

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 25–294

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By Email

12 November 2025

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 27 October 2025 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 submitting a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please provide the following information (1 January 2023 to present) regarding GP premises and primary-care service configuration in the Bewick Road / Prince Consort Road area of Gateshead:

1. Details of any applications, submissions, assessments or approvals relating to the relocation of any GP practice currently operating on/near Bewick Road to Prince Consort Road (or nearby), including the practice name(s) and the proposed new address(es).
2. The anticipated timelines (planned or approved) for any such relocations, and any ICB project plans or decision logs recording the same.
3. Copies of ICB committee papers, agendas, minutes, or decision notices (e.g., Primary Care Commissioning Committee, Place-Based committees/boards) that consider or note GP premises relocation affecting this area.
4. Any impact assessments commissioned or held by the ICB relating to such relocation(s), including patient access, equality impact, primary-care capacity, or pharmaceutical services impact.
5. Copies of correspondence, emails, or meeting notes between the ICB (including Place/PCN teams) and any of the following concerning the above:
 - Gateshead Council (Planning / Regeneration / Estates / HWB)

- NHS England / NHS Property Services / Community Health Partnerships
 - Local GP practices (incl. Bewick Road Medical Centre)
 - Private developers or their agents
 - Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC) or pharmacy operators (incl. Avicenna or successors)
6. Copies of any public consultation documents, engagement summaries, or patient communications issued or held by the ICB in relation to the relocation.
 7. Details of any Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) considerations, supplementary statements, or ICB market-entry/Control-of-Entry evaluations that reference:
 - relocation of pharmacy or GP premises in this area;
 - Regulation 24 “relocation of existing pharmacy premises” applications;
 - any applications or pre-application discussions for pharmacy services within a proposed health centre on/near Prince Consort Road.
 8. Any place-based partnership / Integrated Care Partnership / Health & Wellbeing Board materials supplied by or to the ICB (reports, slide decks, briefing notes) that touch on the above relocation or related primary-care estate changes.

If helpful, please confirm which ICB teams hold relevant information (e.g., Primary Care Commissioning, Estates, Place/Gateshead, Governance) and coordinate a single response. I am requesting administrative/organisational information only, not personal data.

Please provide responses electronically (PDF/EML or similar). If any part is unclear or would benefit from refinement under s.16 (duty to advise and assist), please let me know.

Our Response

1. We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB does hold the requested information. However, on this occasion, it is not possible to satisfy all elements of your request.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 contains a number of exemptions that allow a public authority to withhold certain information from release. Some of the requested information is exempt under s.43(2) of the FOIA2000 as disclosure is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of a person as defined by the Act.

S.43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act protects against the disclosure of information where it would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of either a third party or the public authority itself.

The Information Commissioner's Office has established a multi criteria test for assessing whether a section 43(2) exemption is applicable to the requested information. The first criteria is to determine if the information relates to or could impact on a commercial activity, the second criteria is if the commercial activity is conducted in a competitive environment, and finally if that information is commercially sensitive.

The requested material includes detailed financial, contractual, and project documentation relating to the proposed relocation, including rent reimbursement levels, lease negotiations, and correspondence between the ICB, the practice, and the Jewish Community Council of Gateshead (JCCG), who are leading and funding the scheme.

Disclosure of this information at this stage would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of both the ICB and third parties by:

- Revealing ongoing negotiation positions on lease and rent reimbursement values;
- Exposing financially sensitive data that could disadvantage parties during active discussions.

Factors in favour of *withholding the information* are largely laid out in the explanation for the use of the exemption above but would include:

- Ongoing negotiations: Information relates to active lease and rent reimbursement discussions. Disclosure could undermine the ICB's negotiating position or that of the practice or third-party funder.
- Commercial prejudice: Release of sensitive financial data (e.g., rent levels, funding contributions) could prejudice future negotiations or discourage charitable and community-led investment in NHS estate projects.
- Premature disclosure: Releasing incomplete or draft information could cause confusion or misinterpretation before final terms are agreed.
- Impact on third parties: Disclosure could reveal information about the Jewish Community Council of Gateshead's financial commitments or strategy, which has been shared in confidence.
- Public interest balance: While there is some public interest in transparency, this is outweighed by the need to protect the integrity of commercial negotiations and ensure the best outcome for NHS resources and patients.

Factors in favour of *releasing the information* include:

- Transparency and accountability: Disclosure could help demonstrate how the ICB is making decisions regarding the use of public funds and the relocation of NHS services.
- Public understanding: Providing information could increase understanding of how local healthcare estates are being developed and how decisions are made in partnership with community organisations.
- Confidence in process: Openness may help reassure patients and stakeholders that the ICB is acting appropriately and ensuring value for money.

After consideration of the above factors, we believe, on balance, the public interest lies in maintaining the exemption which outweighs the interest in disclosure at this stage. Releasing commercially sensitive information before agreements are concluded could undermine negotiations and delay delivery of improved GP facilities for patients.

2. At present, disclosure of detailed project information would be premature and commercially sensitive. Once lease agreements and funding arrangements are concluded, the ICB will publish an appropriate summary through its usual governance and engagement channels.

The ICB intends to publish summary information about the relocation once formal agreements are finalised, including details of approved premises and expected patient benefits. Draft materials are currently being developed but are not yet approved for publication; disclosure now would therefore be premature. At present there is no defined date.

3. No specific papers, reports, or briefing materials have been provided to or received from Place-Based Partnerships, the Integrated Care Partnership, or the Gateshead Health & Wellbeing

Board in relation to pharmacy services or relocation of GP premises in this area beyond general updates on the ICB's primary care estates work programme.

Any documents held relate only to high-level estates planning discussions, which do not include pharmacy provision or contain information beyond what is already covered by internal project papers.

4. The ICB does not currently hold any completed impact assessments relating to the proposed relocation of Bewick Road Medical Practice, including those covering patient access, equality impact, primary care capacity or pharmaceutical services.

All relevant assessments including equality impact assessment, patient access considerations, and service capacity reviews will be undertaken as part of the formal consultation and planning process, once a lease agreement has been finalised and it is confirmed that the proposed premises can be secured and refurbished for GP service delivery.

5. Please refer to the response to question 1.
6. NENC ICB does not hold copies of the documents you have requested. Formal patient and public engagement has not yet taken place, as this will occur once a final agreement is reached confirming that the premises can be secured and refurbished for clinical use. A communications plan will be developed at that stage to ensure patients are appropriately informed.
7. The ICB holds no recorded information relating to any Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) considerations, supplementary statements, or Control of Entry (Regulation 24) applications associated with this relocation.

There are currently no plans or applications for a pharmacy to operate within the proposed new premises on Prince Consort Road, and no discussions have taken place with the Local Pharmaceutical Committee or pharmacy operators regarding co-location or relocation of pharmacy services at this site.

There have been no supplementary statements to the PNA issued by Gateshead HWB since January 2023. There have been no relocation applications received for the Gateshead area since January 2023. In addition, the ICB holds no evidence of any applications or pre-application discussions for pharmacy services within a proposed health centre on/near Prince Consort Road.

8. No specific papers, reports, or briefing materials have been provided to or received from Place-Based Partnerships, the Integrated Care Partnership, or the Gateshead Health & Wellbeing Board in relation to pharmacy services or relocation of GP premises in this area beyond general updates on the ICB's primary care estates work programme.

Any documents held relate only to high-level estates planning discussions, which do not include pharmacy provision or contain information beyond what is already covered by internal project papers (exempt under Section 43(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 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**