

Patient and Client Council

Annual Complaints Report 2014/15

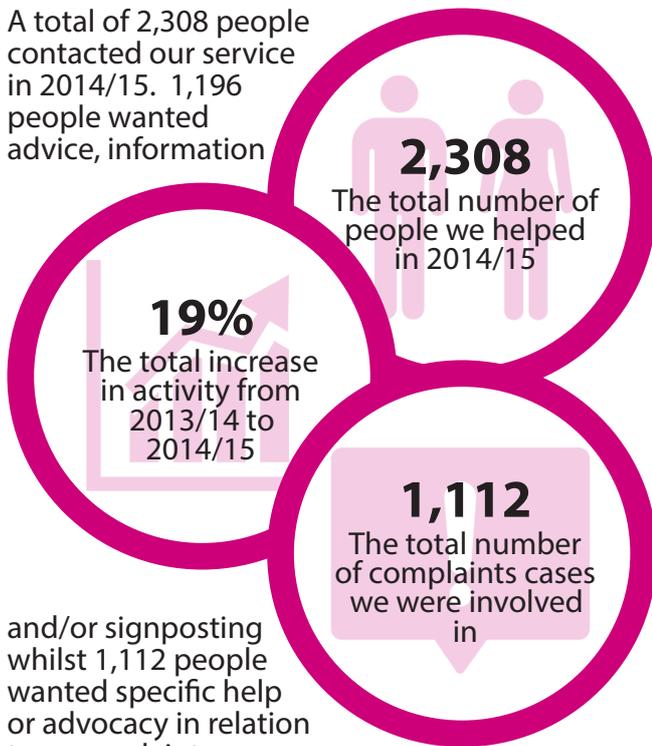
Summary Report - July 2015

Introduction

The provision of support for anyone who wishes to make a complaint about a Health and Social Care Service they have received is one of the four statutory functions of the Patient and Client Council. Our Complaints Support Service is one of the ways that we hear from patients about what needs to change within their Health and Social Care to make their services better for them.

Making a complaint

A total of 2,308 people contacted our service in 2014/15. 1,196 people wanted advice, information



and/or signposting whilst 1,112 people wanted specific help or advocacy in relation to a complaints case.

The experience of talking to our clients in the Complaints Support Service has shown that some people are reluctant to engage in a formal complaints process. Often, initial queries and concerns relate to a perception that the system itself is complex and hard to navigate through. People's previous experiences of making a complaint highlight that not being believed and a general defensive culture can make the process stressful and emotionally draining.

Many of the clients we support note that, on reflection, the process for them has been

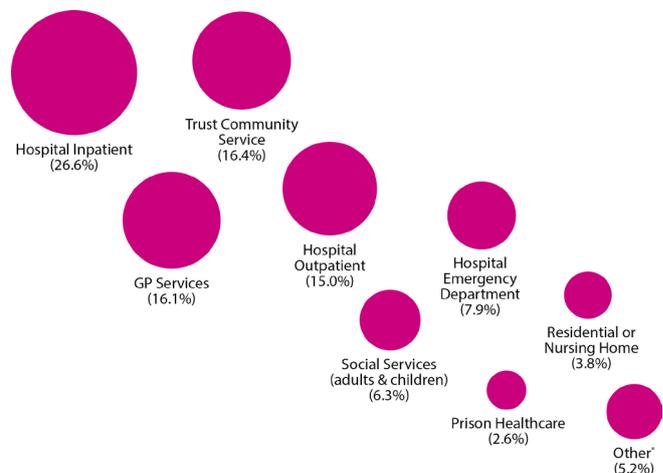
difficult but ultimately positive, and in these examples, often supported by health and social care staff who have genuinely wanted to help.

What do people complain about?

Of the 2,308 clients who contacted the PCC Complaints Support Service in the past year, a total of 1,196 wanted information/ advice and/ or signposting. The remaining 1,112 were part of the formal or informal complaints process.

The areas of services within health and social care raised by the people we supported through the Complaints Support Service in 2014/15 are shown in **Figure 1.1**:

Figure 1.1 Areas of service which were of concern to people who contacted us for support with a complaint in 2014/15

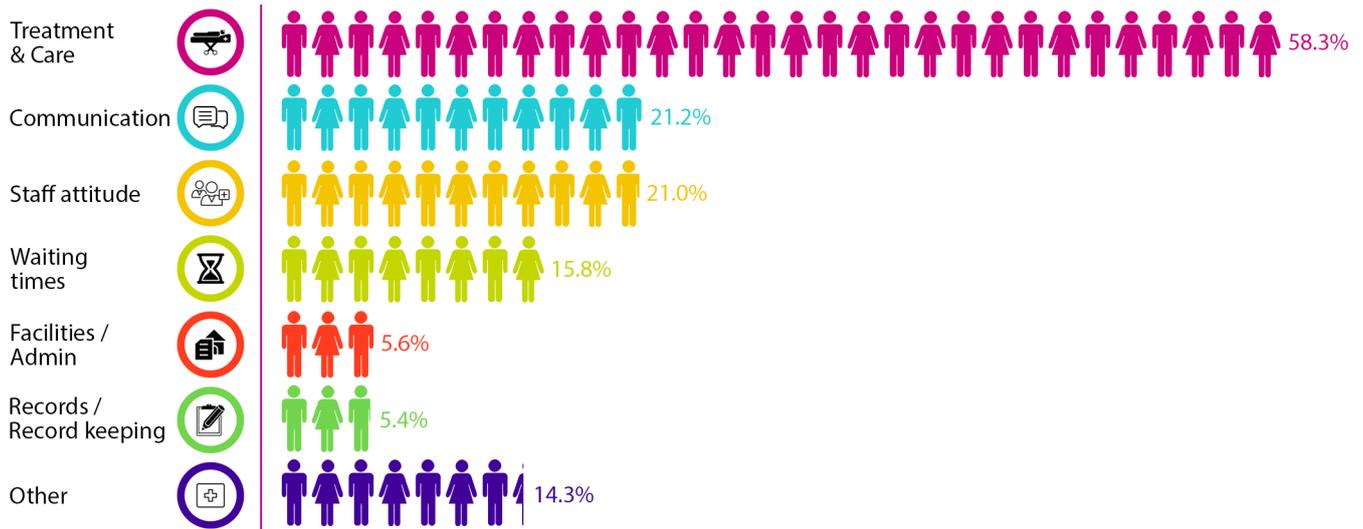


**Other refers to other family practitioner services, facilities, ambulance service and patient transport Base = 1,011 (Based on those who specified an area of services (101 did not specify))*

As with previous years, hospital inpatient was the area of service most frequently raised in the complaints we supported. Many complaints managed by the Complaints Support Service are complex in nature with several different causes or issues identified within each individual complaint.

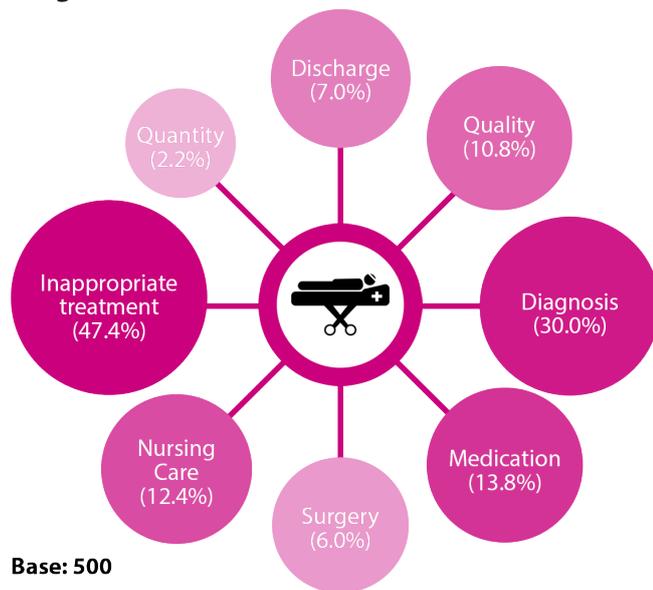
In line with previous years, **Figure 1.2** shows the common causes of complaint in 2014/15. The top four areas were Treatment and Care (58.3%), Communication (21.2%), Staff attitude (21.0%); and Waiting times (15.8%).

Figure 1.2: Nature of complaints raised in 2014/15



Treatment and care is made up of eight sub-categories with just under half (47.4%) of all treatment and care complaints relating to inappropriate treatment. This was closely followed by diagnosis (30.0%), medication (13.8%) and nursing care (12.4%).

Figure 1.3: Breakdown of Treatment and Care



Base: 500

Outcomes for clients

Clients approach our service at various stages throughout their complaints journey. This can either be when they are thinking about making a complaint, when they have decided they want to make a complaint or if they have received a response which they are not happy with.

Regardless of what stage clients come to us, we help them in their journey to receive the outcome they want from raising an issue or complaint.

Outcomes that people want when they avail of our service include:

- ▶ An explanation for what went wrong
- ▶ Reassurance it won't happen again
- ▶ An apology
- ▶ Service change to ensure what happened to them never happens again.

Whilst many people contact the Complaints Support Service with an outcome in mind, others contact the service to talk things over before deciding what they want to do next.

Developing our service for clients

Overall feedback from our clients suggests that they were happy with the service we provided to them over the course of 2014/15. The majority of our clients felt that we provided either a 'good' or 'excellent' service for them.

For a minority of people who provided us with feedback, they would have liked us to have done more for them. During 2014/15, our service implemented changes to enhance access and quality, based directly on what clients were telling us.

In 2015/16, to ensure that we learn and develop further, the Complaints Support Service will seek to refine our client feedback mechanisms to understand what people's experience of our service has been.

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