

Our Reference      North East and North Cumbria ICB\  
FOI ICB 25–145

**North East and North Cumbria ICB**  
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By Email

6 August 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 14 July 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 writing to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

1. How many dental urgent care appointments, of the type referenced in the Labour Party manifesto (2024), were delivered by your ICB in the financial year 2024/25?
2. How many such appointments do you intend to deliver in the financial year 2025/26?
3. How many have you delivered so far in 2025/26?

Please provide the most recent available data and specify the time period if it does not align with the timeframes given above. Please also provide this data in a spreadsheet.

**Our Response**

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB holds some of the information you have requested.

The information you have requested is exempt from disclosure under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). There is a clear intention to publish the information at a future date and in line with section 22 it is considered reasonable in all the circumstances that the information

should be withheld from disclosure until the date of publication. Further information on section 22 can be found at the following link: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/22>

### Public Interest Test

To use this exemption, we are required to undertake a public interest test. The matters which were considered in applying the public interest test are as follows:

#### *Factors in favour of disclosure:*

- Disclosure of the information supports the general public interest in the transparency, accountability and general understanding of the delivery of public services.

#### *Factors in favour of withholding:*

- Early disclosure of unvalidated information could lead to confusion if the published data differs from the unvalidated information released in response to an FOI.
- Early publication or release would be likely to result in the inclusion of errors, inaccurate and incomplete information. This would make the information of less value to those looking at it.
- Releasing information intended for publication by one ICB ahead of its planned national publication date could lead to disruption of the national communications plan and put duplicated or inaccurate information within the public domain. This would or is likely to be misleading to those viewing the information.

Having taken into account the arguments for and against disclosure, North East and North Cumbria ICB has decided that the public interest in this case is best served by maintaining the exemption and by not disclosing the information requested, at this stage. We consider that the possible benefits of disclosure are outweighed by the real risk of misleading data being released as a result of premature disclosure.

We reached the view that, on balance, the public interest is better served by withholding this information under Section 22 of the Act at this time. This response therefore acts as a refusal notice under section 17 of the FOIA.

For your reference:

1. Dental statistics for England, which includes urgent dental care appointments are published by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA).
  - Data for 2023/24 has already been published and is available on the NHSBSA website: [Dental statistics – England 2023/24 | NHSBSA](#)
  - Data for the financial year 2024/25 will be published on the NHSBSA website in Summer 2025 and is therefore being withheld under section 22 of the FOIA as explained above.
2. For 2025/26 ICBs have been instructed to purchase additional urgent care appointments over and above the ICB urgent dental care baseline. The baseline encompasses all urgent care activity in each ICB covering the 12 months to June 2024.

North East and North Cumbria ICB has been instructed to deliver 57,559 additional urgent care appointments. The additional volume of urgent care appointments each ICB has been instructed to deliver is detailed in Annex A of a letter that was sent to all ICBs in February which can be found here: [NHS England » Arrangements for NHS urgent primary dental care during 2025/26 and confirmation of the closure of the New Patient Premium scheme](#)

3. Dental appointments provided, 2025/26 to date, were included in the Integrated Delivery Report presented at the ICB's Public Board Meeting on 29 July 2025: [Integrated Delivery](#)

[Report June 2025](#). As per the response to question 1, dental statistics for England, which includes urgent dental care appointments are published by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA).

In accordance with s.21 of the FOIA, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is reasonably accessible to you by other means.

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 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](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

*Information Governance Support Officer*

**Information Governance Support Officer  
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board**