

Currently our local gender dysphoria service, the Northern Region Gender Dysphoria Service (NRGDS) has stopped accepting further referrals, which the current waiting time for the last person referred estimated at greater than 5 years. Patients are being referred to clinics elsewhere in the UK, but waiting times for those clinics are similar. We therefore have patients waiting well over the 18 weeks that we should be aiming to see patients in and have a duty to offer them private alternatives through NHS right to choose if there are suitable private services available.

My question, specifically, is:

1. Whether or not the ICB has investigated what suitable alternatives to the NHS clinics are available for patients awaiting a potential gender dysphoria diagnosis

2. What the results of that investigation were, should it have occurred
3. If this investigation has not yet occurred, what is the reason for it not being done when there is an established clinical need?

Our Response

On this occasion it is not possible 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.

NENC ICB does not commission the gender dysphoria service, its NHSE. Therefore, we suggest that you redirect your request to them as follows:

NHS England	england.contactus@nhs.net	Please write "Freedom of Information" in the subject line.
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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 sincerely

Pamela Coxon

Pamela Coxon
Information Governance Officer