

Freedom of Information Request

Reference Number: EPUT.FOI.22.2704
Date Received: 27.10.2022

Information Requested:

1. The total number of complaints received over the last 4 years

	Formal Complaints	Informal Complaints	Concerns raised via MP	Locally Resolved (Within operational services)
2021-22	376	118	84	35
2020-21	275	39	83	98
2019-20	293	**	46	99
2018-19	285	**		59*

*Locally resolved & MP complaints were not logged separately until 2019/20, so 59 is a combined figure of MP and local resolutions.

** There was not an informal complaints process until 2020-21. Until then, concerns were either resolved locally within operational services, by PALS, or logged as a Formal Complaint.

2. Do you have a Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)? If so, could I have the total number of PALS contacts received over the last 4 years?

	PALS Contacts
2021-22	1369
2020-21	2820
2019-20	998
2018-19	860

3. Do you log both formal complaints and informal concerns? If so, does your informal concerns include PALS or just those that are raised locally with operational services? Informal Complaints are complaints that have been raised via the Complaints or PALS team, which are then subsequently passed to the operational service to resolve directly without a formal complaint investigation. Complaints that are raised locally with operational services are logged separately as "Local Resolutions".
4. The total number of concerns raised with operational services?
See table provided under question 1.
5. Does your team also deal with MP concerns? If so, could you provide the total number of concerns received over the last 4 years?
See table provided under question 1.
6. Do you have a triage process in place to identify any immediate actions or early learning? If so, are you able to describe this process?
Learning is identified during the process of handling/ investigating the complaint. For locally resolved and informal complaints, lessons are identified and documented on a pro forma along with actions taken, and this is emailed to the Complaints Team to log on the complaints database (Datix)

For formal complaints, lessons are identified as part of the formal investigation and recorded on the Complaint Investigation Report (CIR) and subsequently logged on the complaints database (Datix), along with any actions taken.

On a monthly basis, all lessons identified are followed up by the Complaints Team to ensure all improvement actions have been taken.

Lessons identified from all complaints are analysed monthly, and themes are raised at the monthly Learning Lessons Collaborative Forum. Lessons learned through complaints are shared in the monthly "Lessons Identified Newsletter".

7. Do you have an internal signing off process prior to sharing the response with the person raising the complaint? If so, are you able to describe this process?
Written responses to Formal Complaints are approved by:
The Complaint Investigator
The Service Manager
The Service Director
Approved and signed off by the Chief Executive.

8. What are your timescales for responding to both informal and formal concerns?
Our internal target is to respond to formal complaints within 40 working days (8 weeks) and informal complaints within 15 working days (3 weeks).

9. How are the final responses provide to the person raising the complaint i.e. letter, meeting or in person?
The majority are emailed or sent by post. But we do also resolve complaints via resolution meetings where possible, if this is what the person raising the complaint has requested.

10. If individuals are unhappy with their final response to their complaint, are they able to ask for their concerns to be re-investigated? If so, are you able to describe this process? Who completes these? How is feedback provided?
If an individual is unhappy with their final response we will re-investigate their concerns if:
 - We have failed to adequately address all the original issues raised
 - We have provided inaccurate information
 - Our response has raised new issues/ further questions that need to be addressed.
 Wherever possible re-opened investigations would be conducted by a different Complaint Investigator.
If, however, all points have been comprehensively addressed and we consider our original response to be correct, we would not re-open an investigation. In these circumstances we would reiterate to the individual their right to escalate their concerns to the Parliamentary & Health Services Ombudsman (PHSO) for an independent investigation.

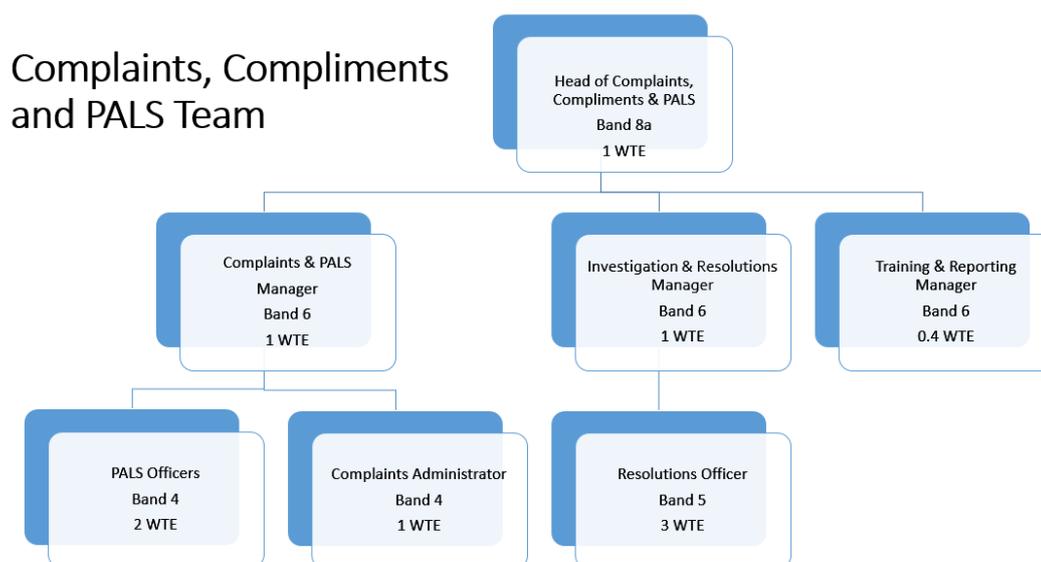
11. Thinking about the service that you provide do you seek feedback from those who have been through the process? If so, are you able to describe this process?
We have a satisfaction survey that is sent with the complaint response (a link to an online survey is emailed with responses).

12. Do you deliver any training either informally or formally on concerns handling? If so, can you describe whether this would be face to face, via e-Learning and who would deliver this?

We have a training course which is delivered by the Head of Complaints & PALS as part of MDP Training (Management Development Program) via MS Teams on a quarterly basis.

Ad-hoc training is also available to anyone who handles or investigates complaints, this is delivered by the Complaints Manager either in person or via MS Teams.

13. Are you able to provide a copy of the PALS and Complaints structure (number of staff, WTE, Banding)?



Publication Scheme:

As part of the Freedom of Information Act all public organisations are required to proactively publish certain classes of information on a Publication Scheme. A publication scheme is a guide to the information that is held by the organisation. EPUT's Publication Scheme is located on its Website at the following link

<https://eput.nhs.uk>