



REPORT TO: PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 22 SEPTEMBER 20202
REPORT ON: QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE – 1ST QUARTER 2020/21
REPORT BY: CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER
REPORT NO: PAC20-2020

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to summarise the complaints performance for the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) in the first quarter of 2020/21. The complaints include complaints handled using the Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership Social Work Complaint Handling Procedure, the NHS Complaint Procedure and the Dundee City Integration Joint Board Complaint Handling Procedure.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Performance and Audit Committee (PAC):

- 2.1 Notes the complaints handling performance for health and social work complaints set out within this report.
- 2.2 Notes the work which has been undertaken to address outstanding complaints within the HSCP and to improve complaints handling, monitoring and reporting (sections 4.6 and 4.13).

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

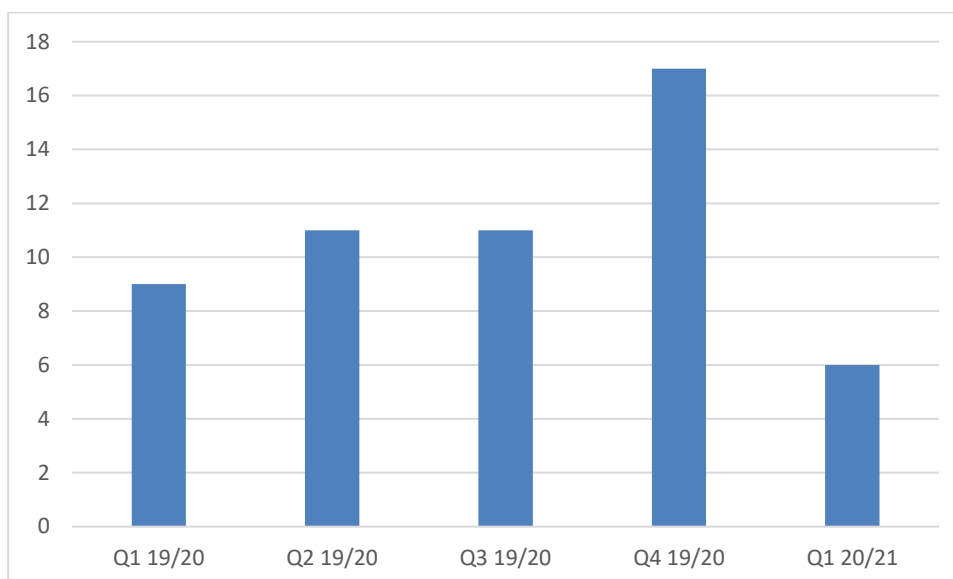
4.1 Since the 1st April 2017 both NHS and social work complaints follow the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman Model Complaint Handling Procedure. Both NHS Tayside Complaint Procedure and the Dundee Health and Social Care Partnerships Social Work Complaint Handling Procedures have been assessed as complying with the model complaint handling procedure by the SPSO.

4.2 Complaints are categorised by 2 stages: Stage 1: Frontline Resolution and Stage 2: Investigation. If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of a Stage 1: Frontline Resolution complaint, it can be escalated to a Stage 2. Complex complaints are handled as a Stage 2: Investigation complaint. If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2: Investigation complaint they can contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman who will investigate the complaint, including professional decisions made. Complaints about the delivery of services are regularly presented to the Clinical, Care and Professional Governance Group to inform service improvement.

4.3 Social Work Complaints

In the first quarter of 2020/21 a total of six complaints were received about social work or social care services in the Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership. This is a sharp decline from the previous two quarters which remained stable at above 10 complaints.

Graph 1 - Number of Social Work complaints received quarterly



The graph shows that there has been a considerable reduction in the complaints received within Q1. The drop in the volume of complaints this quarter could be due to the current pandemic however, the reasons behind the complaints do not necessarily suggest that our response times or new working arrangements has affected the level of service we provide.

4.4 Social Work complaints by reason for concern

Complaints about a delay in responding to enquiries and requests have dropped from 7 to 0 this quarter which is excellent considering we were working within a pandemic at home.

Attitude, behaviour or treatment by a member of staff	2
Delay in responding to enquiries and requests	0
Dissatisfaction with our policy	1
Failure to provide a service	0
Failure to follow the proper administrative process	0
Failure to meet our service standards	3

The numbers of social work complaints are still relatively small. The complaints received were regarding several services and suggest no themes or patterns of dissatisfaction with services at this time.

4.5 Social Work Complaints Stages and Outcomes

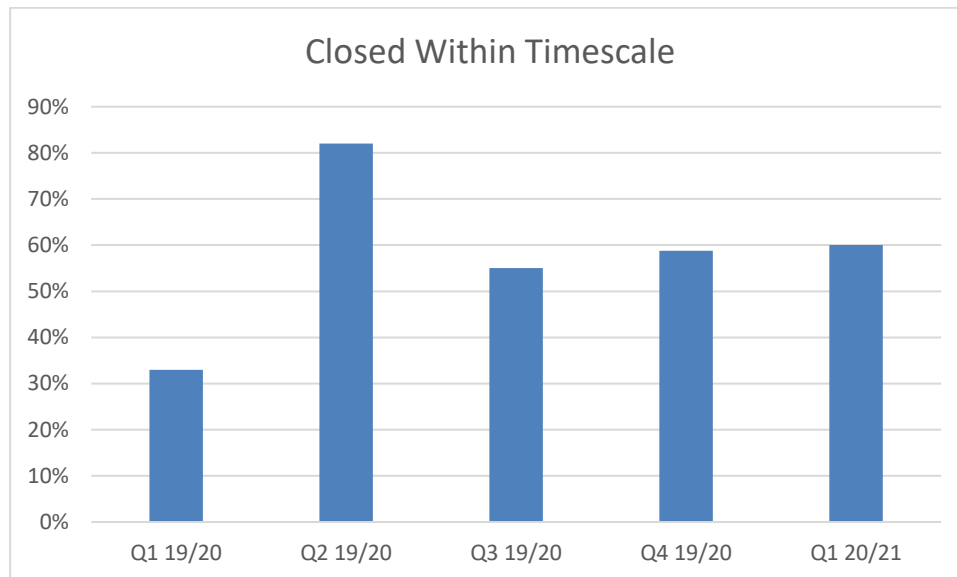
Five complaints received were handled at a frontline resolution stage compared to 12 last quarter and one was stage 2 investigation from the beginning. Of these, only one is still open and under investigation, two were upheld or partially upheld with a planned service improvement, a further two were not upheld and one being changed to an enquiry rather a complaint.

Frontline Resolution	5
Investigation (Escalated from Frontline)	0
Investigation	1
Joint with NHS	0

4.6 Social Work Complaints Resolved Within Timescales

Three of the Social Work complaints received by the Partnership were able to be resolved within the target dates. The other three missed their target date, one was 11 days late, one was 40 days late and the final is currently still under investigation. Although things are starting to return to normal, we are still learning as we go with how to handle the additional pressures the pandemic has placed upon us all.

Graph 2 - % of Social Work Complaints resolved within timescales



The graph shows that there has been a slight increase in the number of complaints that are resolved within timescales. The Customer Care and Governance Officer is ensuring that delays are kept to a minimum and processes are correctly followed. Meetings with Investigating Officers have unfortunately been delayed due to the pandemic. While we have managed to increase the volume being completed within timescales, we have drastically increased the timescales on those which have not been closed within timescales. This is something which is planned to be worked on and a deeper understanding of where the process failed to be able to build in additional resource.

4.7 Planned Service Improvements

The two upheld complaints have all identified a cause and have service improvements planned to address these.

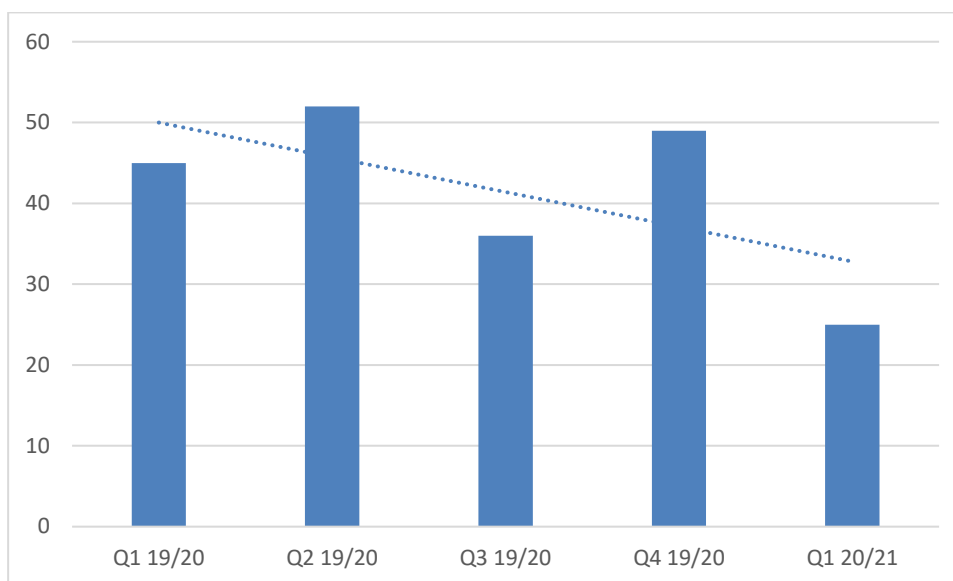
4.8 SPSO Complaints

No complaints were referred to the SPSO this quarter.

4.9 NHS Complaints

In the first quarter of 2020/21 a total of 25 complaints were received about Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership health services compared to 49 in quarter four. These are complaints which have been coded against DHSCP, there may be other complaints where DHSCP have contributed to a joint response:

Graph 3 – Number of NHS Complaints received



The graph shows that during quarter one there has been a sharp decrease in complaints received, this could be due to the current pandemic and people being within quarantine or self-isolating.

4.10 NHS Complaints by Theme

The top three themes were once again for the third quarter running Attitude and Behaviour; Clinical Treatment and Communication (Oral).

The top three sub themes were Disagreement with treatment/care plan and Other for the second quarter running and Lack of support for this quarter.

The lack of support could be down to the new working arrangements during the lockdown and the fact that many staff may have been self-isolating or unable to work during this period.

4.11 NHS Complaints Stages

20 complaints were handled at a frontline resolution stage compared to 14 last quarter. Of these complaints, three were transferred to another department, two were upheld and a further two were partially upheld.

This quarter saw no complaints handled as Stage 2 Escalated complaints compared to six last quarter.

Only five complaints were handled as a Stage 2 complaints from the start compared to 29 in quarter four. This quarter three complaints were fully upheld, which was the same as last quarter, an increase this quarter from ten to fourteen were partially upheld, five were not upheld, one was transferred to another department and one is irresolvable.

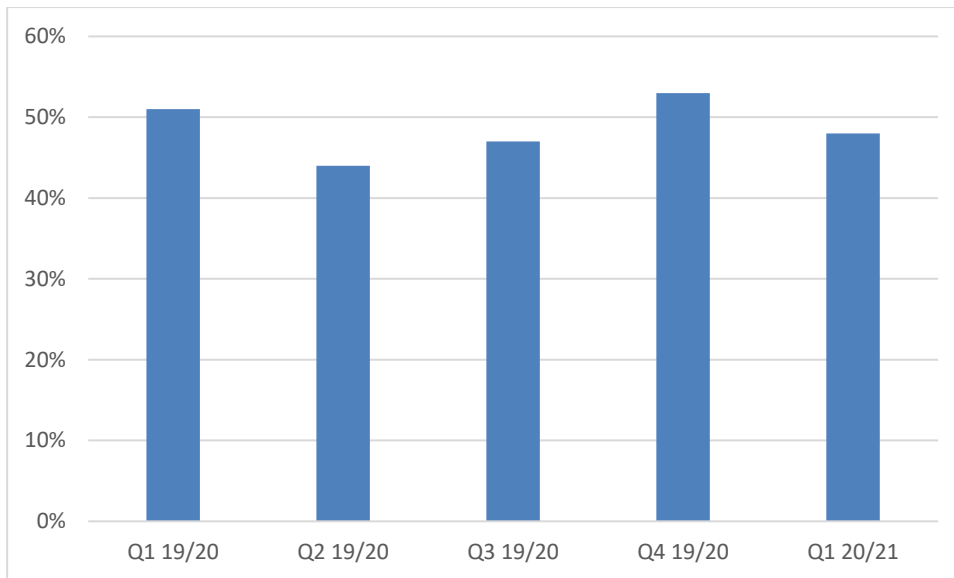
57% of Frontline resolution complaints were either upheld or partially upheld compare to 43% last quarter. In contrast 71% of stage 2 non escalated complaints were upheld or partially upheld compared to only 45% last quarter.

Frontline Resolution	20
Investigation (Escalated from Frontline)	0
Investigation	5

4.12 Closed NHS Complaints Resolved within Timescales

34 complaints were closed within the first quarter regardless of when they were received, and 35% (12) of these were closed within timescales. This is a slight decrease from the previous quarter.

Graph 4 - % of closed NHS complaints closed within timescales

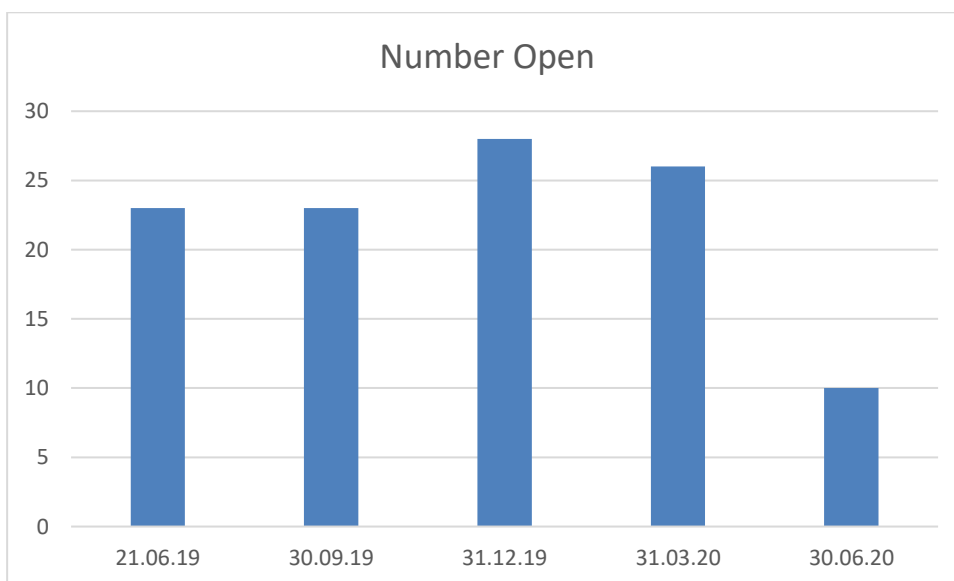


There has been a decrease in the number of closed complaints resolved within their target throughout this quarter.

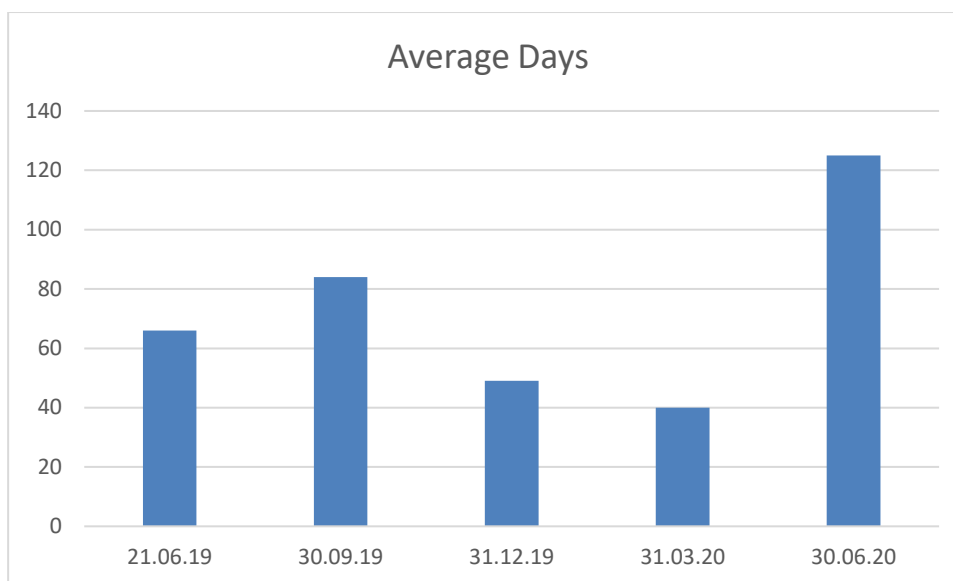
4.13 Outstanding NHS Complaints

The graph below shows that there has been a decrease in the amount of NHS complaints that are overdue in the past year and with new staff working on the complaints, this could continue into next quarter.

Graph 5 - Snapshot of number of open overdue NHS complaints at a given date



Graph 6 - Snapshot of average length in working days of overdue NHS complaints at a given date



The above graph shows that the average length of overdue complaints has increased for the first time since September 2019. Work has been ongoing to complete the backlog of overdue complaints and until recently timescales had been looking better, however with the lockdown, increasing workloads and new ways of working timescales have slipped.

Discussions are still taking place with NHS Tayside to identify how we can improve our complaint response times. However our plan to trial a more robust and effective complaints system has been put on hold due to the current pandemic.

5.0 IJB COMPLAINTS

5.1 No complaints about the Integration Joint Board have been received.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Equality Impact Assessment. There are no major issues.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 This report has not been subject to a risk assessment as it is provided for information and does not require a policy decision from the PAC.

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The Chief Officer and the Clerk were consulted in the preparation of this report.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None.

Dave Berry
Chief Finance Officer

DATE: 31 July 2020