

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\  
FOI ICB 24–257

[NECS – John Snow House](#)  
Durham University Science Park  
Durham  
DH1 3YG

Tel: 0191 301 1300  
E-mail: [necsu.icbfoi@nhs.net](mailto:necsu.icbfoi@nhs.net)

By Email

1 October 2024

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 by North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) on 18 September 2024 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, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley (which covers the five local authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees).

Please find the information you requested on behalf of the ICB as follows.

**Your Request**

Has the Tees Valley Primary Care Commissioners instructed the Linthorpe GP Services Contractor to:

1. Cease using total triage (emergency measure during the Covid Pandemic)?
2. Comply with the mandatory requirement to promote and restore operation of the Online Booking of Appointments/Cancellation System before the end of March 2024?

It's a simple request requiring only simple answers – yes/no and if yes, the date(s). A speedy response will be appreciated. I would like to receive the information in advance of the 26 September PPG Meeting, and my submission of questions for the 1 October ICB Board Meeting.

**Our Response**

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB does hold the information requested.

1. No, the use of total triage is a way of implementing modern general practice:  
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/national-general-practice-improvement-programme/modern-general-practice-model/>
2. No as the contractual requirement to offer online booking/cancellation was already in place.

Patient Online Management Information (POMI) <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mi-patient-online-pomi/current> up until end of March, indicates that NENC ICB Tees Valley has:

- 100% of practices offering patients with the ability to order prescriptions online.
- 100% of practices offering patients with the ability to view prospective medical record online.
- 97.7% of practices offering patients with the ability to book or cancel appointments online (2 practices, not Linthorpe, with known technical issues syncing to NHS digital, but local data confirms contractually compliant).

POMI data indicates that as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, for Linthorpe that the following was used by patients:

- Appointment booking and cancellation – 1718 times.
- Online prescription ordering – 3,206 times.
- Record views – 6,710 times.

Contractually:

*"The Contractor must promote and offer to its registered patients the facility for a patient to: (a) book, view, amend, cancel and print appointments online; (b) order repeat prescriptions for drugs, medicines or appliances online; and (c) view and print a list of any drugs, medicines or appliances in respect of which the patient has a repeat prescription in a manner which is capable of being electronically integrated with the computerised clinical systems of the Contractor's practice using appropriate systems authorised by NHS England."*

This can include NHS App, e-consult or other digital tools such as accurx. We are assured that Linthorpe is therefore contractually compliant.

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 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 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 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.org.uk](http://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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) . This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours faithfully

*S Davies*

**S Davies**  
**Information Governance Officer**