

Our ref:  
Please contact:  
Email:  
Personal assistant:  
Direct tel:

Level 3, Christ Church Precinct  
Count Hall  
Fishergate Hill  
Preston  
PR1 8XB

Tel: 0300 373 3550  
www.lancashireandsouthcumbria.icb.nhs.uk

9 July 2024

Dear,

**Re: Your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000**  
**Ref no: FOI-4099-LSC**

Thank you for your request dated 12 June 2024.

We can confirm that the ICB does not hold the information you requested.

Please find our response to your questions below:

1. Does local health data suggest significantly higher rates of cancer and asbestosis in the Bentham area over the last forty years, compared with national levels?
2. Does local health data suggest significantly higher rates of cancer and asbestosis in the Bentham area over the last forty years, compared with national levels?
3. Does local health data from the Bentham area suggest there are higher rates of cancer related to the presence of PFAS elements?

**NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB does not have access to data stretching back over the last 40 years, therefore an accurate response to question 1 cannot be provided. Also, the explicit cancer data we have access to would not be detailed enough to identify those commonly linked with exposure to asbestos.**

**The ICB does have access hospital episodes data, from which we could potentially extract some data for specific diagnostic codes, though this would only serve as a proxy for hospital activity related to (suspected) asbestos exposure and not rates of cancer per se.**

**Lastly, the prevalence of asbestos within local communities is not data that the health service would hold. This is more likely to be something that the Local Authority might be able to provide more information on. You may wish to redirect this to the following:**

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/transparency/access-to-information/access-information-held-by-the-county-council/access-to-official-council-information/>

<http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/data-and-information/freedom-information>  
<https://www.westlancs.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-governance/freedom-of-information.aspx>

<https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Transparency-and-open-data/Freedom-of->

[information/Freedom-of-information.aspx](http://information/Freedom-of-information.aspx)

<https://www.wyre.gov.uk/freedom-of-information>

<https://www.morecambe.gov.uk/freedom-of-information/>

<https://chorley.gov.uk/council-democracy/FOI/2#:~:text=You%20can%20make%20a%20request,Chorley%2C%20Lancashire%2C%20PR7%201DP>

<https://southribble.gov.uk/council-democracy/freedom-information-foi#:~:text=The%20Freedom%20of%20Information%20Act,be%20exempt%20from%20being%20supplied.>

In relation to the third question, this represents data not held in a reportable format.

As such, whilst we may be able to supply some proxy data around hospital episodes linked with specific diagnostic codes, this would not be able to accurately respond to what the request is seeking in this instance.

### **Right of Appeal**

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this response please do not hesitate to contact us. If you are dissatisfied with the response, you are entitled to request an internal review which should be formally requested in writing and must be within two calendar months from the date this response was issued.

### **To request an internal review**

You can request this by contacting the FOI team by email at [MLCSU.FOITeam@nhs.net](mailto:MLCSU.FOITeam@nhs.net) or by post to Leyland House, Lancashire Business Park, Leyland, PR26 6TR, specifying why you require a review.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the CCGs FOI complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF  
[www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

**Asim Patel – Chief Digital Officer**

**On behalf of Kevin Lavery  
ICB Chief Executive**