

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 26–139

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

13 July 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 19 June 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

We are requesting specific information regarding the commissioning of HIV support and related services. We are requesting information regarding the services commissioned to provide support for people living with HIV at the point that the responsibility for this commissioning was transferred to ICBs, as of April 2025.

It would be appreciated if your institution could provide us with the information set out in the questions below. If you do not commission any support services specifically for people living with HIV, please respond to that effect.

At the point of assuming responsibility for HIV commissioning:

1. Was funding being provided through contracts and/or grants for services specifically supporting people living with HIV? Please specify whether a contract or a grant.
2. Detail what support services were being provided for people living with HIV?
3. What providers of HIV support were being commissioned in your area?
4. Of these which were:
 - a. HIV voluntary/community organisations
 - b. Other non-HIV voluntary support/community organisations
 - c. Spent internally within the trust

- d. Somewhere else – please specify
- 5. Was support for people living with HIV explicitly mentioned within the contractual and/or documentation for any generic services you funded?
- 6. What was the total (non-clinical) spend for HIV support services?
- 7. How many unique individuals were supported by HIV support services?
- 8. What was the total spend per head for HIV support services?

Our Response

The responsibility for commissioning HIV treatment and care services transferred from Speciality Commissioning to NENC ICB in April 2025. The majority of that is for contracts with NHS providers and there is likely to be support for patients specified within those contracts.

Service specifications are nationally set by NHS England, so the support requirements may well be nationally determined, although I think some areas do commission Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise providers for peer support from those with lived experience. Provider trusts may arrange this themselves within their contract.

NENC ICB were commissioning Blue Sky Trust to provide peer support to those diagnosed through the ED Opt Out Blood Borne Virus testing programme during 2025. This is an NHS England programme through which funding comes to the ICB to commission the trust (The Newcastle-upon-Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (NuTH)) for the opt out testing programme, and the peer support. NENC ICB had a contract in place with Blue Sky Trust in 2025 until February 2026. NHSE reduced the funding for this aspect this year and has just been through the process of agreeing our MOU with NHSE and contracting with NuTH and Blue Sky Trust for this year.

Please find the information the ICB holds in relation to the Blue Sky Trust service:

- 1. Yes, NENC ICB had a contract with Blue Sky Trust to February 2026..
- 2. The contract with Blue Sky Trust was for peer support for those newly diagnosed with HIV through ED opt out testing.
- 3. The provider of HIV support was Blue Sky Trust.
- 4. Blue Sky Trust was a HIV voluntary/community organisation.
- 5. Yes, support for people living with HIV was explicitly mentioned within the contractual and/or documentation for generic services funded.
- 6. NENC ICB had a 12-month contract for £50,353 with Blue Sky Trust contract. This contract ran from March 2025 to February 2026, and finances split to £25,176.50 in each of 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.
- 7. The number of patients who have received peer support was 429 (April to December 2025).
- 8. We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB on this occasion is not able 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. However, we have determined that the information is held by NHS England's Commissioning Team in the North East and Yorkshire

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 the FOI contact for the team: england.commissioningtransformation-ney@nhs.net

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**