

Our Ref: TS/AKB/FOI/0224/721

Stafford Education & Enterprise Park
Weston Road
Stafford
ST18 0BF

13th February 2024

Telephone: 0300 123 1461

Sent by email

Dear Sir/Madam

FOI-0224-721

Your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your request for information received on the 12th February 2024. We can confirm that the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board can provide the following information.

An anonymised copy of this response will be made publicly available on the ICB website.

Please see our responses in blue below:

- 1. Does your ICB provide Age-related Hearing Services (including hearing aid provision) throughout your ICB area? (Y/N). If there are areas without provision, then please provide the reason(s) for this.**

Yes. ICB wide coverage.

- 2. Is the Hearing aid provision set up differently across different areas within the ICB borders ? (Perhaps these sub-areas were inherited from the CCG era but still operating within the current ICB set up?) Please document the type of service set-ups within your ICB indicating the type for each area e.g. AQP, single provider, Community Services, ENT-led, Hospital-based only etc.**

AQP audiology providers.

One contract and two providers covering what was North Staffordshire CCB and Stoke-on-Trent CCG (the North service).

One contract and four providers covering what was Stafford and Surrounds CCG, Cannock Chase CCG, East Staffordshire CCG and South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula CCG (the South service).

- 3. Please let us know who the audiology providers are within the ICB .**

North: Scrivens, Specsavers.

South: Outside Clinic, Industrial Diagnostics, Scrivens, Specsavers.

4. When did the contract(s) start?

North: 1st April 2023.

South: 1st April 2023.

**5. When is/was the contract end date according to the original contract?
(please detail for all contracts in the ICB area)**

North: 31st March 2021.

South: 31st March 2021.

**6. Has the contract been extended beyond the original contracted end date
(without going to Tender)? (please detail for all contracts in the ICB area)**

Yes, via direct awards for North and South contract.

**7. If the required contract renewal has been delayed beyond the original
contracted date, then what are the intentions for the future required
contracting of the service? (please detail for all contracts in the ICB area)**

No decisions made for 2024/2025 at this stage.

**8. Are there plans to merge multiple services within the ICB into one service
Contract for the entire ICB. If so, then please supply information together
with proposed start dates. Or are there any plans to changed the Contract
type significantly in some other way e.g. combine all into AQP, add ear wax
removal to the service, change to self-referral model.**

No decisions made at this stage. However, the ICB is looking to harmonise services across the footprint and future intentions for audiology would have to consider this requirement.

**9. Can a Provider be admitted to the contract mid-term? i.e. can new providers
be admitted during the current contract, after the initial contract had been
awarded. If so, please advise how the Provider would apply to be included
within the Contract.**

No.

**10. What are the current typical wait times for accessing (the various) Hearing
Aid Services within the ICB?**

0-6 weeks.

11. Have any Providers left the contract for any reason, or restricted their intake very significantly? Please provide as much information as possible.

University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Trust (UHDB) did have an AQP Audiology contract, stepped down during the 2020 pandemic, in common with other community providers, and their contract expired on the 31st March 2021.

12. Have any current Providers been awarded the current Contract without the ICB tendering the opportunity? This may be a short-term contract that was issued for emergency reasons e.g. due to COVID or Provider terminating their service suddenly. Please detail.

Direct awards for the current 2023/2024 contract.

13. Are the (various) hearing services accepting self-referral patients? If not, then are there plans to introduce self-referral as per recent NHS guideline requirements? Please detail.

Self-referral launched on the 29th September 2023 in the ICB area.

14. If there are AQP services within the ICB, then are there any areas where services are only available from a single Provider?

The service is available ICB wide.

15. Please comment further on any future intentions for the procurement of Age-related Hearing services within the ICB (that may not have been mentioned above).

No decisions made at this stage.

16. Please send any available documents or meeting minutes that support your answers above.

No decisions made at this stage.

Please refer to the ICB website: [Home - Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB](#) for details of self-referral.

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 an internal review by contacting the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board FOI team by emailing the team at StaffsStokeFOI@staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk or by post to the address at the top of this letter.

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 Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board's 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

Yours sincerely

Tracey Shewan
Director of Corporate Governance