

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 26–006

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

14 April 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 2 April 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 sending this request under the Freedom of Information Act to ask for the following information. Please could you supply data for each of the ICBs you manage FOIs for, where applicable. If all questions cannot be answered in the appropriate time limit, please answer the questions in order until the time limit is reached.

1. In 2025, how many referrals of any form were made to the ICB for Fast-Track Continuing Healthcare (CHC)?
2. How many of the referrals in question 1 were rejected as inappropriate by the ICB?
3. Please explain, in general terms, the main reasons for which referrals were deemed inappropriate
4. How many of the referrals in question 1 were withdrawn/closed by
 - a. The referrer, or
 - b. The patient/their family.
5. How many of the referrals in question 1 were withdrawn/closed as a result of the patient dying before any funding was put in place?
6. In 2025, how many referrals were accepted for Fast-Track Continuing Healthcare?
7. In 2025, what was the average timeframe – for Fast-Track CHC referrals that were accepted – between receipt of the completed Fast Track Pathway Tool and the care package being commissioned. Please provide the answer in hours where possible, or otherwise in days. If

data for calendar years cannot be provided, please instead give the average timeframe for the most relevant period for which data can be compiled (for example, December 2025).

8. In 2025, what was the average timeframe – for Fast-Track CHC referrals that were accepted – between receipt of the completed Fast Track Pathway Tool and the funding for the care package being put in place. Please provide the answer in days. If data for calendar years cannot be provided, please instead give the average timeframe for the most relevant period for which data can be compiled (for example, December 2025).
9. Please can you explain the decision-making process for Fast-Track Continuing Healthcare referrals, giving details of all criteria involved in the process between receiving the referral and commissioning support? As part of this, please could you explain:
 - a. The criteria you use for who can make a Fast-Track CHC referral (for example, are non-NHS medical professionals, care home nurses and/or GPs able to do this?)
 - b. Whether Fast-Track Continuing Healthcare referrals made by an appropriate clinician are subject to further checks by professionals working for, or on behalf of, the ICB before being granted? Please explain this process if so.
 - c. Whether a patient referred by an appropriate clinician is required to meet further criteria, such as having a primary health need, in order to qualify for Fast-Track support?

Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB holds some of the information requested. This is detailed in the spreadsheet attached.

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 for Northumberland ICB place. However, we have determined that the information is held by Northumberland County Council.

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 a link to the council's FOI portal: [Information Governance | Northumberland County Council](#)

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**