

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 26–180

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

3 August 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 July 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

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act relating to Black maternal mental health in England. I would like to clarify that these questions relate to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) as it is now and any predecessor ICBs within its geographical area.

In each of the last three years (2023-2026):

1. How many services have been commissioned by your organisation to specifically support Black maternal mental health?
 - a. What type of support is provided by these services?
 - b. How does your organisation currently signpost to or commission any Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE), community-led or culturally specific services supporting Black mothers during pregnancy, birth or the postnatal period?
 - c. How are these services evaluated and what does the evaluation show?
2. How does your organisation and maternity services collate data on the specific perinatal mental health experiences and needs of Black mothers?
 - What does this data show, and how frequently is it collated?

3. Has your organisation commissioned maternity-specific cultural competency or anti-racism training, to be delivered to clinical staff (including, but not limited to, midwives, obstetricians, and maternity support workers) specifically targeted to aid understanding of and support Black mothers facing mental health difficulties? If yes,
 - a. What did the training cover?
 - b. Who delivered the training, and was this delivered by a specialist organisation with expertise in Black maternal health, perinatal mental health and lived experience?
 - c. Was the training co-created with Black mothers, Black women with lived experience, or community-led organisations?
 - d. When was the training delivered and how frequently?
 - e. How many staff received the training?
 - f. What gaps were identified in culturally responsive training or support for Black mothers, does your organisation have plans to commission or develop provision in this area?
 - g. How is the training evaluated and what does the evaluation show?
 - h. What criteria does your organisation use to assess whether training or services are culturally competent, trauma-informed and appropriate for Black mothers?

Our Response

1. Maternal Mental Health services are commissioned across the North East and North Cumbria (NENC). They support all women or birthing people who require mental health support during their maternal journey. The services offer assessment, treatment and advice for women and birth people and their partners who are experiencing psychological distress related to: Complex Birth trauma (PTSD), Loss (Miscarriage, Stillbirth, Stillbirth Neonatal Death and Termination), Severe fear of childbirth (Tokophobia) following previous loss/trauma and Severe fear of hospital environment/foetal medicine impacting on care.
 - a. Support includes direct input (e.g. therapeutic intervention), indirect input (e.g. consultation and supervision) and systemic working (e.g. system training).
 - b. 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. NENC ICB does not commission specific VCSE services for the community.

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.

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/
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- c. Fast follower maternal mental health service sites were evaluated by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) these finding are publicly available: [ESMI-III: The Effectiveness and Implementation of Maternal Mental Health Services – ARC South West](#). Therefore, the ICB considers this element of your request exempt from disclosure by way of s.21 as the information is readily accessible by other means

2. Please refer to the response to question 1b.

- a. 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. NENC ICB does not commission specific VCSE services for the community.

However, we have determined that the information is held by the mental health 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.

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

3. NENC ICB has commissioned training, please see the details below.

- a. The training was not specifically targeted at supporting Black mothers with mental health difficulties, but it did cover wider cultural curiosity and safety within maternity and neonatal care, including unconscious bias, anti-racism, systemic barriers, the impact of racism on outcomes, and approaches to providing equitable, culturally safe and patient centred.
- b. The Cultural Curiosity and Safety training was delivered by Baby Lifeline. The programme was commissioned for maternity and neonatal services across NENC and was delivered as a specialist training offer focused on cultural curiosity, safety, equity and culturally sensitive care.
- c. Baby Lifeline developed the course content and NENC ICB do not hold confirmed information on whether the training was co-created with Black mothers, Black women with lived experience, or community-led organisations. Please contact Baby Lifeline directly to obtain this information. Their website address is [Baby Lifeline](#)
- d. The Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems (LMNS) commissioned Baby Lifeline Cultural Curiosity training in 2025, including an online 1.5-day workshop on 22–23 April and a 3-day Train the Trainer programme on 18–20 June. A further online Train the Trainer cohort was arranged for 2–4 March 2026, after which each NENC trust will deliver six-hour Cultural Curiosity training locally.
- e. 36 staff have been trained as Train the Trainer across the eight provider trusts. Trust-level numbers and the number of wider staff subsequently trained through local mandatory study days should be confirmed with each provider trust.

- f. We have not identified any gaps in our training to date. As described above, this training covers the global majority and is not specific to Black mothers. We have no plans to commission or develop specific provision in this area.
- g. Baby Lifeline completed the evaluation. Evaluation used delegate feedback, session ratings and pre/post confidence questions. For the 2026 course, 100% rated the education as very good or excellent, 81% said it met or exceeded their objectives, and 100% intended to modify practice.
- h. The Cultural Curiosity training learning objectives and course content were reviewed and approved by the LMNS Equity & Equality Co-Chairs and the LMNS Clinical Lead prior to implementation.

This approval process was used to ensure that the training content was culturally appropriate, aligned with the aims of the LMNS Equity & Equality programme and reflected the needs of the local maternity and neonatal system.

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**