

0.0.1. Patient Experience

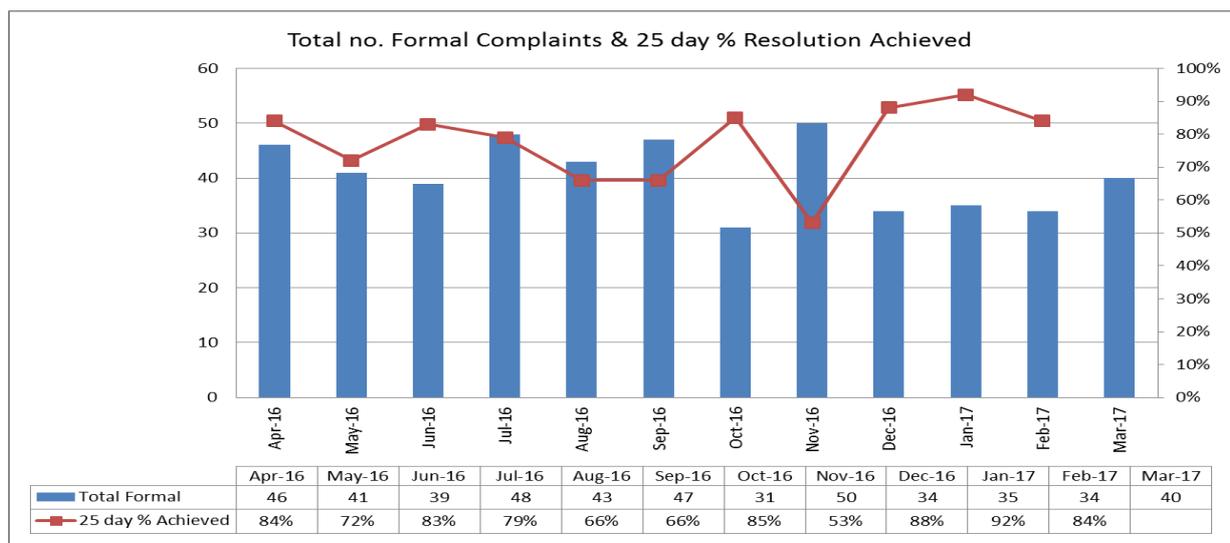
Complaints and compliments

Since 2012 Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust has operated a single point of access PALS service. PALS and complaints work together to appropriately manage enquiries and concerns that are raised by the public. The Trust has five categories for concerns that it receives. Categories 1 to 3 relate to minor issues that with the agreement of the complainant can be dealt with immediately at a local level with the PALS team. Category 4 and 5 are both formal complaints, however, category 5 relates to complaints that are multi organisational/divisional and/or complex and are allocated 40 or 60 days to be resolved on agreement with the complainant. Our complaints ethos is built on the Ombudsman’s “Principles for Remedy” that state that complaints resolution should be based on:

- Getting it right first the first time
- Being customer focused
- Being open and accountable
- Acting fairly and proportionately
- Putting things right
- Seeking continuous improvement

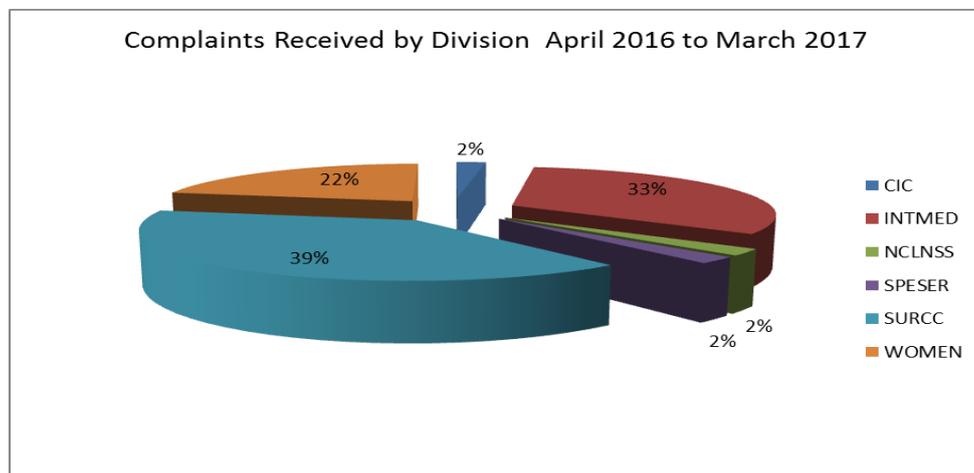
In 2016/17 Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust received 487 formal complaints compared to 606 formal complaints received in 2015/16. This represents a 20% reduction in complaints received when compared to the previous year.

The graph below shows the number of formal complaints received each month throughout the reporting period. The Trust has set an internal target of 85% of all 25 day complaints to be responded to within 25 working days. The graph below shows our performance during 2016/17. Not including March 2017 we achieved an average of 77% of our 25 day complaints being responded to in the specified time frame.



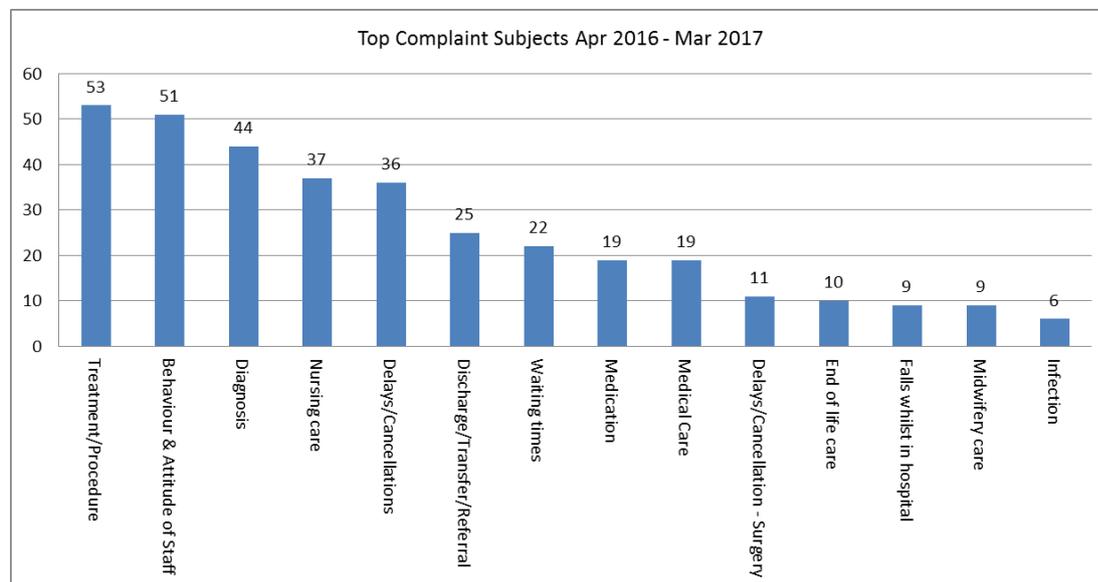
The number of annual complaints has fallen over recent years from 685 in 2014/15 to 487 in the same period in 2016/17. The second and third quarter remains the busiest part of the complaints year and the fourth quarter is the least busy

The Trust currently has 5 clinical divisions and one non clinical division; each division has specialities within it. The graph below shows the breakdown of complaints received by each division.

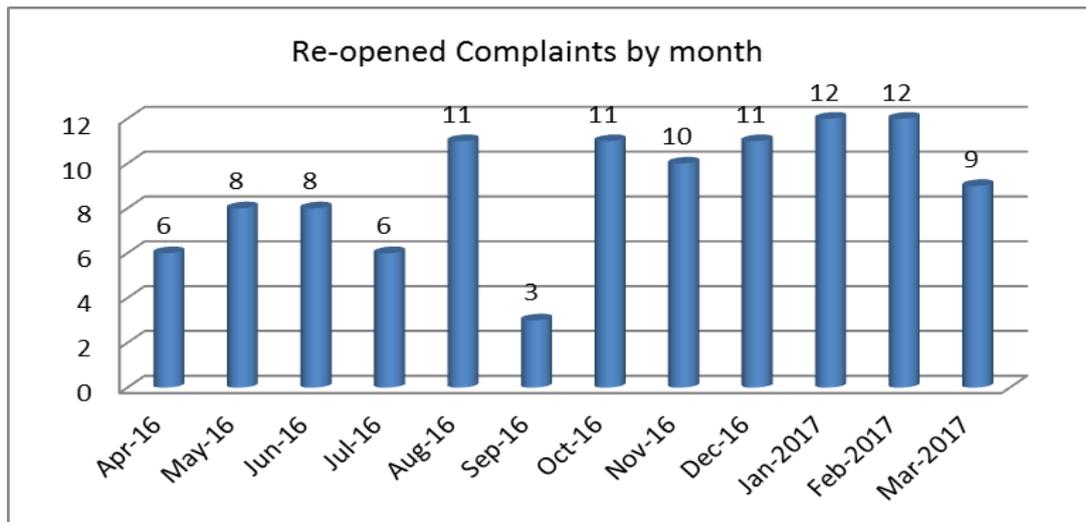


The graph below illustrates the reasons that people raised complaints against the Trust in 2016/17. Treatment and procedure, behaviour and attitude of staff were the main causes for complaints in 2016/17. Diagnosis, which includes failure to diagnose, was the third highest reason for complaints.

The main subjects of the complaints were:



Below is a graph illustrating our reopened complaints. We had an average of 9 complaints reopened each month as a result of a complainant requesting further information. In 2017/18 we will be recording and monitoring our reopened complaints so we can differentiate between reopened cases. We want to identify complaints reopened as a result of a thorough investigation that has raised additional new questions and a poor investigation that did not respond in full to the original complaint.



Learning from Complaints

The top 3 reasons for complaints in 2016/17 were:

1. Treatment and procedure
2. Behaviour and attitude of staff
3. Diagnosis - which includes failure to diagnose

A key component of every complaint is the learning identified to inform improvement. Each complaint has an action plan that is recorded and monitored by the individual clinical divisions.

Behaviour and Attitude of staff - concerns highlighted about this matter have been rising since January 2016. The issue has also been recorded by the PALS service in their role as single point of access, and has also featured in the free text feedback received relating to the friends and family test. The cause for this is not confirmed but the incidents are often connected to telephone conversations or face to face conversations about access to services or appointments. Actions taken so far include:

The PALS service conducts quarterly training sessions which include techniques related to managing difficult conversations. The importance of staff attitude is further reinforced in the nursing preceptorship training. First impressions and communication is part of the patient experience presentation to the FY1&FY2 training and as part of new corporate staff induction. The importance of attitude and the perception of the patient is also being given in the HCA training given by the patient experience manager.

Delays and Cancellations - Delays and cancellations have remained a recurring theme with the Trust exploring IT solutions to help mitigate the causes of enquiries in this area. Furthermore, feedback relating to access is a core theme through the complaints service. There are plans for modernisation of our Outpatient Department related access processes. Progress is being made in the modernisation program proposals in relation to Electronic Referrals (ERS).

2016/17 Complaints Test of Change:

During 2016/17 the complaints team implemented some new processes for improving complaints performance. The key specific areas reviewed were:

- All investigating officers should make a contact/phone call to the complainant early in the investigation process to see if the complaint issues can be clarified with a conversation and determine an agreed timeframe for the complaint.
- Introduction of a new complaints investigation template tool. This tool focused more pointedly on the issues in the complaint and the evaluation of these issues.
- Whenever a trainee doctor is named negatively in a formal complaint no matter how trivial this will be connected to their revalidation process.
- IOs are the designated contact for the complainant during the investigation period of the complaint answering requests for updates on the progress of the complaint during the investigation period.
- Jointly working IOs are to develop a single coherent complaint response that is returned to the complaints team.

In 2016/17 there were 9 complaints referred to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. Of the 9 cases referred, 5 were not upheld, 1 was partly upheld and 1 was upheld. We currently have 2 cases the ombudsman is deciding on whether to investigate.