

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 24-291

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By Email

13 November 2024

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 18 October 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

1. How much funding has been allocated across the North East and North Cumbria footprint to the establishment and operation of Women's Health Hubs since the publication of the 2022 Women's Health Strategy?
2. What percentage of the overall North East and North Cumbria budget has been designated for women's health services, specifically for menstrual health conditions, in the Women's Health Hubs?
3. Has the funding for Women's Health Hubs in North East and North Cumbria been reviewed or adjusted since the initial allocations? If so, please provide details on any changes.
4. How many Women's Health Hubs are currently operating in North East and North Cumbria?
5. What menstrual health services (e.g., diagnosis and treatment of heavy menstrual bleeding, endometriosis, period pain, etc.) are currently offered in Women's Health Hubs in North East and North Cumbria?
6. Are there specialists (e.g., gynaecologists, nurses) specifically trained to address menstrual health issues within the Women's Health Hub[s] in North East and North Cumbria?
7. What referral pathways are available for individuals requiring specialist care beyond the scope of the Women's Health Hub[s] in North East and North Cumbria?

8. What does the patient pathway between primary, secondary, and tertiary care look like in relation to i) endometriosis, ii) heavy menstrual bleeding, and iii) fibroids in North East and North Cumbria.
9. How does North East and North Cumbria monitor the quality and effectiveness of menstrual health services provided in the Women's Health Hubs?
10. What audits have been conducted since the inception of the Women's Health Hubs in North East and North Cumbria and in what areas and how often?
11. Who from North East and North Cumbria senior leadership team is part of the Network of Women's Health Champions?
12. What services are currently being provided by the Women's Health Hubs in North East and North Cumbria?
13. What percentage of women are treated with LARC (long-acting reversible contraception)/ Intrauterine system (IUS) for heavy menstrual bleeding, as recommended by NICE, in your North East and North Cumbria?
14. Does North East and North Cumbria follow the 2021 GIRFT guidance for gynaecology?

Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB holds some of the information you have requested.

1. Allocated funding was £595,000 across 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years. There was no service in place prior to this time.
2. Less than 1% of the ICB's budget was designated for menstrual health conditions in the Women's Health Hubs. Any funding received from Women's Health Hubs into the ICB is fully spent on Women's Health.
3. No, the funding has not been reviewed.
4. There are 3 women's health hubs currently operating in the NENC region.
5. None of the 3 hubs are currently providing core service menstrual problems assessment and treatment. Long-acting contraceptives are provided for contraception purposes and also for heavy bleeding.
6. 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.
7. Patients requiring specialist support, which is over and above service provision across each of the 3 pilot hubs, will be referred onto NHS specialist pathways, depending on the individual needs of each patient, within Primary and Secondary Care settings.
8. Please refer to the response to question 6.
9. Currently none of the 3 hubs are delivering the core service menstrual problems assessment and treatment.
10. There have been no audits carried out.
11. Lead commissioner for Women's Health is Siobhan Brown, Director for Healthier Fairer, Women's Health and Project Management Office.
12. The services provided are:
 - Menopause assessment and treatment
 - Contraceptive counselling and full range of contraceptive support and advice.
 - Pessary fitting and removal.
 - Cervical screening.
 - Screening and treatment for STI's and HIV screening.
13. Please refer to the response to question 2.

The published LARC data - is based on 'main method' not for heavy menstrual bleeding (table 17a) – <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/sexual-and-reproductive-health-services>

14. Please refer to the response to question 2.

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