

TITLE: **Adult Social Care and Public Health - Annual Report on Services**
Complaints, Compliments and Representations – 1 April 2017 to 31 March
2018

REPORT OF: Alison Routledge, Complaints Manager

SERVICE: Commissioning and Quality Assurance. Care, Wellbeing and Learning

SUMMARY

The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 came into force on 1 April 2009. This legislation sets down the procedures that Adult Social Care Services and National Health Services, (NHS), must follow when complaints or representations are made.

As part of the responsibilities set out in the Act, local authorities must produce an annual report on all complaints and representations received. This report fulfils Gateshead Council's obligations and provides information on all representations received about the Council's Adult Social Care Services from 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018.

1.0 The Statutory Complaints Process

1.1 There are two steps to the Statutory Complaints Process;

Step 1 - Informal (Local) resolution by the Council;

Step 2 - Independent consideration by the Local Government Ombudsman, (LGO).

1.2 Once received, all complaints are assessed and given a grading. Categories of complaint are:

- Green, which are low-level or minimal risk for either the service user or the Council;
- Amber, which are assessed as a moderate or medium risk;
- Red, a serious complaint which is graded as high risk.

1.3 There are no prescribed timescales for resolution as the quality of the investigation and outcome is significantly more important than attempting to adhere to a stipulated period for response. However, it is very important that all investigations are proportionate to the issues complained about and that the complainant is always kept up to date on the progress of investigation.

2.0 Publicity and Information

2.1 Publicity on how to complain can be provided in several formats, encouraging and facilitating easy access to the complaints process. All new service users receive a complaints leaflet in their information pack. A leaflet is also provided when a service user receives the outcome to an assessment / reassessment of need. Adult Social Care feedback cards are also provided to clients and their carers after an assessment or review of social care needs.

3.0 Independent Element

3.1 The Council operates an internal investigation procedure. Complaints administration is fully independent of any form of service delivery to ensure fairness and impartiality.

4.0 Advocacy and Special Needs

4.1 Vulnerable people receiving an Adult Social Care service are encouraged and supported to express their views and to access the complaints procedure if they wish. An easy read complaints leaflet is also available for people with a learning disability.

4.2 In all cases advocacy is offered if it is felt that the complainant would benefit from this service.

4.3 Individuals who wish to complain about a Public Health or other Health service can obtain free independent advocacy support. The advocacy is Government funded and is exclusively for Health Service complaints.

5.0 Training and Employee Development

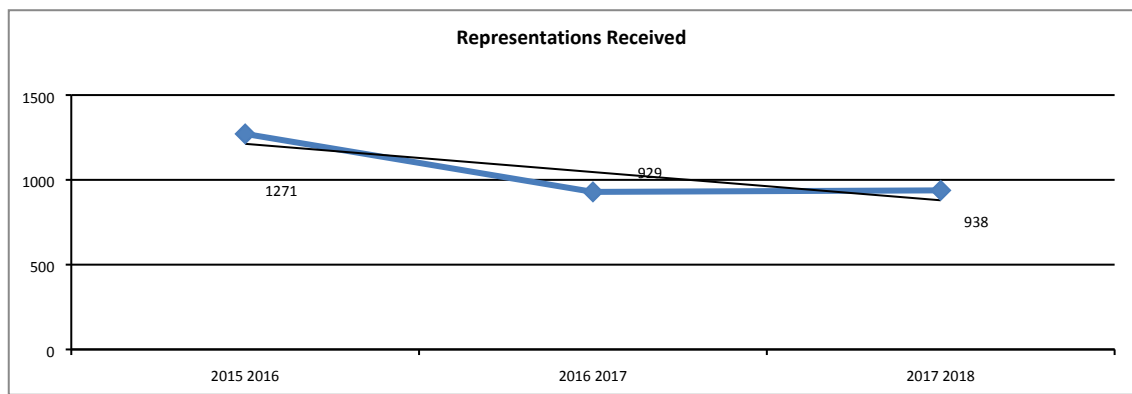
5.1 Training for Investigating Officers is provided on a regular basis. All Adult Social Care Team Managers / Service Managers are expected to have undergone investigating skills training.

5.2 The Investigating Skills Training Course is facilitated by the Local Government Ombudsman, (LGO). The training concentrates on defining, investigating and resolving complex complaints. It also emphasises the need to identify any improvements that may be necessary as a direct result of individual complaints.

5.3 A LGO Investigating Skills Training Course specific to Adult Social Care took place on 25 April 2017. Fifteen Adult Social Care Managers attended the training course, which was facilitated by a senior LGO Investigator. The feedback from the course was extremely positive and it is hoped to arrange another course for all new managers in October 2018.

6.0 All Representations Received over the Past Three Years

All Formal Contacts	2015 2016		2016 2017		2017 2018	
Statutory Adult Services Complaints	4.88%	62	5.72%	53	30.66%	65
Appeals Processes	Na	Na	Na	2	0.94%	2
Comments re Adult Social Care	Na	Na	Na	Na	0.47%	1
Complaint Related Queries	3.38%	43	2.48%	23	8.02%	17
Commissioned Service - Own investigation	1.34%	17	0.22%	2	1.89%	4
Commissioned Services Issues	4.01%	51	11.87%	110	50.94%	108
Corporate Complaints	0.16%	2	0.11%	1	0.47%	1
Data Breach	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Health & Social Care Joint Investigations	0.24%	3	0.43%	4	2.83%	6
Insurance Claim	0.08%	1	0.00%	0	0.94%	2
Inter-Agency Concerns	0.16%	2	0.43%	4	0.00%	0
Local Government Ombudsman	0.47%	6	0.00%	9	1.42%	3
MP / Councillor Responses	0.24%	3	0.97%	1	0.00%	0
Safeguarding Alerts	0.31%	4	0.11%	0	0.00%	0
Whistle Blow	0.24%	3	0.00%	0	1.42%	3
All Dissatisfaction		197		209		212
Compliments	84.50%	1074	77.67%	720	77.32%	726
Total		1271		929		938



- 6.1 **A Representation is any comment made by a service user or their representative about the services provided by Adult Social Care.**
- 6.2 Representations may be general, dissatisfaction or complimentary but all are regarding the quality of the services that had been received.
- 6.3 The table on page 2 and the graph above show the increase in representations received during 2017/18.
- 6.4 As representations also include compliments, the rise in the number of representations received during 2017/18 is, in part due to the increase in the number of compliments received about the quality of the services or the staff within Adult Social Care.

7.0 Statutory Adults Services Complaints

Complaint Categories	2015 2016	2016 2017	2017 2018
Green	4	7	10
Amber	57	45	55
Red	1	1	0
All	62	53	65

7.1 Key Points of Interest

- During 2017/18, sixty five complaints were received regarding Adult Social Care Services.
- This is a 23% increase on complaints received during 2016/17, (53).
- The number of complaint related queries (Crqs) have continued to reduce and 2017/18 saw a 26% decrease on the number received during 2016/17, (17 from 23).
- Complaint related queries are low-level representations that must be resolved within one working day after receipt.
- The majority of low level issues were dealt with directly by the services concerned and resolved to the customer's satisfaction.
- As most complainants now wish for a written response to their concerns, this would account for the decrease in low level issues not requiring an outcome letter and the increase in formal complaints where a written response is a statutory requirement.
- The number of complaints assessed as Green (minimal risk to the Council or service user) accounted for 15% (10) of the total number of complaints received.
- Amber complaints, which are medium risk to the Council or the service user, accounted for 85% of all complaints received. Amber complaints can often include a number of issues which are deemed as moderate risk to either the service user or the Council.
- There were no Red complaints during 2017/18. Red complaints are assessed as high risk to either the Council or the service user and are often extremely complex and generally contain a large number of sensitive issues.

- 9% (6) complaints were regarding the consultation around the Council's charging for care policy.
- 9% (6) complaints were about Adult Social Care Direct.
- Five of the complaints received about Adult Social Care Direct were regarding the delays in having telephone calls or emails responded to. One was regarding staff behaviour.
- 77% of representations made during 2017/18 were compliments and only 23% were concerns or formal complaints.

7.2 Themes of Complaints Received

7.2.1 There were three main themes of complaints received during 2017/18

1. Disputes Around Charging for Care

During 2017/18, twenty two complaints were received relating to charging for care services.

45%, (10), of complaints received were about the lack of information about charges for care services at the assessment stage. All complainants had stated that the Assessing Officer / Social Worker had not informed them that there would be a cost for any care services that may be provided.

As a resolution to complaints regarding disputes to care charges, the Council had agreed in some circumstances to waive either all or some of the care fees owed.

27% (6) complaints were regarding the implementation of the Council's new Charging Policy. All complainants raised issues about the lack of consultation relating to this Policy along with the changes which had been proposed.

As a result of these complaints, the Director of Adult Social Care agreed to suspend the Policy and undertake a further consultation exercise to ensure that all services users and their representatives who may be affected by this policy had an opportunity to have their views heard.

14% (3) complaints were around the delay in arranging a care package for service users who were undergoing an assessment of need within a Promoting Independence Centre. The delays were in part due to the unavailability of an appropriate care service within rural locations along with delays caused by individual social workers work capacity.

2. Staff Issues

Eight complaints were received regarding the behaviour of individual members of staff. All complainants cited staff conduct as the main issue complained about.

The Council ensure that all complaints where staff conduct is cited as the main concern are fully investigated by a manager, and where necessary, appropriate action is taken.

If any conduct issues are found to be justified, the Service ensure that these are addressed with the member of staff concerned. If the issues raised are of a very serious nature, the Council can immediately invoke employment procedures to

ensure that the concerns are independently investigated. During 2017/18, the Council invoked the internal employment process on one occasion.

After investigation, three complaints about staff conduct were not upheld, two were partially upheld and one was fully upheld. Two complaints are still under investigation.

3. Delays Encountered by Users of Adult Social Care Direct

Six complaints were received regarding delays or problems encountered by the public when trying to access the Adult Social Care Direct Service. The issues were fully investigated and all complaints were upheld. As a result of the complaints raised, Adult Social Care Direct have reviewed the service and identified times where the volume of calls and requests appeared to increase. As an outcome to this review, Adult Social Care Direct have appointed additional staff to meet the increasing public demand for services.

7.3 Specific Areas of Complaint

Service Area	2015 2016		2016 2017		2017 2018	
Assessment & Personalisation	54.84%	34	40.63%	36	80.00%	52
Care Call	6.45%	4	7.81%	2	9.23%	6
Commissioning & Quality Assurance	6.45%	4	23.44%	4	4.62%	3
Finance & ICT	3.23%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	NA
Health & Housing Support	8.06%	5	12.50%	0	0.00%	NA
Provider Services	20.97%	13	15.63%	11	6.15%	4
Total		62		53		65

- During 2017/18, fifty two complaints were about the Assessment & Personalisation service.
- This is a 44% increase on the number received during 2016/17 (36).
- However, as Assessment & Personalisation is the first service to become involved, dissatisfaction and disputes can often be expected, in particular in times of unprecedented demand for services.
- 27% (14) of complaints received by Assessment & Personalisation were disputes to care charges. In particular the poor communication from workers about possible charges for services that were provided.
- 27% (14) of complaints were regarding services provided by the Hospital Social Work Team.
- 50% (7) of these complaints were around communication about care charges at the assessment stage.
- After investigation, five complaints were found to be unjustified and two were fully justified.
- Complaints about Adult Social Care Provider Services decreased by 64% (4 from 11), since 2016/17.
- Provider Services include Promoting Independence Centres, Shared Lives Services and Council home care.
- Three complaints were around the standard of care provided by the Promoting Independence Centres.
- After investigation, one complaint was partially upheld and two were not upheld.
- A complaint about the conduct of a home care worker was found to be justified and appropriate action was taken by the service concerned.

7.4 All issues complained about

Issues of Complaint	2015 2016		2016 2017		2017 2018	
Appeal Changes after Care Needs Review	0.00%	0	20.75%	11	0.00%	0
Council Policy	0.00%	0	5.66%	3	10.77%	7
Delay	6.45%	4	3.77%	2	9.23%	6
Lack of Service	11.29%	7	9.43%	5	23.08%	15
Quality of Service	53.23%	33	41.51%	22	41.54%	27
Refusal of Service	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	3.08%	2
Staff Issues	29.03%	18	18.87%	10	12.31%	8
Total		62		53		65

- Almost 42%, (27), of complaints were around the quality of services received. This area remains the greatest cause for complaint.
- Quality of service involves alleged failure of service delivery, for example:
 - Missed or delayed social work visits / appointments;
 - Non return of telephone calls;
 - Poor communication;
 - Lack of a timely response after a request for service.
- Only one complaint was around the quality of the support provided by an individual social worker.
- The complaint was investigated and found to be unjustified.
- 8% (3) complaints were regarding the quality of the assessment or review which had been carried out by individual workers.
- All complaints were regarding changes to care packages or services.
- Each complaint was investigated and the individual assessment of need was reviewed by a Team Manager.
- As a result of this review, it was found that in two cases, the changes to the care package were considered to be appropriate.
- 12% (8) complaints received were regarding the attitude or conduct of individual workers.
- All complaints cited staff attitude as their main issue.
- After investigation, three complaints about attitude or behaviour of staff were not upheld.
- Two were partially upheld.
- One complaint was fully upheld.
- Proportionate and appropriate action was taken by the service concerned.

7.5 Outcomes

Outcomes of complaints	2015 2016		2016 2017		2017 2018	
Outstanding		6		5		4
Not upheld	28.57%	16	52.08%	25	44.26%	27
Partially upheld	35.71%	20	18.75%	9	14.75%	9
Upheld	23.21%	13	29.17%	14	29.51%	18
Other Resolution	12.50%	7	0.00%	0	11.48%	7
Total		56		48		61

- 44%, (27), of all complaints were not upheld after investigation;
- 15% (9) of complaints were found to be partially justified;
- 29% (18) of complaints were found to be fully justified;
- All improvements as a result of the complaints found to be partially / fully justified are included within this report.

7.6 Timescales

- 36 working days was the average time to investigate complaints during 2017/18. This is a 9% increase on the response times during 2016/17, (33 working days).

- Although there are no statutory timescales for response, the Council expects all complaints to be completed within 30 working days of receipt. However, as complaints now include numerous issues across adult services and other agencies, it is often difficult to provide a full and thorough response within this timescale. In all cases, if the complainant is regularly updated on the progress of the investigation, any extended timescales are generally accepted.

7.7 How complaints were received

Method of Complaint	2015 2016		2016 2017		2017 2018	
Service Feedback Form	4.84%	3	1.89%	1	3.08%	2
Complaints Form	3.23%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Email	33.87%	21	24.53%	13	33.85%	22
Letter	27.42%	17	32.08%	17	36.92%	24
Personal Visit	9.68%	6	1.89%	1	6.15%	4
Telephone	20.97%	13	39.62%	21	20.00%	13
		62		53		65

- Letters and emails continue to be the main method of referral accounting for 71%, (46), of all complaints received.
- Personal visits are now rare, with complainants preferring to either submit written complaints or complain by telephone.
- Complaints received by telephone are generally in response to immediate issues, such as missed care visits or disputes regarding invoices for care.
- Relatives, including relative carers, continue to make the most representations, and accounted for 83%, (54) of complaints made.

8.0 Equalities Monitoring

8.1 Gateshead Council recognises that equality monitoring of service delivery is crucial for effective planning and scrutiny of the services that it provides. This monitoring can identify which groups are using services and gauge their level of satisfaction. The information can then be used to highlight possible inequalities, investigate their underlying causes and address any unfairness or disadvantage.

8.2 Information about the complaints process can be made available in key languages and formats. Information for customers with sight, hearing or learning difficulties can also be provided.

- No formal complaints, 1 complaint related query and 7 compliments were raised by members of the BAME community.
- All compliments were regarding the quality of the services provided by Adult Social Care.
- Complaint information can always be provided in various formats to facilitate easy access to the complaints procedure.
- Access to interpreters can be provided if necessary.

9.0 Commissioned Care Services – All issues received

Commissioned Services	2015 2016	2016 2017	2017 2018
Formal Complaints	1	4	3
Complaint Related Queries	7	2	3
Commissioned Services Issues	51	110	108

Commissioned Service - Own Response	19	2	4
Compliments	4	6	1
Moved to Safeguarding	3	0	0
Whistle Blows	2	0	2
Total	87	124	121

- During 2017/18 representations regarding commissioned services decreased by 2%.
- Three formal complaints were received, which were investigated by the Contract Management Team.
- One complaint was about a home care provider, two were regarding commissioned care homes.
- After investigation, two complaints were found to be unjustified.
- One complaint about a commissioned care home was found to be partially justified.
- In all cases, Contract Management Officers carried out additional monitoring of the service to ensure that the provider was adhering to their contractual obligations with the Council.

9.1 Commissioned Service issues are concerns received by other professionals on behalf of service users, which are shared with the care providers. The care providers are then responsible for looking into the issues and providing effective resolution for the service user concerned. During 2017/18, one hundred and eight commissioned service issues were received. This is a decrease of 2% on the number received during 2016/17, (110).

9.2 Once a completed response is received from the care providers, it is shared with the relevant Contract Management Officer who is requested to ensure that all issues have been fully addressed.

- During 2017/18, seventy three commissioned services issues were received about commissioned home care services.
- 43% (31) concerns were about late, missed or short home care visits remains the main theme of issues received.
- 34% (25) were regarding the support or conduct provided by individual care workers;
- 12% (9) were around medication issues.
- Thirty two commissioned services issues were about commissioned care homes.
- Issues received regarding care homes highlight;
 - The standard of individual care provided
 - Hygiene concerns;
 - The standard of the food and beverages provided.

9.3 Once complaints are resolved, Contract Management Officers are expected to ensure that any proposed actions or improvements to service are carried out and fully monitored. Any feedback, which includes dissatisfaction, is helpful to inform the Commissioning Team of how the current care services are operating and how they could be commissioned in the future.

10.0 Health & Social Care Joint Investigations

10.1 The statutory complaints process covers NHS and Social Care Services. All complaints that are received which are about services provided by both Health and Social Care are co-ordinated by either the Council's Complaints Manager or the Complaints Manager responsible for the Health Service area subject to the complaint. The organisation responsible for the majority of the complaint will take the lead in the investigation and

will ensure that a combined response letter is sent to the complainant within the agreed timescales.

- 10.2 During 2017/18, six complaints were received which included concerns about services provide by both Health and Social Care. This is an increase of 50% (4), since 2016/17.
- 10.3 Five investigations were led by colleagues at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in conjunction with Managers within Adult Social Care.
- 10.4 Adult Social Care issues complained about mostly focused on the discharge process. However all complaints received included a number of issues, which included The Gateshead Housing Company, the Occupational Therapy Service and Adult Social Care Direct.
- 10.5 All six complaints were investigated by the relevant managers within Adult Social Care.
- 10.6 Three complaints regarding Adult Social Care Services were not upheld as it was found that the Service had acted appropriately. One concern was found to be partially justified and recommendations were identified by the investigating officer. Two complaints are still under consideration.

11.0 Local Government Ombudsman Investigations

- 11.1 During 2017/18, three complaints were investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman. This is a decrease of 67% on the number received during 2016/17, (9).
- 11.2 All complaints received had previously been considered through the statutory complaints procedure.
 - Two referrals were regarding services provided by Assessment & Personalisation;
 - One referral was about the Care Call Service.
- 11.3 Detailed information and responses for each individual case was provided to the Ombudsman to allow them to investigate the circumstances and to make a decision on whether the Council had followed processes and procedures.
- 11.4 After investigation, the Ombudsman made judgement on two complaints:
 - Both investigations had found no injustice relating to the main issues raised;
 - There was an element of injustice within one complaint and as a result, the Ombudsman recommended that the Council provided the complainant with a full apology. This was accepted and actioned on behalf of the Chief Executive;
 - One complaint is still under consideration.

12.0 Public Health Complaints

- 12.1 During 2017/18, there were two formal complaints received by the Council regarding Public Health Services. Both complaints were in relation to the School Measuring Programme, in particular, disagreement with the assessment outcome. Both complaints were investigated and responded to by Consultant's within Public Health and were found to be unjustified. In both cases, it had been found that the assessment had been carried out in-line with national guidance.

12.2 All services commissioned by Public Health are required to have their own complaints procedure and are responsible for the management of any complaints that they receive. The numbers of complaints and compliments for each service is forwarded to the Council on a quarterly basis.

Public Health Concerns & Compliments	2015 - 2016		2016 - 2017		2017 - 2018	
	Compliments	Concerns	Compliments	Concerns	Compliments	Concerns
Gateshead Evolve	11	3	5	1	19	3
Platform Gateshead	3	0	0	0	0	0
South Tyne Foundation Trust	123	7	21	0	0	0
Integrated Sexual Health	62	7	0	1	108	2
Live Well	0	2	18	0	0	0
Rape Crisis	Na	Na	21	1	0	0
	199	19	65	3	127	5

13.0 Learning from Complaints: Examples of Service Improvements

13.1 Learning from complaints is critical to prevent recurrence of the cause(s) of the original complaint. It is important that we make sure that people's experiences help the Council to improve services where possible. Changes can include policy, procedure or employee development.

13.2 Complaints about individual practice or failure to follow procedures are dealt with by reinforcement of processes and reiterating customer care standards through service / team meetings or individual supervision sessions.

13.3 In all cases, any justified issues regarding attitude or conduct of staff are dealt with in line with the Council's internal employment procedures.

Improvements after a complaint include:

- That when referring clients to a commissioned care home, all assessing officers / social workers must always ensure that the care home is provided with an up to date Care Plan and contract on admission.
- That all workers within the Single Point of Access Team should be mindful about the way in which service users or their representatives are informed of any delays in respect of the assessment / allocation process. This information should always be shared in a sensitive manner to minimise the risk of any upset or possible dissatisfaction.
- That all Care Call Operators must ensure that they activate the "No Response" procedure should a service user not respond when a Care Call Operator contacts their home.
- That all employees within Adult Social Care should ensure that any sensory needs of a service user and/or their representative is clearly included within the case file. This will ensure that any documentation sent to them is in the correct format.
- That Assessing Officers should always ensure that a service user with capacity will accept a package of care before it starts and that they should ensure that this agreement is recorded on the case file.
- That when arranging an emergency admittance to care, that all workers will ensure that the correct up to date documentation is used.
- Due to the increase in calls to the Single Point of Access and Adult Social Care Direct Teams, a number of workers have been allocated to work overtime hours each evening to enable the service to deal with the backlog of telephone calls and

emails. This will ensure that queries from members of the public are dealt with in a timely manner.

- That family members / carers should receive comprehensive written feedback in respect of a person's stay within a Promoting Independence Centre, which will be shared with the service user's representative on discharge.
- That the detail, quality and accuracy within case recordings is monitored by the Promoting Independence Centre Manager. This will ensure that a true account of a person's experiences is recorded. It will also evidence that the service user's care and support needs are being fully met.
- That when arranging an emergency admittance to care, that all workers must ensure that the correct up to date documentation is used.

Charging Issues

- All assessing staff and social workers will ensure that they inform of care fees at the assessment stage. They must inform on the standard rate and the assessed rate for assessment / respite stays in a Promoting Independence Centre.
- All Assessing Officers will ensure that each area on the Agreement to Assessment Form is discussed with the service user and/or their representative and each area of the form ticked to indicate acceptance, in particular, areas regarding charging for care. The agreement must then be signed and dated by the service user and/or their representative.
- All Promoting Independence Centre staff will ensure they use the 2017 residency agreement and that they must also provide a copy of the signed agreement to the service user and/or their representative.
- All Promoting Independence Centre admitting officers will ensure that they also verbally explain the charges for assessment / respite stays to the service user and/or their representative during the admissions process.

14.0 Compliments

- 14.1 A compliment is good news! Line managers should recognise the importance of such events and to ensure good practice is shared across teams. Compliments help balance the picture that is given to Senior Management, Members and to the public.
- 14.2 Information about compliments is always fed into all Adult Social Care Services, including the Commissioning Team, to highlight good practice and to identify opportunities for improvements to services.
- 14.3 During 2017/18, Adult Social Care received 726 compliments, which accounted for 77% of all representations received.
- 37% (268), of compliments were regarding the Assessment & Personalisation Team;
 - 72%, (192) of the Assessment & Personalisation compliments were regarding the Single Point of Access Team;
 - 6%, (15) were about the Adult Social Care Direct Team;
 - 61%, (443) of compliments were about Provider Services;
 - 34%, (152) of these compliments were about Council provided home care;
 - 41%, (181) of Provider Service compliments were about the care provided by the Councils Promoting Independence Centres.

- 14.4 Examples of compliments received

Adult Social Care Direct

'Thanks to the call handler at Adult Social Care Direct, she was a lovely, delightful, caring and supportive girl and that she explained everything fully and clearly.'

Care Call

'I work for the North East Ambulance Service. Me and a colleague attended a patient this morning where some of your care employees were on scene. I would just like to say that both workers did a fantastic job - excellent care given to the patient prior our arrival.'

Single Point of Access

'The worker who visited me at my flat was very polite and well-spoken and assisted me fully in getting me the aids to help me through my daily routines ie bath hand rail and kitchen aids that make it easier and less stressful when cooking or even standing washing dishes. Thank you.'

Promoting Independence Centres

'Can I just say thank you so much for the care, support and friendship that has been given to my mother over the last 6 weeks.'

Occupational Therapy Team

'From my first telephone conversation and all subsequent meetings and assessments with M she has proven herself to be totally professional, with an amazing understanding of my needs, and she was excellent in arranging the work that had to be done. Her advice has been invaluable. I cannot thank this wonderful lady enough.'

Learning Disability Team

'Just to say many thanks again from all of us for your help, good advice, support and patience over the last couple of difficult years for our family''

Gateshead Access to Employment Service (GATES)

'Just to say thank you for the work and support that had been done in securing paid employment for our son we are very impressed with the determination shown and the help which has been invaluable'.

15.0 Conclusions

- 15.1 Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018, there were 6075 new referrals to Adult Social Care. In addition to this, 4600 people received an Adult Social Care service during 2017/18.
- 15.2 Therefore there were 10,675 users of Adult Social Care during 2017/18
- 15.3 Adult Services complaints increased by 23% compared to 2016/17 figures. However, the number of complaints received during 2017/18 is more in-line with the numbers received in previous years.
- 15.4 During 2017/18 increased demand for services had been identified across all of Adult Social Care and any increase in demand invariably leads to dissatisfaction due to delays or waiting lists for allocation.
- 15.5 Issues around charging for care have also increased during 2017/18. The majority of complainants had cited a lack of information regarding fees and charges for services.

As a result of this, Adult Social Care have made a number of changes to their processes in respect of sharing charging information at the start of the assessment process. The Service have also improved the documentation provided to service users and their representatives during the Promoting Independence Centre's admission process.

- 15.6 More people are now requesting written responses to their concerns rather than verbal feedback. When this is the case, the concern must be recorded as a formal complaint. This can be evidenced by the increase in formal complaints processed and by the reduction of complaint related queries, (low level concerns dealt with informally and verbally).
- 15.7 After considering the number of referrals to Adult Social Care during 2017/18, it can be evidenced that 99% (10,610) of all contacts with Adult Social Care had been satisfied with the services they had received and that only 1% (65) of contacts resulted in formal dissatisfaction.
- 15.8 The number of changes to services and processes set out within this report can evidence that Adult Social Care continue to use complaints and compliments to inform them of service users personal experiences of Adult Services. It can also be evidenced that these experiences are then used to drive a number of improvements across all of the Adult Social Care Teams.
- 15.9 This commitment benefits the Council by ensuring that the Adult Care services delivered are of a standard that people expect and deserve.

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