



# North East and North Cumbria

Our Reference North East & North Cumbria  
ICB FOI 398

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16 June 2023

By Email

Dear

## **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 05 June 2023 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**

Is your Integrated Care Board aware of the recently published NHS England publication titled "Optimising personalised care for adults prescribed medicines associated with dependence or withdrawal symptoms: Framework for action for integrated care boards (ICBs) and primary care"?

[NHS England » Optimising personalised care for adults prescribed medicines associated with dependence or withdrawal symptoms: Framework for action for integrated care boards \(ICBs\) and primary care](#)

If so, what action will your Board take to:

- 1) Provide appropriate withdrawal services (not inappropriate substance misuse services) for patients who have become dependent, through no fault of their own, to prescribed drugs identified in the recent PHE review, such as benzodiazepines, z drugs, opioid containing drugs, antidepressants and pregabalin and gabapentin?
- 2) Develop local policies for the above?
- 3) Implement in prescribing practice when prescribing the drugs mentioned above?

These were three key objectives in the NHS England publication.

## **Our Response**

*NENC ICB can confirm that it is aware of that publication*

1. *Commissioning of services is under constant review and the development of an ICB clinical strategy will inform this in future. The information in this review is a consideration in the development of that clinical strategy*
2. *As above*
3. *There are a number of initiatives in place to support prescribers with the information in the report and according to best evidence. These include the public facing campaign 'Painkillers Don't Exist' along with various locally commissioned prescribing quality schemes. A new pain clinical network has been established to support development of evidence and commissioning direction in relation to dependence forming medicines used in that clinical condition.*

In line 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 make a complaint or 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 complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. 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.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.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**