

# Briefing Note

**To:** Health Scrutiny and Performance Sub Panel

**Date:** 26 January 2009

**Re: Performance Monitoring – Hospital Complaints**

Report detailing the number of formal complaints investigated by the Trust (October – December 2008) under the NHS Formal Complaints Procedure and response times, together with any trends identified and action taken as a result. There were no requests for Independent Review by the Healthcare Commission/Health Service Ombudsman during this period.

## Formal Complaints received October – December 2008

### Numbers of complaints

There were 71 formal letters of complaint received and investigated during this period (previous quarter 78). All, with one exception which was due to computer failure, were responded to within the statutory timescale of 25 working days.

Three of the letters received raised concerns which involved other hospitals or the ambulance service and, in line with the recommendations of the Department of Health, a joint response was sent which negated the need to make two separate complaints.

### Analysis of letters of complaints into categories

Breakdown of complaints into categories show the 'top five' as:

- Quality of clinical/medical care
- Staff Attitude/Behaviour
- Appointments
- Waiting times
- Unhappy with general care

A comprehensive breakdown of letters of complaint into categories can be seen in Appendix 1.

**NB** The number of letters received does not match the number of categories logged, as some raise more than one issue and are logged against multiple categories

### Number of complaints received by Service Areas:

- Unplanned Care 34
- Planned Care 30
- Family Health & Diagnostics 9

**NB** Some letters of complaint relate to more than one service area.

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<b>ANALYSIS OF LETTERS OF COMPLAINT RECEIVED FROM 1 OCTOBER 2008 TO 31 DECEMBER 2008</b>		<b>1.10.2008 to 31.12.2008</b>	<b>1.7.2008 to 30.9.2008</b>
<b>IMPROVING ACCESS AND WAITING</b>			
<b>100</b>	<b>Admission, transfer and discharge arrangements</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
101	Delay/failure in transfer/discharge arrangements	3	1
103	Transport		1
<b>130</b>	<b>Appointments</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>
131	Organisation/Co-ordination	6	11
134	Delay in operation	2	3
135	Delay in procedure	1	1
136	Delay in diagnostic imaging		1
137	Delay in investigations	2	
139	Cancelled operation	3	
<b>150</b>	<b>Waiting times</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
152	Waiting time for appointment	1	2
154	Length of time - for appointment	1	1
155	Length of time - treatment	4	1
156	Length of time - procedure	1	3
157	Length of time - diagnostic imaging		
158	Length of time – investigations		
160	Length of time – clinic		2
161	Length of time – pharmacy	1	
<b>170</b>	<b>Service provision/PCT commissioning</b>		<b>2</b>
171	Location of service		1
172	Level of service		1
173	Waiting time		
<b>200</b>	<b>Parking</b>	<b>1</b>	
203	Availability of drop off zones close to all main entrances		
<b>220</b>	<b>Patient transport</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
221	Availability	1	1
<b>230</b>	<b>Quality of clinical/medical care/practice/treatment</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>60</b>
231	Assessment	2	2
232	No diagnosis	1	
233	Incorrect diagnosis	7	10
234	Delay in diagnosis	9	10
235	Suitability of treatment/procedure	12	14
236	Failure to follow agreed procedure	5	1
238	Organisation of care (communication between hospital and GP)		
240	Transfer elsewhere		2
241	Delay in transfer/discharge		
242	Early discharge	4	9
243	Care plan and transfer/discharge	8	1
244	GP information in transfer/discharge		1
247	Confidence and trust in doctor/health professional	4	1
249	Multi-agency working – co-ordination of services		1
	Staff shortages		

<b>260</b>	<b>Privacy and dignity</b>		
263	Segregated toilets and bathrooms		
<b>270</b>	<b>Pain relief/management</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
271	Pain control – amount of help	1	2
272	Pain control – length of time before provided	1	2
<b>280</b>	<b>Patient Safety</b>		<b>1</b>
281	Patient/relative accident		1
<b>290</b>	<b>Infection Control</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
292	Standards of infection control	1	1
<b>310</b>	<b>Patients' property and expenses</b>		
311	Damaged/lost		
<b>330</b>	<b>Aids, appliances and equipment</b>		
332	Delay		
334	Access to		
<b>BETTER INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND MORE CHOICE</b>			
<b>360</b>	<b>Information for patients</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
361	Quality of written/oral information – appropriateness (cultural, minority language		
364	Access to information – availability	1	
366	Access to information – to support patient making a choice		1
369	Access to information – infection control		
374	Information to help patients/users in exercising choice		1
<b>375</b>	<b>Freedom of Information Act</b>		
<b>380</b>	<b>Complaints</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>
385	Complaints about specific staff	15	7
<b>400</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
401	Lack/failure poor quality (written/oral) – content/style	1	
403	Lack/failure poor quality (written/oral) – lack of advice		1
406	Lack/failure poor quality (written/oral) – missing documentation	2	2
407	Patient/professional relationship – patient involvement in care	1	1
411	Patient/professional relationship – customer care inadequate		
413	Patient/professional relationship – customer care conflicting		
415	Patient/professional relationship – customer care offensive		
<b>420</b>	<b>Consent</b>		<b>2</b>
421	Lack of information/explanation to support informed consent		2
422	Procedure for informed consent not followed		
<b>430</b>	<b>Personal Records/Patient Information</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
431	Admin/clerical error/inaccurate information	1	
436	Missing records		3
<b>460</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>1</b>	
461	Patient not allowed choice	1	

<b>BUILDING CLOSER RELATIONSHIPS</b>			
<b>470</b>	<b>Staff attitude/behaviour</b>		
471	Communication – customer care/approach, openness, honesty, transparency and courtesy	<b>32</b> 1	<b>32</b> 1
472	Communication – listening to and respecting a patient/user perspective (non-judgemental)	5	1
473	Communication – time to listen – talking about concerns, ask questions	3	2
474	Communication –language related problems and cultural differences	1	1
475	Communication – relating to relatives		
476	Communication – providing understandable answers/advice/information, avoiding jargon	9 3	10 1
478	Behaviour – treated with respect (patient, family, cultural needs)	2	2
479	Behaviour – self-awareness/body language and non-verbal communication	1	
484	Behaviour – verbal abuse/rude/aggressive	1	
485	Unhelpful	2 2	2 1
<b>486</b>	<b>Unhappy with care</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>490</b>	<b>Dignity, privacy and respect</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
497	Personal privacy – consultation/examination/treatment	5	2
499	Personal privacy – personal conversations overheard	1	
<b>540</b>	<b>Confidentiality</b>		
541	Adherence to Code of Confidentiality		
<b>CLEAN, COMFORTABLE, FRIENDLY</b>			
<b>560</b>	<b>Hotel services/environment</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
561a	Cleanliness/hygiene	2	2
562	Food/Beverages		
562a	Menu Choice		1