

WESTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST

**COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT
2015/16**

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND / FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Health & Social Care Complaints Procedure, this is our sixth annual report which sets out a detailed analysis of the nature and number of complaints and concerns received by the Western Health and Social Care Trust during 2015/16. During the year we have continued to encourage more meaningful engagement and involvement with our patients and service users, ensuring that lessons are continually learned to safeguard quality and help prevent future failures in care and treatment.

In order to encourage a simpler and more flexible approach to complaints handling and a greater emphasis on local resolution, the current system has only two stages, the first being a complaint to the health and social care provider or commissioner, followed if necessary by the complaint being considered by the Health Service Ombudsman.

The Trust is obliged to offer every opportunity to exhaust local resolution and therefore encourages complainants to contact the Trust again should they remain dissatisfied. During the year a total of 68 complainants asked for a further review of their complaint by the Trust. In addition, 5 complainants referred their complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

The Trust's Head of Clinical Quality and Safety, Governance Manager and Complaints staff facilitated a number of meetings throughout the year between complainants and professional staff in order to attempt resolution of formal complaints and this approach achieved a number of satisfactory outcomes.

FOREWORD

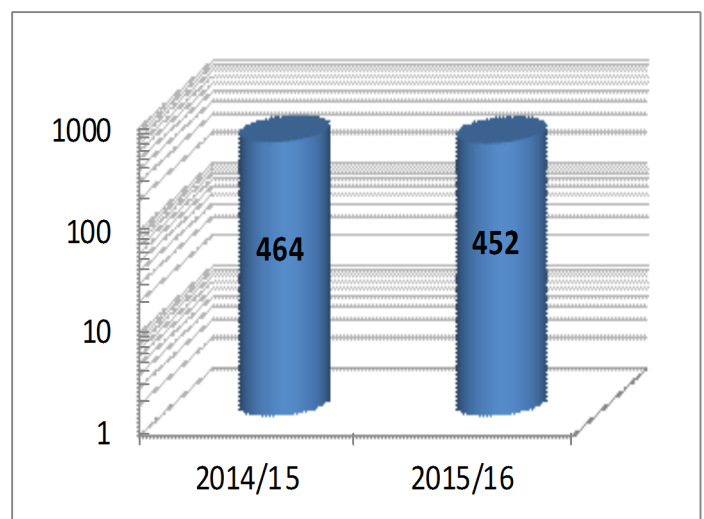
The Complaints Annual Report reviews the complaints received by the Western Health and Social Care Trust for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Mrs Elaine Way
Chief Executive
7 September 2016

Annual comparison of complaints

During 2015/2016 a total of 452 formal complaints (includes 2 Children Order Complaints) were received by the Trust. This compares with 464 complaints during the previous financial year of 2014/2015.

The continued awareness training provided to staff on the Health & Social Care Complaints Procedure highlights the emphasis around enhanced local resolution and encourages staff to resolve complaints at a local level.



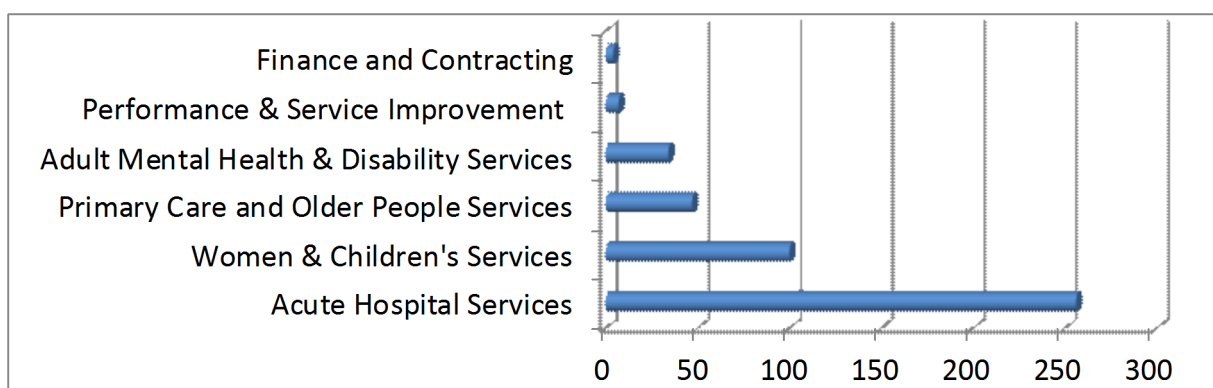
What our service users complained about

A total of 828 subjects were identified from the 452 complaints received during the 2015/16 year.

Treatment & Care, Quality (28)	220
Staff Attitude/Behaviour (24)	129
Communication/Information to Patients (6)	126
Clinical Diagnosis (5)	58
Treatment & Care, Quantity (29)	56
Professional Assessment of Need (22)	42
Admission into Hospital, Delay/Cancellation (Inpatients) (2)	36
Waiting Times, Outpatient Departments (33)	26
Discharge/Transfer Arrangements (13)	19
Patients' Privacy/Dignity (18)	19
Appointments, Delay/Cancellation (Outpatient) (4)	16
Other (35)	13
Waiting Times, Accident & Emergency (32)	13
Confidentiality (8)	12
Policy/Commercial Decisions (21)	10
Records/Records Keeping (23)	9
Access to Premises (1)	3
Environmental (14)	3
Transport, Late or Non-Arrival/Journey Time (26)	3
Children Order Complaints (34)	2
Complaints Handling (7)	2
Consent to Treatment (9)	2
Contracted Regulated Establishments and Agencies (10)	2
Patient's Status/Discrimination (20)	2
Aids/Adaptations/Appliances (3)	1
Hotel/Support/Security Services (15)	1
Other Contracted Services (11)	1
Patient's Property/Expenses/Finance (19)	1
Transport, Suitability of Vehicle/Equipment (27)	1
Totals:	828

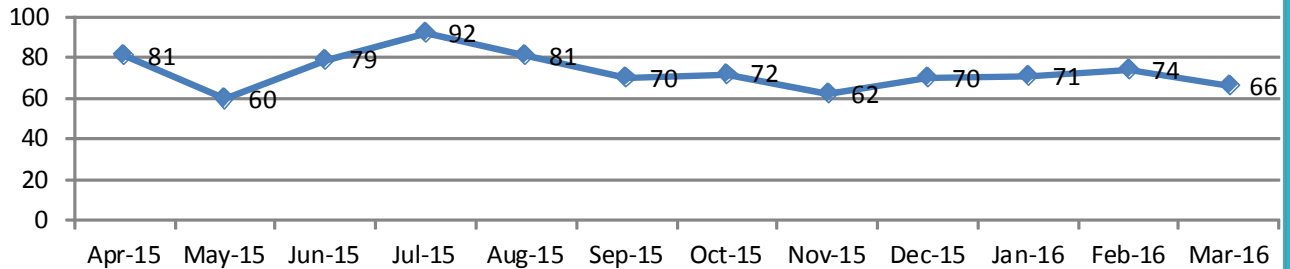
Which Directorates received complaints?

The following is a breakdown of the Complaints received by Directorate for the 2015/2016 year.



RESPONSE TIMES – April 2015–March 2016

Complaints Responded to within 20 working days



Monitoring / Reporting / Learning

Monitoring

The Complaints Department has and will continue to take action to increase the number of complaints responded to within 20 working days. This includes regular reports to management and relevant groups on the performance of each Directorate as well as increased follow-up with Investigating Officers. Summaries of outstanding complaints are also provided on a regular basis to Assistant Directors. Complaints staff encourage staff to meet with Complainants when it is felt that this will promote a more positive and timely outcome.

Reporting

A complaints handling flowchart is in place to ensure that actions are taken to address any delays in receiving responses from the Investigating Officers.

Learning

In accordance with the flowchart the Complaints Manager referred **five** complaints during the 2015/16 year that were open for over 3 months to the Trust's Chief Executive. Following this action was taken to ensure that a response to the complaint was issued.

The Trust is committed to using complaints/concerns as an opportunity to learn and improve services and care. In order to record and monitor complaints activity, the Complaints Department is required to maintain a database of complaints and provide regular reports to the Complaints Forum, Directorates and other relevant Committees. These reports highlight themes and trends across the Trust to ensure learning takes place.

The Complaints Department also provides information on lessons learned as a standing item for the Share to Learn Quality and Safety Newsletter.

The Trust continues to provide a monthly monitoring return to the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) regarding lessons learned from all complaints closed within each month.

A decision has been made to amalgamate the Complaints Forum and the Patient Client Experience Group to allow discussion and learning from both positive and negative patient and client experiences of health and social care. The group will meet quarterly, be jointly chaired by a Director and Non-Executive Director and have service user representation from each of the Directorates.

COMPLIMENTS

Services across the Trust receive many compliments on a frequent basis, usually in the form of written thank you letters/cards or verbal feedback. A number of compliments are received by the Chief Executive which are forwarded on to relevant services by the Patient's Advocate. A total of 3379 patients and clients have formally acknowledged and complimented the treatment and care that they have received by Trust staff during 2015/16. Staff are greatly encouraged by the positive comments.

CHILDREN ORDER COMPLAINTS

The Trust received a total of 2 Children Order complaints for the 2015/16 period. Each of these complaints was processed through the Children's Order Procedure.

Other/Additional Information

The Western Health and Social Care Trust takes all complaints seriously and welcomes the opportunity to learn from complaints. The Trust's Chief Executive reviews weekly summaries of complaints received and she is also signatory to all written responses.

This report highlights the significant work being done within the Complaints Department to ensure that the HSC Complaints Procedure is being managed effectively and improve the responsiveness to patient and clients concerns and complaints in line with the regulations.

Complaints staff also regularly liaise with staff across the Trust to help resolve informal complaints and respond to enquiries from MLAs, local Councillors and other public representatives. A total of 308 general enquiries were handled by the Complaints Department in 2015/16. The Complaints Department continues to work with Service Directorates to ensure a quick resolution of issues which may be resolved without the need for an investigation of a formal complaint. Complaints Department staff wish to thank all areas for their assistance throughout the 2015/16 period.