

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 24–356

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By Email

13 January 2025

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 17 December 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

I'd like to request the following information under the FOI Act:

1. A list of the national medicines optimisation opportunities the ICB has been delivering in 2024/25.
2. A list of the national medicines optimisation opportunities the ICB worked on delivering in 2023/24.
3. A list of the locally identified medicines optimisation priorities the ICB has been delivering in 2023/24.
4. A list of the locally identified medicines optimisation priorities the ICB has been delivering in 2024/25.

By way of context, in the 2024/25 planning guidance ICBs were told to "*optimise medicine value through delivering against at least 5 of the national medicines optimisation opportunities alongside locally identified priorities*".

NHSE listed the 16 national medicines optimisation opportunities referred to in the planning guidance in a document entitled National medicines optimisation opportunities 2024/25. This was

the second year that NHSE had asked ICBs to focus on at least five of these opportunities. In 2023/24 it also published a document listing the same 16 opportunities.

Our Response

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

1. The ICB has a focus on all the medicines optimisation (MO) opportunities for 2024/25. For your reference these national priorities can be found at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/national-medicines-optimisation-opportunities-2023-24/>
2. The ICB worked on delivering the MO opportunities for 2023/24. Those national priorities can be found at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines-2/medicines-optimisation/national-medicines-opportunities-23-24/>
3. While focusing on all MO opportunities in 2023/24, ICB priorities include:
 - Polypharmacy
 - Low priority prescribing
 - Improving equitable adoption of the most clinically and cost-effective medicines, using best value biologics
 - Addressing inappropriate antidepressant prescribing
 - Appropriate prescribing and supply of blood glucose and ketone meters, and testing strips and lancets, using best value direct-acting oral anticoagulants.
 - Optimising inhaler use to improve respiratory outcomes and reduce carbon emissions, Improving valproate safety
 - Optimising lipid management for cardiovascular disease prevention
 - Reducing course length of antimicrobial prescribing
 - Chronic non-cancer pain management without opioids
 - Switching intravenous antibiotics to oral.
4. Please refer to the priorities listed in question 3, for 2023/24.

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

S Davies

S Davies
Information Governance Officer