



**NHS 24  
PATIENT EXPERIENCE TEAM**

**PATIENT AND SERVICE USER FEEDBACK  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2019/2020**

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**April 2020**

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## 1. Introduction and Key Information

- 1.1 NHS 24 is the national provider of digital and telephone based health and care services for Scotland. We provide people with access to information, care and advice through multiple channels including telephone, web and online.
- 1.2 The NHS 24 2019/20 Patient Feedback Annual Report details the numbers of items of feedback received, their outcomes and improvements made as a result. The detail below demonstrates a slight decrease in patient feedback this year. Whilst this demonstrates a high level of satisfaction by service users, NHS 24 continues to encourage and welcome feedback on its services.

### **A summary of key information is detailed below:**

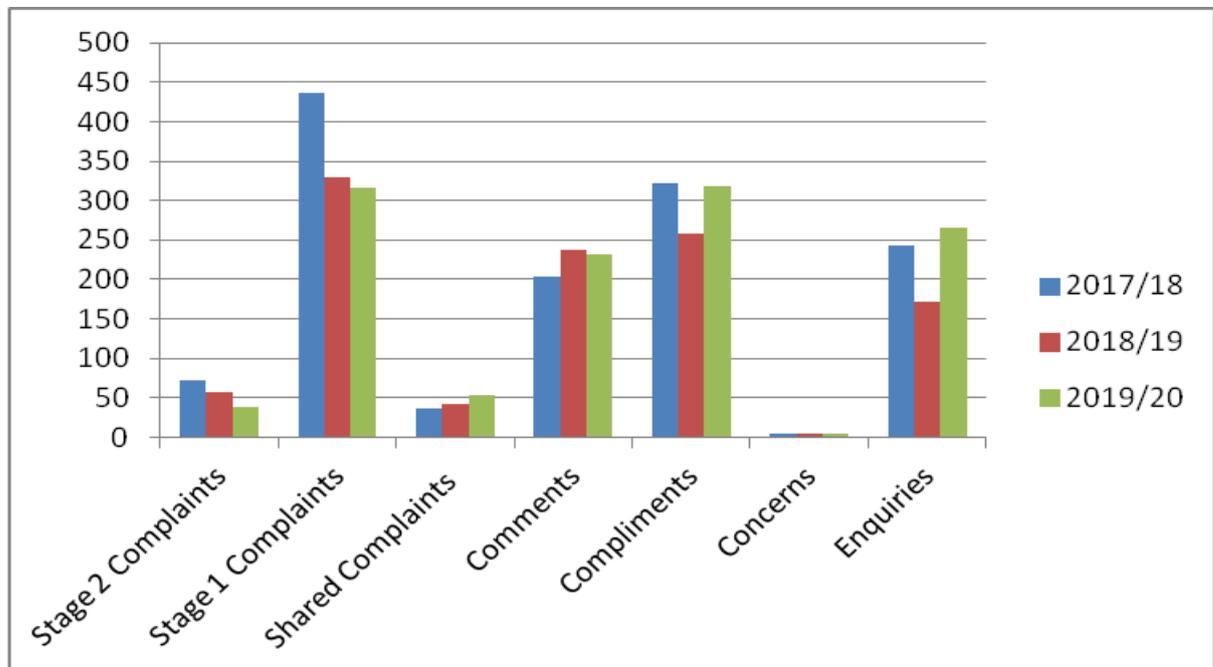
- 1,229 items of patient feedback were managed via the NHS 24 Patient Experience Team for 2019/20
- This is a 9% increase from the previous year (1,129 items managed in 2018/19)
- A 33% decrease in Stage 2 complaints from 58 in 2018/19 to 39 this year
- A 4% decrease in Stage 1 complaints to 316 compared to 330 received for the previous year
- A 29% increase in Shared Complaints from 42 to 54
- A 2% decrease in Comments from 237 to 232
- A 12% increase in Compliments from 285 to 319 this year
- A 54% increase in Enquiries from 172 in the previous year to 265 this year
- Four items of feedback were managed as concerns. These items may, or may not, require review.
- 286 external phone communications were managed by the Patient Experience Team of which 229 (80%) were resolved, de-escalated, or re-directed at source. Where appropriate, the Patient Experience Team attempt early local resolution of issues raised. This work positively impacts the wider organisation by reducing the requirement for senior staff involvement in complaints management in terms of time and resource.

The figures above demonstrate another busy year for the organisation in the receipt and management of feedback. A reduction is noted in the receipt of Stage 2 complaints, which is attributed to excellent real time management of feedback provided by frontline staff and the Patient Experience Team.

1.2 Below details the number of items of feedback received and managed via the NHS 24 Patient Experience Team

**Table 1 – Total Feedback**

Feedback Type	2018/19	2019/2020	% variance
	Call Demand	Call Demand	
	1,496,877	1,656,804	+11%
Stage 2 Complaints	58	39	-33%
Stage 1 Complaints	330	316	-4%
Shared Complaints	42	54	+29%
Comments	237	232	-2%
Compliments	285	319	+12%
Concerns	5	4	-20%
Enquiries	172	265	+54%
<b>Total Feedback</b>	<b>1,129</b>	<b>1,229</b>	



**Table 2 – Stage 2 Complaints vs Call Demand**

Year	No. Of Stage 2 Complaints	Call Demand	Percentage
2019/20	39	1,656,804	0.002%
2018/19	58	1,496.877	0.003%
2017/18	72	1,582,905	0.004%

### 1.3 Table 3 – Service Involved

Stage 1, Stage 2 and Shared Complaints 2019/20		
	Total	Upheld/Part Upheld
Unscheduled Care Services (NHS 24 111)	352	167
Scottish Emergency Dental Service (SEDS)	17	12
Musculoskeletal Advice and Triage Service (MSK)	11	3
Breathing Space	13	4
Living Life	2	2
Mental Health Hub	2	1
Health Information Services	6	1
GP Triage Service	4	2
Cancer Treatment Helpline	2	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>192</b>

### 1.4 Comments

- 1.4.1 Comments received by NHS 24 on its services are primarily managed and responded to by the Patient Experience Team. Examples are:

*Comment received about the information contained within the NHSInform website relating to the eligibility of students to use the Minor Ailments Scheme. The information was subsequently updated.*

*Comment received from caller to the 111 service who experienced difficulty in accessing the service.*

*Feedback received, logged as a comment, from a patient who considered the service should be able to provide an electronic prescription to a pharmacy.*

### 1.5 Compliments

- 1.5.1 NHS 24 welcomes complimentary feedback and recognises the importance and value of positive feedback. Where possible, for the 111 service, compliments are shared directly with staff members. The Patient Experience Team acknowledges compliments and these are shared via the NHS 24 Intranet and published within the staff magazine 'Insight'.

Some examples of complimentary feedback are detailed below:

*Wanted to compliment the call handler I spoke to today for managing not to sound stressed or harassed when I got through eventually. It must be very difficult for you, given the call volumes. Great that staff still sound friendly and caring. Just waiting for a call back from Triage - hope they are as good!*

*Just want to say a massive thank you to the nurse I spoke to last night regarding my son. He is undergoing assessment for autism, sensory and co-ordination issues. She spoke to him herself and explained what was happening and that little touch made such a difference. He ended up being sent to our local infirmary late last night as it was a much easier process for him because of her. I'm a student nurse and also work as a healthcare assistant for the NHS and I felt very proud of being part of the NHS.*

One item of positive feedback resulted in the author kindly agreeing to be involved in the production of her 'story' by video, which will be shared with staff at Core Induction. Here's what she had to say:

*I just wanted to give a massive thank you to the call handler and nurse who inevitably saved my daughters life in January. It was on the 1st January 2020 (I know, happy new year, right!) the call was taken late morning. My daughter, who was born 6 weeks premature, became unresponsive and thanks to the amazing NHS24 call handler and nurse we were able to take my daughter down to A&E and get the treatment she needed.*

*My daughter ended up with her life in the balance with aggressive Broncholitis and RSV but has luckily pulled through and after her check this week, is doing well given the circumstances.*

*The call handler was so efficient in getting the info to the nurse and the nurse (knowing how concerned I was), was so calming, professional and clear in what she asked me to do and because of this, I am so grateful and thankful. I wish I could remember both ladies names because they were outstanding and forever will be indebted to their help, prompt advice and guidance as to next steps.*

## **2. NHS 24 Patient Experience Service**

- 2.1 The Patient Experience Team forms an integral part of the Nursing & Care Directorate. Emphasis is on local accountability, which involves resolution of issues at the point of contact, where appropriate.
- 2.2 To ensure a consistent approach to the receipt and management of Patient Feedback, all feedback received organisationally is managed centrally and recorded via the Data Capture System 'Respond'. This ensures a consistent audit trail and informs evident trends and themes.

## **3. NHS 24 Complaints Handling Procedure**

- 3.1 The NHS 24 Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) ensures a standardised approach by all Health Boards in relation to the management of patient feedback with focus on early local resolution of any issues raised.

- 3.2 The majority of complaints received by NHS 24's 111 service require some level of clinical review, which involves a significant amount of clinical resource. NHS 24 has attempted, as much as possible, to adhere to the five working day timeline for Stage 1 complaints, however there are situations when, due to staff availability and pressures on the provision of the clinical service, achievement of this has not been possible. Indicator seven of the attached Appendix applies.
- 3.3 Figures show a continued reduction in Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints when compared to the previous year. This is attributed to the excellent real-time management of patient feedback by frontline staff and the Patient Experience Team. Where appropriate, early local resolution is the preferred outcome for the patient/complainant and the organisation.
- 3.4 This year shows a marked rise in feedback managed as 'Enquiries' received by the Patient Experience Team. This can include requests for information, signposting to other services, or requests from partner Health Boards for information on the patient journey through NHS 24. Some enquiries require a level of investigation by a clinician or the requirement for the Patient Experience Team to review and interpret the detail of the NHS 24 journey of care. The Patient Experience Team has worked extremely hard this year to manage as many enquiries as possible thereby reducing the requirement to utilise resource by requesting a clinical review. However, should the requirement for a clinical review be apparent, this will be requested.
- 3.5 The CHP sets out nine Complaints Performance Indicators and NHS 24 compliance with these is detailed in the attached Appendix.

#### **4. Encouraging and Gathering Feedback**

- 4.1 Feedback is received in the following ways:
- Verbally, in writing, or in person, to any NHS 24 Centre or to the Patient Experience Team
  - Via the dedicated feedback page within the NHS 24 websites
  - Via Care Opinion
  - Via social media channels
  - Via Community Engagement undertaken by the NHS 24 Engagement Team and the Participation and Equalities Team.
- 4.2 Patient feedback received by NHS 24 forms an integral part of the overarching National Healthcare Quality Report, which is presented via the

clinical governance structure to the National Clinical Governance Group and the NHS 24 Clinical Governance Committee. The Committee consists of internal and external partners, non-executive directors and public panel members.

- 4.3 NHS 24's process of continuous improvement is facilitated by patient feedback, feedback received via partner Health Boards, the adverse event process and adverse incident report forms. Information from these processes is captured within a single data capture system to ensure effective cross referencing, thereby informing organisational visibility.

## **5. Service Improvement and Engagement**

- 5.1 As a result of feedback, NHS 24 evaluates and implements changes to enhance the overall patient experience. Where it is evident that a process, guidance document, or clinical support tool requires to be reviewed, relevant approval involving governance bodies is sought. For the NHS 24 111 Unscheduled Care Service, clinical content is evaluated regularly to ensure safe, effective, person centred care is provided.
- 5.2 During 2019/20, NHS 24 has continued to work with partner Health Boards to gather feedback from service users on their NHS 24 111 experience. This involves the collection of 'real time' feedback from service users who attend at the Out of Hours Centres. As NHS 24 does not have the benefit of seeing our patient's face to face, we are grateful to colleagues in partner Health Boards for their support in this initiative.
- 5.3 The NHS 24 Public Partnership Forum (PPF) receive regular updates on sharing of learning from feedback. This is welcomed by the group and informs their understanding of the importance NHS 24 places on the value of patient feedback. In addition to this, the Patient Experience Team has participated in the newly formed NHS 24 Youth Forum. An informative session was presented to the Youth Forum, which was well received and received by Youth Forum members.

## **6. Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)**

- 6.1 NHS 24 fully engages with any requests received via the SPSO. This year, six complainants referred their complaint to the SPSO. Upon initial review by the SPSO, no complaints were progressed to the investigation stage as the SPSO were satisfied that NHS 24 had undertaken a full review and had issued an apology where necessary. In one case, the SPSO shared the following comments made by a complainant:

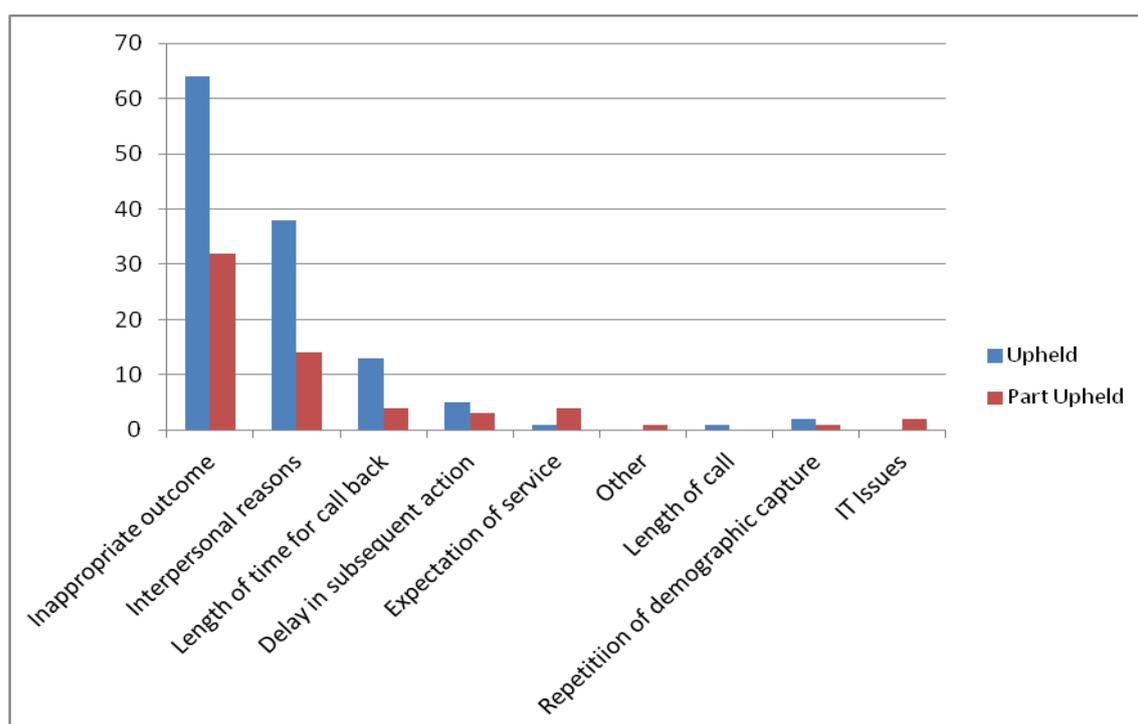


- 7.4 Of the stories shared this year, 7% were moderate or strongly critical of the NHS 24 111 service with the vast majority of feedback being complimentary.
- 7.5 Work has been undertaken to raise staff awareness of Care Opinion. This has included a demonstration of the Care Opinion website at induction, information in the staff magazine 'Insight' and the development of promotional materials relevant for use within NHS 24. 'Roadshows' are planned in the coming year within each of the main NHS 24 Contact Centres. Collaborative working continues with the Care Opinion Team.

## APPENDIX 1 – COMPLAINT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

### Indicator One - Learning from complaints

- 1.1 NHS 24 is a learning organisation and appreciates the valuable contribution patient feedback makes to overall service improvement.
- 1.2 Individual learning from complaints is recorded, actioned and monitored to ensure closure of actions identified. During 2019/20, 283 individual learning actions were identified which are tracked to ensure closure. Evident themes were:
- Importance of accurate record keeping
  - Importance of adherence to process
  - Comprehensive assessment of clinical symptoms
- 1.3 During 2019/20, NHS 24 met with 10 complainants and/or their families. These meetings were welcomed by those involved and, in a non-patient facing Health Board, these are hugely valuable to the organisation. Of these, five complaints resulted in the organisation progressing an Adverse Event Review.
- 1.4 NHS 24 has invoked the Duty of Candour legislation in nine cases this year and engagement has taken place with the patients/families involved. A separate NHS 24 Duty of Candour Report will be available.
- 1.5 The table below shows the upheld/part upheld complaint categories for 2019/20



1.6 As a result of complaints and feedback in relation to its services, NHS 24 evaluates and implements changes to enhance the overall patient experience. Where it is identified that a process, guidance or clinical support tool requires to be reviewed, appropriate approval is sought from the relevant governance body. In addition, clinical content is evaluated regularly by the NHS 24 Clinical Development Team to ensure the delivery of safe, effective, person centred care. Detailed below is service improvement work undertaken by NHS 24 during 2019/20.

1.7 Completed organisational learning:

NHS 24's Clinical and Operational Process Review Group (COPRG) reviewed the Real Time Support Process to address where the patient has communication difficulties and is communicating through an intermediary, the clinical supervisor must take over the call prior to reaching an endpoint.
NHS 24's Clinical and Operational Process Review Group (COPRG) improved the management of patients with hearing impairment who do not have Text Relay within the Hearing & Speech Impaired Caller Process.
Communication to all clinicians in relation to taking over calls and speaking directly to callers/patients to improve patient care
NHS 24 to issue a communication that urine samples are not required if referring patients with urinary symptoms to Community Pharmacy.

1.8 NHS 24 issues communication to frontline staff weekly in the form of a 'Hot Topic'. This communication contains information, updates or direction for staff as a result of feedback and the recommendations which are evident from clinical investigations.

### Indicator Two - Complaints Process Experience

2.1 Anonymous survey forms are sent to patients/complainants following completion of the Stage 1 or Stage 2 complaints process. A total of 86 survey forms were issued with 18 (21%) were returned. Of the 18 returns, 89% of respondents reported a positive experience in the management of their complaint. Work is ongoing to try to improve the uptake on the completion of the survey forms. NHS 24 is not isolated in receiving low returns.

### Indicator Three - Staff Awareness and Training

3.1 NHS 24 Frontline staff are trained in the receipt and progression of patient feedback during their core induction training programme. An e-Learning module is available to support this. The induction session has recently been reviewed to include all Patient Experience activity to ensure staff receive a comprehensive overview of how feedback is managed and of the important role they have in its receipt and de-escalation. Regular updates are

provided to staff in relation to numbers, trends, themes and outcomes from complaints at the Regional Clinical Governance meetings attended by frontline staff.

- 3.2 'Patient stories' form an integral part of the NHS 24 Board Meeting Agenda. These outline the patient experience and any individual or organisational learning identified. These are well received by the NHS 24 Board Members who welcome this valuable insight. During 2019/20, a comprehensive Patient Experience presentation was provided to Board Members, which was well received.
- 3.3 Information on feedback is included quarterly within the staff magazine 'Insight'. Work is ongoing in relation to staff awareness of Care Opinion.
- 3.4 The detail below shows training completed for 2019/20.

<b>Learning</b>	<b>No. of staff completed</b>
NHS 24 Model Complaints Handling Procedure	265
The Value of Feedback	175
Duty of Candour (launched March 2018)	73
Patient Experience Core Induction Session	125

#### **Indicator Four - Total number of complaints received**

- 4.1 NHS 24's local delivery plan (LDP) sets out the levels of performance which we plan to achieve against each of the key performance measures. For complaints, it is to ensure these do not exceed 0.01% of all calls received. NHS 24 achieved 0.003% in 2018/19 and 0.002% in 2019/20.
- 4.2 The total number of complaints received is detailed below:

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
<b>Feedback Type</b>	<b>Call Demand</b>	<b>Call Demand</b>
	1,496,877	1,656,804
Stage 2 Complaints	58	39
Stage 1 Complaints	330	316
Shared Complaints*	42	54

\* Complaints involving another partner Health Board in which NHS 24 has contributed to the overall response.

- 4.3 Complaints per call demand in 000's

Stage 1 Complaints	0.002%
Stage 2 Complaints	0.019%
Shared Complaints	0.003%

### Indicator Five - Complaints closed at each stage

- 5.1 The term 'closed' refers to a complaint that has had a response provided to the complainant and, at the time, no further action is required (regardless of which stage it is processed and whether any further escalation takes place).
- 5.2 The table below shows the number of complaints closed as a % of all complaints

Stage 1 Complaints	89%
Stage 2 Complaints	11%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Indicator Six - Complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld

- 6.1 Outcomes for 2019/20

	Upheld	%	Part Upheld	%	Not Upheld	%
<b>Stage 1 Complaints*</b>	96	30%	60	19%	160	51%
<b>Stage 2 Complaints</b>	14	35%	8	21%	17	44%

### Indicator Seven - Average times

- 7.1 The table below demonstrates the average in working days to close complaints at Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Stage 1 Complaint	4 days
Stage 2 Complaint	16 days
Stage 1 – 2	-

### Indicator Eight - Complaints closed in full within the timescales

- 8.1 Complaints closed in full within timescales:

Number of complaints closed at Stage 1 within 5 working days as a % of total Stage 1 complaints	74%
Number of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 days as a % of total Stage 2 complaints	95% *
Stage 1 – 2 complaints closed within 20 days	100%

\* Two Stage 2 complaint breached 20 days due to consent status.

- 8.2 Of the 39 Stage 2 complaints managed, all of these were responded to within 20 working days, upon receipt of consent.

## Indicator Nine - Number of cases where an extension was authorised

### 9.1 Authorised extensions.

Number of complaints closed at Stage 1 where an extension was authorised, as a % of all complaints at Stage 1	3%
The number of complaints closed at Stage 2 where an extension was authorised, as a % of all complaints at Stage 2	NA

Examples of extension reasons:

- Pressures within Service Delivery
- Availability of key staff to investigate/provide outcomes

9.2 The Patient Experience Team continue to work with Service Delivery colleagues to ensure, as much as possible, adherence to the five-day target for Stage 1 complaints with focus on improved communication in relation to requests for extensions.

## Glossary of Terms

<b>Stage 1 Complaint</b>	Less complex complaints, which may, or may not, require a degree of clinical investigation. Early local resolution within five working days
<b>Stage 2 Complaint</b>	More complex complaints, which require a full clinical review. These are acknowledged within three working days and a full written response provided within 20 working days
<b>Shared Complaint</b>	Complaint in which complainant has raised issues relating to the service provided by more than one Health Board or organisation. Lead responder Board identified and provides written co-ordinated response from all agencies concerned
<b>Concern</b>	Some concerns may require an investigation. Follows exactly the same process of a Stage 1 complaint with outcome provided verbally with the agreement of the feedback provider
<b>Comment</b>	These can be a range of issues relating to the services of NHS 24. Some of these require a response and some do not
<b>Enquiries</b>	Enquiries received which may be managed locally or which may require re-direction to a partner Health Board or other organisation for progression
<b>Upheld</b>	Complaint where all issues following investigation are accepted
<b>Not upheld</b>	Complaint where all issues following investigation are not accepted
<b>Partially upheld</b>	Complaint where some issues following investigation are accepted
<b>Enquiry</b>	These are a variety of ad hoc general enquiries received by the Patient Experience Team
<b>Care Opinion</b>	Public on-line facility to enable patients and service users to document their experience of NHS services