



North East and North Cumbria

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 25–506

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

5 March 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 4 March 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

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following recorded information held by your organisation regarding assurance processes for software-based data erasure of end-of-life IT equipment.

For clarity, this request relates specifically to the erasure of storage media associated with end-of-life hardware such as laptops, desktops, servers, storage arrays, or other data bearing IT equipment. It does not relate to operational deletion of data within live systems, routine account management, or DSP Toolkit self-assessment processes.

Physical destruction methods such as shredding, crushing, degaussing, or disintegration are outside the scope of this request. This request concerns software-based erasure only.

This request seeks to distinguish between confirmation that an erasure process was carried out and recorded evidence demonstrating that the final data state of a specific storage device is irrecoverable. I am not seeking technical configuration detail or security sensitive information, only the recorded assurance basis relied upon when concluding that personal data has been rendered irrecoverable. Please confirm:

www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk

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1. Whether your organisation's policies, contractual terms, or internal procedures require an explicit outcome-based warranty or guarantee that personal data on a specific storage device has been rendered irrecoverable as a final data state following software-based erasure.
2. Where software-based erasure of storage media is undertaken internally, what recorded evidential assurance is relied upon to conclude that the final data state of the specific storage device is irrecoverable, as distinct from confirmation that an erasure process was executed.
3. Where software-based erasure is undertaken by a third-party provider:
 - a. Do the certificates or contractual documents held constitute an explicit outcome-based warranty or guarantee of irrecoverability for each specific storage device processed?
 - b. Beyond reliance on supplier accreditation or recognised standards including but not limited to ADISA certification, ISO accreditation, NIST alignment, HMG IA standards, NHS Digital guidance, or Data Security and Protection Toolkit assertions, and beyond confirmation that a wiping process was completed, does the organisation hold any recorded, device specific documentation evidencing independent verification, testing, or validation that the data on the storage media has been rendered irrecoverable in practice?
4. If no explicit outcome-based warranty or device specific outcome evidence is held beyond certification, accreditation, or confirmation of process completion, please confirm what recorded form of evidential assurance is relied upon when concluding that personal data has been rendered irrecoverable.

Our Response

1. 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 North of England Commissioning Support (NECS).

To further clarify, NENC ICB uses a third-party – NECS – for its Corporate IT Service provision and secure disposal and decommissioning of IT equipment and data sanitation. This is delivered within the SLA as part of an Asset Management Service line. The third-party supplier has its own assurance / audit process to ensure compliance NHS standards in particular the Records Management Code of Practice 2021, which also underpin the ICB Record Management Policy.

The ICB does not hold specific details or records of the third-party supplier or its subcontracted disposal services.

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 NECS: england.contactus@nhs.net. Please write "Freedom of Information" in the subject line.

2. Please refer to the response to question 1.
3. Please refer to the response to question 1.
4. Please refer to the response to question 1.
5. Please refer to the response to question 1.

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**