



Berkshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Annual Complaints Report

April 2022 to March 2023

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1. Introduction and executive Summary

This report contains the annual complaint information for Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (referred to in this document as The Trust), as mandated in The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009. The Trust formally reports patient experience through our Quality Executive and Trust Board on a quarterly basis, alongside other measures including compliments, the Friends and Family Test, PALS and our internal patient survey programme, which is operated through the iWGC feedback solution.

This report looks at the application of the Complaints Process within the Trust from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and uses data captured from the Datix incident reporting system.

Factors (and best practice) which affect the numbers of formal complaints that Trusts receive include:

- Ensuring processes are in place to resolve potential and verbal complaints before they escalate to formal complaints. These include developing systems and training to support staff with local resolution.
- An awareness of other services such as the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS – internal to the Trust) and external services including Healthwatch and advocacy organisations which ensure that the NHS listens to patients and those who care for them, offering both signposting and support.
- Highlighting the complaints process as well as alternative feedback mechanisms in a variety of ways including leaflets, poster adverts and through direct discussions with patients, such as PALS clinics in clinical sites.

When people contact the service, the complaints office will discuss the options for complaint management. This gives them the opportunity to make an informed decision as to whether they are looking to make a formal complaint or would prefer to work with the service to resolve the complaint informally.

The number of formal complaints received in 2022-23 about the Trust has increased to 240, compared to 231 in 2021-22 and 213 in 2020-21.

The Trust actively promotes feedback as part of 'Learning from Experience', which within the Complaints Office includes activity such as enquiries, services resolving concerns informally, working with other Trusts on joint complaints, and responding to the office of Members of Parliament who raise concerns on behalf of their constituents. With the exception of one case in May 2022, the Trust achieved a 100% response rate with responding to complainants within an agreed timescale.

There were 550,654 contacts within the Trust in 2022/23 across inpatient and community for both physical and mental health services, this was an increase from 468,368 reported contacts the previous year. This gave a complaint rate of 0.043% compared to 0.049% in 2021/22 and 0.038% in 2020/21.

The Trust actively promotes feedback as part of 'Learning from Experience', which within the Complaints Office includes activity such as enquiries, services resolving concerns informally, working with other Trusts on joint complaints, and responding to the office for Members of Parliament who raise concerns on behalf of their constituents. There were 88 MP concerns raised, up from 67 in 2021/22 and 34 in 2020/21. CAMHS continues to be the main service MPs contact the Trust about, with 66% of contacts in 2022/23 and 55% in 2021/22. The concerns are predominantly around waiting times. There were 19 concerns about community based mental health services (the same as last year) and 7 were about physical health services.

Our complaints process works alongside our Serious Incidents processes and Mortality Review Group having a direct link to ensure that any complaint involving a patient death is reviewed. Weekly and monthly meetings with the Patient Safety Team take place to ensure that we are working effectively and identifying any themes or emerging patterns.

2. Complaints received – activity

2.1 Overview

During 2022/23, 240 formal complaints were received into the organisation. Table 1 shows the number of formal complaints by service and compares them to the previous financial year. The information in this report excludes complaints which are led by an alternative organisation, unless specified.

Table 1: Formal complaints received

Service	2021-22						2022-23						Comparison to last FY
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total for year	% of Total complaints	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total for year	% of Total complaints	
CMHT/Care Pathways	5	8	10	9	32	13.85	11	10	18	14	53	22.00%	↑
CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	5	10	6	10	31	13.42	4	6	13	10	33	14.00%	↑

Crisis Resolution & Home Treatment Team (CRHTT)	5	4	2	4	15	6.49	3	9	6	4	22	9.00%	↑
Acute Inpatient Admissions – Prospect Park Hospital	11	8	7	6	30	12.99	13	7	9	6	35	15.00%	↑
Community Nursing	4	5	2	1	12	5.19	3	0	4	5	12	5.00%	=
Community Hospital Inpatient	6	8	6	5	25	10.82	4	3	2	1	10	4.00%	↓
Common Point of Entry	0	1	1	0	2	0.87	0	1	3	1	5	2.00%	↑
Out of Hours GP Services	1	1	5	2	9	3.9	1	0	1	2	4	1.50%	↓
PICU - Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit	3	1	2	1	7	3.03	1	2	0	4	7	3.00%	=
Urgent Treatment Centre	1	1	0	0	2	0.87	1	0	0	0	1	0.50%	↓
Older Adults Community Mental Health Team	0	0	0	2	2	0.87	1	1	0	0	2	1.00%	=
Other services during quarter	18	14	14	16	64	27.71	19	11	15	11	56	23.00%	↓
Grand Total	59	61	55	56	231	100	61	50	71	58	240	100.00%	↑

Of the 240 formal complaints that were received, 13 were secondary complaints (an increase from 12 the previous year).

Whilst recognising the overall increase are small (particularly when taking into account the increase in patient contacts that the Trust has had), there was an increase in complaints received in relation to the CMHT/Care Pathways, CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHTT), Acute Inpatient Admissions – Prospect Park Hospital

Common Point of Entry and the Older Adults Community Mental Health Team.

CMHT saw the biggest increase in formal complaints from 32 to 53, having previously been 34 in 2020/21 and 32 in 2019/20. It is worth noting that a high number of the formal complaints received for CMHTs this year have been from a small number of habitual complainants and that they were separating out issues rather than submitting one complaint.

Table 2 below details the main themes of complaints and the percentage breakdown of these.

Table 2: Themes of Complaints received

Main subject of complaint	Number of complaints	% of total complaints
Alleged Abuse, Bullying, Physical, Sexual, Verbal	18	7.50
Access to Services	7	2.92
Attitude of Staff	26	10.83
Care and Treatment	104	43.33
Communication	38	15.83
Communication with Other Organisations	1	0.42
Confidentiality	6	2.50
Discharge Arrangements	4	1.67
Discrimination, Cultural Issues	2	0.83
Healthcare Professional	1	0.42
Information to Patients	1	0.42
Medical Records	4	1.67
Medication	9	3.75
Waiting Times for Treatment	13	5.42
Inaccurate Records	1	0.42
Environment, Hotel Services, Cleanliness	1	0.42
Other	2	0.83
Financial Issues/Policy	1	0.42
Patients Property and Valuables	1	0.42
Grand Total	240	100.00

Table 2: Themes of Complaints received

The main theme of complaints received during 2022-23 was care and treatment with 43.33% followed by communication with 15.83% and attitude of staff with 10.83%. This is compared to care and treatment with 47.62%, communication with 10.82% and attitude of staff with 14.29% last year. These have remained consistently the top 3 themes for formal complaints year on year.

Complaints received in relation to care and treatment are wide ranging and focus very much on individual circumstances and therefore it has not been possible to pick up themes or areas for specific action by services in relation to these.

The following tables show a breakdown for 2022/23 of the formal complaints that have been received and where the service is based.

2.2 Mental Health service complaints

Table 3 below details the mental health service complaints received, this shows that the main services where formal complaints are attributed to are CMHT and Adult acute Admissions wards. 47% of the complaints were about care and treatment, which is around the same as in 2021/22 and 2020/21.

Table 3: Mental Health Service complaints

Service	Number of complaints
Adult Acute Admissions - Bluebell Ward	6
Adult Acute Admissions - Daisy Ward	11
Adult Acute Admissions - Rose Ward	7
Adult Acute Admissions - Snowdrop Ward	11
CMHT/Care Pathways	53
CMHTOA/COAMHS - Older Adults Community Mental Health Team	2
Common Point of Entry	5
Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHTT)	22
Learning Disability Service Inpatients - Campion Unit - Ward	3
Mental Health Act Department	1
Neuropsychology	5
Older Adults Inpatient Service - Orchid ward	1
Older Adults Inpatient Service - Rowan Ward	1
Perinatal Mental Health	1
PICU - Psychiatric Intensive Care - Sorrel Ward	7
Psychological Medicine Service	2
Talking Therapies - Admin/Ops Team	1
Talking Therapies - PWP Team	3
SUN	3
Grand Total	145

2.2.1 Mental Health Complaints by service

The adult mental health services receiving higher numbers of formal complaints in 2022/23 are detailed further below.

Community Mental Health teams (CMHT)

As detailed in the table below, within CMHT services the highest number of complaints were received regarding the services in Bracknell (34%), Slough (21%) and Wokingham (17%). 13 of the total CMHT complaints were secondary complaints (an increase from 5% last year). Reading has seen a sustained decrease to 13% from 16% last year and 18% in 2020/21.

Table 4: CMHT complaints

Main subject of complaint	Geographical Locality					Grand Total
	Bracknell	Reading	Slough	West Berks	Wokingham	
Alleged Abuse, Bullying, Physical, Sexual, Verbal					1	1
Access to Services	1					1
Attitude of Staff	2					2
Care and Treatment	6	5	6	8	6	31
Communication	6		3			9
Confidentiality	1				1	2
Discharge Arrangements			1			1
Discrimination, Cultural Issues	1					1
Information to Patients			1			1
Medical Records	1	1				2
Medication		1				1
Financial Issues/Policy					1	1
Grand Total	18	7	11	8	9	53

Adult mental health inpatients

As detailed in table 5, 40% of complaints received by the acute adult admission wards were about clinical care/ care and treatment compared to 48% last year, 36% in 2021/22 and 57% in 2020/21; these were individual to specific patient circumstances.

This includes seven complaints received in relation to Sorrel ward, the same number as last year and compared with four in 2020/21.

Table 5: Adult mental health inpatient ward complaints

Main subject of complaint	Ward								Grand Total
	Bluebell Ward	Daisy Ward	Rose Ward	Snowdrop Ward	Mental Health Act Department	Orchid ward	Rowan Ward	PICU - Sorrel Ward	
Alleged Abuse, Bullying, Physical, Sexual, Verbal	1	2	2	2			1	3	11
Attitude of Staff	1	5	1	2				1	10
Care and Treatment	3	4	3	6				2	18
Communication			1			1			2
Healthcare Professional				1					1
Medication	1							1	2
Inaccurate Records					1				1
Grand Total	6	11	7	11	1	1	1	7	45

Daisy Ward and Snowdrop Ward received the highest number of formal complaints, however there were no specific themes for these.

CRHTT

Table 6 below demonstrates that there were 22 complaints received about CRHTT in 2022/23; an increase from 15 in 2021/22 and compared with 13 in 2020/21.

As with previous years, a higher percentage were in relation to services received in the West of the county and predominantly Reading where the main hub for the west is located.

Table: 6 CRHTT complaints

Main subject of complaint	Geographical Locality					Grand Total
	Bracknell	Reading	Slough	Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead	Wokingham	
Alleged Abuse, Bullying, Physical, Sexual, Verbal	2					2
Access to Services		2				2
Attitude of Staff	1	1		1	2	5
Care and Treatment		3	3	2		8
Communication			1	1		2
Medical Records				1		1
Medication		2				2
Grand Total	3	8	4	5	2	22

2.3 Community Health Service Complaints

Community Health Service complaints accounted for 16% of formal complaints received into the organisation in 2022/23 a significant decrease compared to 29% last year and 24% in 2020/21. There was a decrease from 25 complaints to 10 about our community inpatient wards.

The table below details the community health service complaints received, this shows that the main services where formal complaints are attributed to are Community Inpatient services at 26%, Community Nursing at 32% and WestCall out of hours services at 11%.

When breaking down the top theme of the complaint, 47% of those received was about care and treatment in community health services, these were all about the clinical care received.

There were no themes with complaints raised around specifics of care delivery and patient's individual circumstances.

Table 7: Community Health Service Complaints

Service	Geographical Locality						Grand Total
	Bracknell	Reading	Slough	West Berks	Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead	Wokingham	
Assessment and Rehabilitation Centre (ARC)			2				2
Community Hospital Inpatient Service - Donnington Ward				1			1
Community Hospital Inpatient Service - Jubilee Ward			1		1		2
Community Hospital Inpatient Service - Oakwood Ward		3					3
Community Hospital Inpatient Service - Windsor Ward						4	4
District Nursing	2		1	1	4	4	12
Hearing and Balance Services			1				1
Integrated Pain and Spinal Service - IPASS						1	1
Musculoskeletal Community Specialist Service		1					1
Out of Hours GP Services		2		1		1	4
Phlebotomy				1			1
Podiatry		2				2	4
Sexual Health			1				1

Urgent Treatment Centre				1			1
Grand Total	2	8	6	5	5	12	38

2.3.1 Community Health Complaints by service

The top 3 community services receiving formal complaints in 2022/23 are detailed further below.

Community Nursing

As detailed in Table 8; 18 of the 38 complaints were regarding care and treatment, a review of these has not identified any themes.

Table 8: Community Nursing Service complaints

Main subject of complaint	Geographical Locality						Grand Total
	Bracknell	Reading	Slough	West Berks	Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead	Wokingham	
Alleged Abuse, Bullying, Physical, Sexual, Verbal				1	1		2
Access to Services		1		1		1	3
Attitude of Staff			1			4	5
Care and Treatment	2	3	2	2	4	5	18
Communication			2			1	3
Discharge Arrangements		2	1				3
Waiting Times for Treatment		2		1			3
Patients Property and Valuables						1	1
Grand Total	2	8	6	5	5	12	38

Community Health Inpatient Wards

Table 9: Community Health Inpatient Ward Complaints

Main subject of complaint	Ward				Grand Total
	Donnington Ward	Jubilee Ward	Oakwood Ward	Windsor Ward	
Alleged Abuse, Bullying, Physical, Sexual, Verbal		1			1
Care and Treatment	1		2	3	6
Discharge Arrangements		1	1		2
Patients Property and Valuables				1	1
Grand Total	1	2	3	4	10

The number of formal complaints for Community Inpatient Wards has decreased significantly by 15 down to 10. There has been targeted work to reduce complaints on the wards, particularly on Oakwood Ward which has previously had a higher number of complaints.

WestCall Out of Hours GP Service

As shown in the table below, WestCall received 4 formal complaints during 2022/23 compared with 9 in 2021/22 and 8 in 2020/21. The majority of the complaints for the out of hours GP service were found to be waiting times.

Table 10: WestCall Out of Hours GP Service complaints

Main subject of complaint	Geographical Locality			Grand Total
	Reading	West Berks	Wokingham	
Access to Services			1	1
Waiting Times for Treatment	2	1		3
Grand Total	2	1	1	4

2.4 Children, Young People and Families

Table 11 below details the children, young people and families' complaints received, with 21% of all complaints received attributable to these services (compared with 20% last year and consistently to 21% the year before). The main services where formal complaints are attributed to are the CAMHS ADHD service and CAMHS Specialist Community Team.

Table 11: Children, Young People and Family Service Complaints

Service	Geographical Locality						Grand Total
	Bracknell	Reading	Slough	West Berks	Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead	Wokingham	
CAMHS - AAT		1	1				2
CAMHS - ADHD	1	11			1	1	14
CAMHS - Anxiety and Depression Pathway	1	1				1	3
CAMHS - Common Point of Entry (Children)	1	1					2
CAMHS - Rapid Response		1				1	2
CAMHS - Specialist Community Teams	1	3		1	4	1	10
Children's Occupational Therapy - CYPIT					1		1
Children's Speech and Language Therapy - CYPIT		4					4
Eating Disorders Service	1						1
Health Visiting	1	2				1	4
Immunisation	1	2	1	1			5
Learning Disability Service Inpatients - Campion Unit - Ward		3					3
Grand Total	7	29	2	2	6	5	51

CAMHS

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services received 33 complaints in 2022/23 compared to 31 in 2021/22 and 14 in 2020/21. Access to CAMHS and waiting lists were the main themes, there were 11 complaints compared with 5 complaints last year and 1 in 2021/22.

There were 2 formal complaints about the attitude of staff in compared to 5 last year, and these were both about the Rapid Response Service.

3 Complaints closed – activity

As part of the process of closing a formal complaint, a decision is made around whether the complaint is found to have been upheld, or well-founded (referred to as an outcome). The table below shows the outcome of complaints.

Table 12: Outcome of closed formal complaints

Outcome	2020-2021						2021-2022						2022-23					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	% Of 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	% Of 21/22	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total for year	% of 22/23
Not Upheld	9	25	19	18	71	36%	27	36	34	21	118	51%	23	22	23	38	106	43%
Partially Upheld	13	34	20	28	95	48%	19	18	22	22	81	35%	21	30	26	25	102	41%
Upheld	12	6	0	7	25	13%	9	11	6	6	32	14%	12	9	7	8	36	15%
SI	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	1	0	1	1	3	1%
Grand Total	34	65	39	53	191		55	65	62	49	231		57	61	57	72	247	

Complaints can cover several services and issues which are investigated as individual points which contributes towards higher partially upheld outcomes. The table shows increases in complaints that were found to be both upheld and not upheld with a decrease in those partially upheld.

Weekly open complaints situation reports (SITREP) sent to Clinical Directors, as well as on-going communication with the Complaints Office throughout the span of open complaints to keep them on track as much as possible.

Table 13 – Response rate within timescale negotiated with complainant

2020-21				2021-22				2022-23			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
100	99	100	100	100	100	100	100	95	100	100	100

4 Complaints as a mechanism for change – learning

The Divisions monitor the outcomes and learning from complaints within their Patient Safety and Quality Meetings. A Patient Safety, Experience and Learning Group takes place on a weekly basis, and further learning is shared and disseminated in a Trust wide newsletter called Circulation.

As part of the Trustwide work on Just Culture, the Head of Service Engagement and Experience led a project to understand the impact that being an Investigating Officer (IOs) has and to see how best both the Complaints Office and the Divisions can offer support. This was a helpful in terms of highlighting the pressures on IO's with the Senior Divisional Leadership Teams, such as time constraints, concerns about contacting complainants, and support for people who have been involved in or named in complaints.

5 Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) are independent of the NHS and facilitate the second stage of the complaints process. The table below shows Trust activity with the PHSO.

Table 14: PHSO activity

Month Received	Service	Month closed
May-22	Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHTT)	May-22
Jun-22	CMHT/Care Pathways	Jul-22
Aug-22	CMHT/Care Pathways	Sep-22
Aug-22	Community Hospital Inpatient Service - Donnington Ward	Sep-22
Nov-22	CAMHS - AAT	Mar-23
Nov-22	Children's Occupational Therapy - CYPIT	Nov-22
Jan-23	CMHTOA/COAMHS - Older Adults Community Mental Health Team	Feb-23

6 Multi-agency working

In addition to the complaints detailed in the report, the Trust monitors the number of multi-agency complaints they contribute to but are not the lead organisation (such as NHS England and Acute Trusts).

There were 14 multi-agency complaints responded to in 2022/23, which is a significant decrease from 27 in 2021/22. These mainly involved our physical health services (n13).

Table 15: Formal complaints led by other organisations

Lead organisation	2021-22	2022-23
Berk West CCG	1	1
CCG - Frimley	1	0
CCG East	1	0
EBPCC OOH	1	0
Frimley health	2	0
GP	1	0

Local Authority	1	1
NHSE	4	1
RBH	3	3
SCAS	10	8
Wexham Park	2	0
Grand Total	27	14

7 Complaints training

Our complaint handling and response writing training which is available to staff continues to be delivered online over MS Teams and continues to take place on a regular basis (with a waiting list) across the different localities, in addition to bespoke, tailored training for specific teams which has taken place to staff groups and teams.

8 Mortality Review Group

The Trust Mortality Review Group (TMRG) meets monthly and the Complaints Office provides information into this group. There were 22 formal complaints forwarded to the MRG during 2022/23 compared with 14 in 2021/22 and 18 in 2020/21.

The Medical Director is also sent a copy of complaint responses involving a death before they are signed by the Chief Executive.

Table 16: Complaints forwarded to TMRG

Service	Number of complaints
Adult Acute Admissions - Rose Ward	1
CMHT/Care Pathways	2
CMHTOA/COAMHS - Older Adults Community Mental Health Team	1
Common Point of Entry	2
Community Hospital Inpatient Service - Oakwood Ward	1
Community Hospital Inpatient Service - Windsor Ward	2
Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHTT)	1
District Nursing	9
Intermediate Care	1
Out of Hours GP Services	2
Grand Total	22