

Our Reference      North East and North Cumbria  
ICB\FOI ICB794

[NECS – John Snow House](#)  
Durham University Science Park  
Durham  
DH1 3YG

Tel: 0191 301 1300  
E-mail: [necsu.icbfoi@nhs.net](mailto:necsu.icbfoi@nhs.net)

07 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 would like to make the following request on abortion numbers for 2023:

- Number of abortions broken down by ethnic group, then from ethnic groups broken by the age of the women, broken down by how many weeks pregnant and the gender of the baby (if known).

**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.*

*We do have access to SUS data that gives activity at NHS providers for ICB patients (though not at the level the FOI asks for) but this will not cover the total activity for residents as there will be*

*missing data for organisations such as BPAS and private patients. In addition, we would need to take advice as to how such procedures are coded.*

*There is a definitive source of published data, here is the link for the latest full year data [Abortion statistics for England and Wales: 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/abortion-statistics-for-england-and-wales-2021)*

*And a guide to the collection and publication of abortion statistics here: [Guide to abortion statistics, England and Wales: 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guides/guide-to-abortion-statistics)*

*Basically, they are saying that the doctor taking responsibility for the procedure is legally required to notify the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of the abortion within 14 days of the termination, whether carried out in the NHS or an approved independent sector place and whether or not the woman is a UK resident.*

*The Department of Health and Social Care provides a [HSA4 form](#) for this purpose. And that published statistics are based upon an analysis of these, which we obviously do not have access to.*

*The website explains that the publication of 2022 has been delayed due to a backlog of forms waiting to be processed, they have published data from January to June 2022.*

*Also included on their website are statistics from freedom of information and other data releases, which maybe suggests that they are best placed to handle FOI requests in this area.*

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](https://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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) . This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours sincerely

*Pamela Coxon*

**Pamela Coxon**  
**Information Governance Officer**