

Ref: FOI/00373/CMICB  
06 June 2023

Dear,

**Re: Freedom of Information Act 2000  
ICB Expenditure on GP Communications to Patients**

Thank you for your information request indicated in bold below, which has now been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 by NHS Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB). I can provide you with the following information and responses.

**Your Request:**

**To facilitate a research study, please provide a breakdown of ICB expenditure on NHS general practice patient communication and triage system suppliers. More specific details provided below. Period: Financial Year 2022/23 – end Mar31, 2023**

**1) Email communication systems (exclude regular operational email ie Microsoft Office, include specific patient communication systems only). Split by type of expenditure:**

- a) One-off setup or service activation fees or general consulting**
- b) Recurring service management/software licences**
- c) Specific messaging costs if contracts include per message volume transactional costs**

**2) SMS and Data message communication. Split by type of expenditure:**

- a) One-off setup or service activation fees or general consulting**
- b) Recurring service management/software licences**
- c) Specific messaging costs if contracts include per message volume transactional costs**

**3) Automated or manual Patient Triage/message communication. Split by type of expenditure**

- a) One-off setup or service activation fees or general consulting**
- b) Recurring service management/software licences**
- c) Specific messaging costs if contracts include per message volume transactional costs**

**Our Response:**

1 - 3) Please find listed below the information held by NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB on the total spend during the 2022/23 financial year on email, SMS/data and automated/manual patient triage message communications within General Practice:

Licence Cost	Messaging Cost	Combined Cost (unable to provide a split)	Total Cost
£297,825.58	£419,919.43	£357,170.00	£1,074,915.01

Please note that NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB does not hold this cost information by message type, as this is managed by each individual member GP Practice.

**Your Request:**

**4) Details of messaging volumes for NHS 'free' services such as GOV.UK Notify and NHS App IF used.**

**Our Response:**

4) NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB do not currently use the messaging functions listed in this question. However, a review of this is planned as part of a wider ICB review of patient communications later on this year.

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this response or do not feel that your request has been answered as you would expect, please contact us to discuss.

We also wish to take this opportunity to inform you that, where you are not satisfied with the response to your request for information, a formal complaints and internal review process is available.

This can be formally requested by emailing [foi@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk) and must be done within a reasonable time period (3 calendar months) from the date this response was issued.

Where you remain dissatisfied with our review under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for a review of your appeal decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at;

*The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF*

[www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Should you need any further clarification or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us quoting the above FOI reference.