

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting: Health, Wellbeing & Social Care Portfolio Meeting

Subject: Adult Social Care Annual Complaints Report

Date of meeting: 2nd December 2021

Report by: ASC Complaints Manager

Wards affected: All

1. Requested by

Cllr Jason Fazackarley, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing & Social Care

2. Purpose

To update the Portfolio holder of complaints and other contacts received during the period of 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 for social care services provided to adults and to compare these to the previous 12 month period.

3. Information Requested

Analysis of all complaints and other contacts received during the period of 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 for social care services provided to adults.

4. Overview of the Annual Report

For the financial year 2020/21, there were 62 statutory complaints made about Adult Social Care, (ASC) compared to 67 in the previous year. Included within 2020/21 are 4 complaints involving an independent provider, compared to 8 in the previous financial year.

In addition to statutory complaints, there were 21 customer contacts, six contacts that were responded to under different procedures and one representation.

The number of service users open to Adult Social Care on 31st March 2020 was 6,687. The 62 complaints received therefore represent less than 1% of all the people receiving a service from Adult Social Care.

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5. Background to Report

- Complaints levels have decreased by 7% year on year (62 complaints).
- The most complained about location was the Finance and Benefits, (FAB) team (9 complaints).
- Inadequate service (21), funding (9) and staff communication (9) were the largest reason for complaints.
- Performance on 20-day responses has fallen to 63% from 80% last year.
- Performance on 10-day responses has also dropped to 48% of responses sent within 10 working days compared to 63% last year.
- One complaint was investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman and Social Care and no fault found against Adult Social Care.
- 40% of complaints were upheld to some degree, a decrease from 54% last year.
- Adult Social Care received 19 compliments this year compared to 22 in 2019/20.

The Complaints Managers will continue to support operational staff and managers in handling and responding to complaints in the future. We aim to continue to increase our learning from complaints, to disseminate good practice and to achieve more service improvements as a result.

6. Report detail

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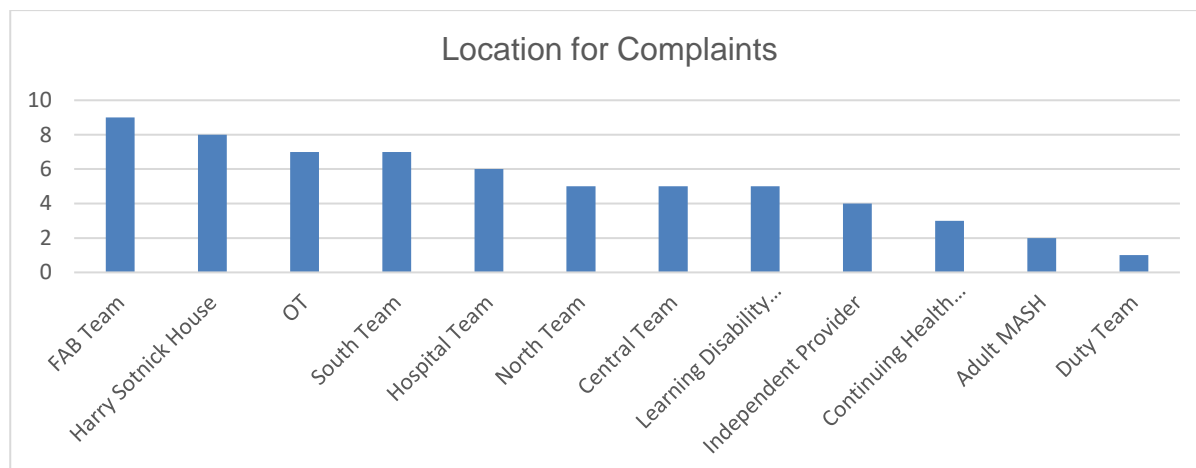
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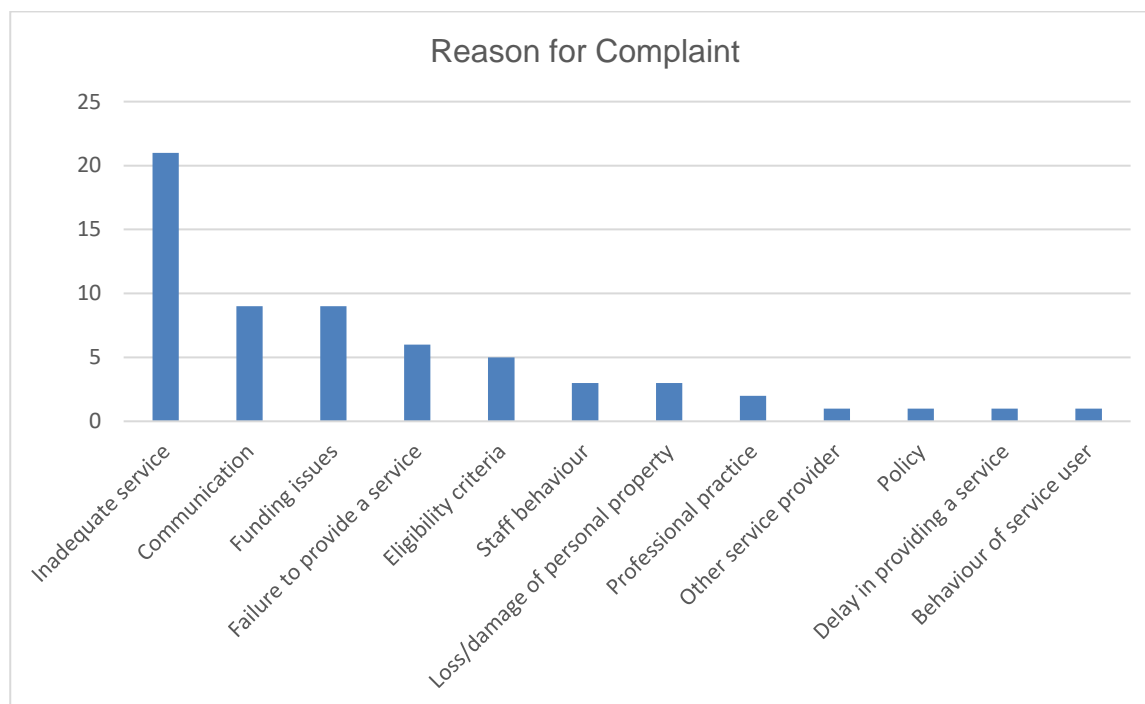
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To set the complaints figures in context, the following chart outlines the number of complaints for each location/team.



It is also important to consider the reasons why complaints were made.



Inadequate service, complaints about communication and funding were the most prevalent complaint themes this year.

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Examples of complaints about inadequate service:

- A service user felt that ASC did not understand his situation fully, his aspirations and the support that is needed to help him acquire his dreams.
- A complainant was unhappy with service provided by an independent domiciliary care agency.

Examples of complaints about funding:

- A complainant was unhappy about ASC asking a service user for their credit card details.
- A relative was unhappy about charges and interest applied to deferred payments.

Examples of complaints about staff communication include communication regarding an outstanding debt, communication from the Hospital social work team in relation to a discharge and charging for care.

PERFORMANCE

Under the complaints procedure, we aim to send complainants a full reply within 10 working days if possible, or if the matter is more complicated, the target timescale is 20 working days. Staff are encouraged to ensure their responses are proportionate to the complexity and level of investigation required.

The extent to which timescales have been met can be seen below.

Full Reply Performance (working days)	Financial Year 2020/2021	Financial Year 2019/2020
0-20 days	66% (48% within 10 days)	80% (63% within 10 days)
20+ days	34%	20%

Overall, 66% of complaints have received a response within 20 working days, which is a decrease from last year, (80%) 48% of complainants received their reply within 10 working days which is also less than the previous year (63%). Some complaints will take longer than 10 days to investigate and reply to, particularly if the matter is complex, there is a need to interview staff or further responses or meetings are required to resolve the complaint.

The Complaints Managers will therefore continue to highlight the importance of dealing with complaints in a timely way and encourage staff to have a positive attitude to complaints handling. Complaints Managers also encourage managers to make a quick initial assessment of a complaint when they receive it, to enable any

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immediate issues to be dealt with and to establish that the right person is handling the complaint.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN CASES

Most complaints continue to be resolved at the early stage of the procedure. If the matter remains unresolved after further responses or escalation of the complaint to more senior managers, then the complainant can refer to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for further consideration.

There were 2 complaints referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) this year compared to 1 in the previous financial year. One is currently being investigated and in the other the Ombudsman found no fault with the actions of our Occupational Therapy service.

Whilst 62 complaints were made, these figures indicate that 60 of these were resolved internally in a manner acceptable to the complainant. This is very positive as we strive to resolve all complaints without the need for complainants to approach the Ombudsman.

PROPORTION OF COMPLAINTS UPHELD

It is interesting to review the outcomes of complaint investigations i.e. the proportion that were justified to some degree by the manager who responded and investigated.

Category	Number of Complaints 2020/2021
Not upheld	31
Partially upheld	11
Upheld	14
Other (withdrawn or response not completed at end of reporting period).	6
Total	62

This shows that 40% (25) of complaints for Adult Social Care were considered to be justified in some way this year compared to 54% last year. In such cases, every effort will be made to identify actions that could improve service in the area concerned.

COMPLIMENTS

Compliments for services are received annually. For the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, we received 19 compliments for Adult Social Care, a small decrease from the 22 received in the previous year. These are broken down by team below.

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Team Name	Number of Compliments
North Team	4
Portsmouth Day Services	2
Victory Unit	2
Shearwater	1
Carers Centre	1
Learning Disability Team	1
Portsmouth Rehabilitation & Reablement Team	1
South Team	1
Duty Team	1
Central Team	1
Hospital Team	1
FAB Team	1
Contracts Team	1
Safeguarding Team	1

PERSISTENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

The council's Corporate Complaints Policy provides guidance on dealing with the small number of complainants who are persistent or unreasonable, taking up an unwarranted amount of council resources or impeding the investigation of their complaint. In Adult Social Care, we have had to use this guidance on two occasions this year to manage the behaviour of two complainants who were acting unreasonably.

In both cases, this has worked effectively and helped manage contact from these complainants to various teams across the council. With one of these complainants, the Social Care Complaints Managers are continuing to act as the Single Point of Contact on behalf of other departments within the council.

COUNCILLOR AND MP ENQUIRIES

Another way in which service users may contact us is through their Councillor or Member of Parliament, (MP). If a complaint is made by a Councillor or MP it will be included in the complaints figures shown earlier in this report. However, if it is only an enquiry it is not included in those figures. In total for this period, we recorded 10 Councillor/MP enquiries (5 enquiries from an MP and 5 enquiries came from councillors) for Adult Social Care compared to 26 last year (11 enquiries from MP's and 14 enquiries from councillors).

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TRAINING

The Complaints Managers have not undertaken any face-to-face training sessions for internal PCC staff this year due to Covid but continue to offer ELearning for PCC staff on Effective Complaint Handling as well as advice to staff on an ongoing basis.

7. Key Learning

Complaints are an invaluable form of research for the department, helping it to continually learn from complaints and improve the services it provides to vulnerable adults in Portsmouth. Learning can take many different forms, for example, changes in working practices, amendments to policy, changes to service, staff training etc.

Some examples of how the department has learned from complaints received in 2020/21 are shown below:-

As a result of a complaint about contacting Harry Sotnick House by telephone at the weekend, the unit replaced the current phone with a cordless one which will be carried by the assistant unit manager or the nurse when they work on the floor making it easier to reach the unit during the weekend.

Another complaint has led to Adult Social Care ensuring all new workers are provided with the relevant information about the charging policy as part of their induction.

Some learning moving forward from a complaint about social care and the NHS would be to have a clear professional lead, who will be the main contact for families and enable more consistent communication.

Following complaints about missing items, (mainly of laundry) at Harry Sotnick House, the property list form has been changed and a more robust procedure has been implemented. All property lists now must be checked by the Assistant Manager on duty who must sign to confirm that they have done this together with the relative. A photo is taken of any valuables and is attached to the form. Upon discharge, all items must be checked off with any outstanding clothing being listed in the box on the form. This must again be checked and signed by the Assistant Manager on duty. Any property list with outstanding items is then placed in the new Outstanding Items Folder. When each item of clothing returns from the laundry it is marked off the list and once all items are back, the Assistant Manager contacts the next of kin for collection. The bottom of the form is then signed and dated by the Assistant Manager to confirm that items have been returned. Following all admissions and discharges, the property lists are now checked by the deputy manager to ensure that the new procedure is being adhered to. The vast majority of complaints around Harry Sotnick House were down to this issue. Therefore the implementation of a more robust procedure should see these types of concerns decrease.

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Signed by (Director)

Appendices:**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location