

Patient Complaints Annual Report 2013 – 2014

King's Values – Understanding you

“Listening is the key to understanding what matters – whether it’s one of our patients or another member of staff. Only by hearing what they say and trying to put yourself ‘in their shoes’ will you really appreciate their situation and understand their concerns.”

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Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of patient complaints received in 2013/14. It includes details of numbers of complaints received during the year - both for the Denmark Hill and Bromley sites following the dissolution of the South London Healthcare Trust in September 2013; performance in responding to complaints, Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman investigations, and action taken by the Trust in response to complaints.

Following the published *Francis Report* and the *Clwyd and Hart* review of NHS complaints in 2013, the Trust developed its own action plan to improve its processes for listening to patients and responding to their concerns. During the year a Serious Complaints Committee was established, which is chaired by a non-executive Board Member and Patient Experience Champion. We invited complainants to participate in our Listening Events – *King's in Conversation* at both the Denmark Hill site and the Princess Royal University Hospital site, and also continue to gather invaluable information through initiatives such as patient video stories, and the other well established mechanisms such as the extensive 'How are We Doing' (HRWD) patient feedback programme, which is now embedded at the Princess Royal site.

The Trust has and continues to work hard to ensure its complaints process is personal and responds to the individual circumstances to ensure the experience is listened to and put right. For the year our PALS activity reflects high levels of support and assistance, with 3,849 enquiries (Denmark Hill site) and since October 2013, 1,577 enquiries on the Bromley sites.

Main Points to note

- As a new enlarged organisation **967** complaints were received and **5,426** PALS enquiries were recorded *Denmark Hill - 768 and Bromley sites – 199 (October 13)*
- 74 legacy complaints (received by SLHT April-September 13) transferred to King's in October to investigate.
- 20% increase in complaints (Denmark Hill) from 2012/13 and overall an organisational increase of 52%.
- 53% (Denmark Hill) and 56% (Bromley sites) of complaints were upheld after investigation.
- End of year performance of 43% of complaints responded to within 25 working days (Denmark Hill) and 36% (Bromley sites) since October 2013.
- 2% of Denmark Hill complaints (12) were referred by complainants to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. This is the lowest level of requests for independent review despite the PHSO increasing the number of investigations following the *Francis Report*. Four legacy complaints were referred.

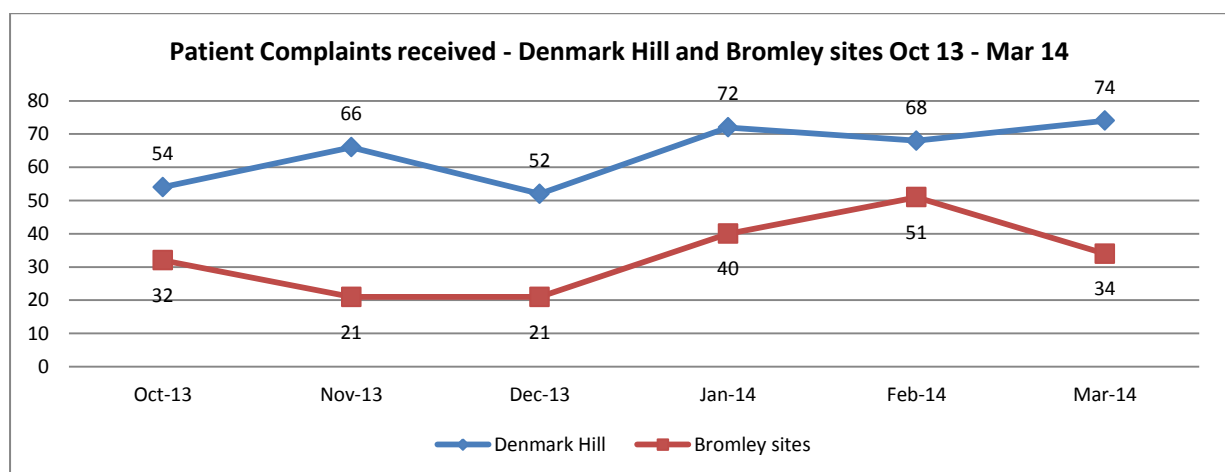
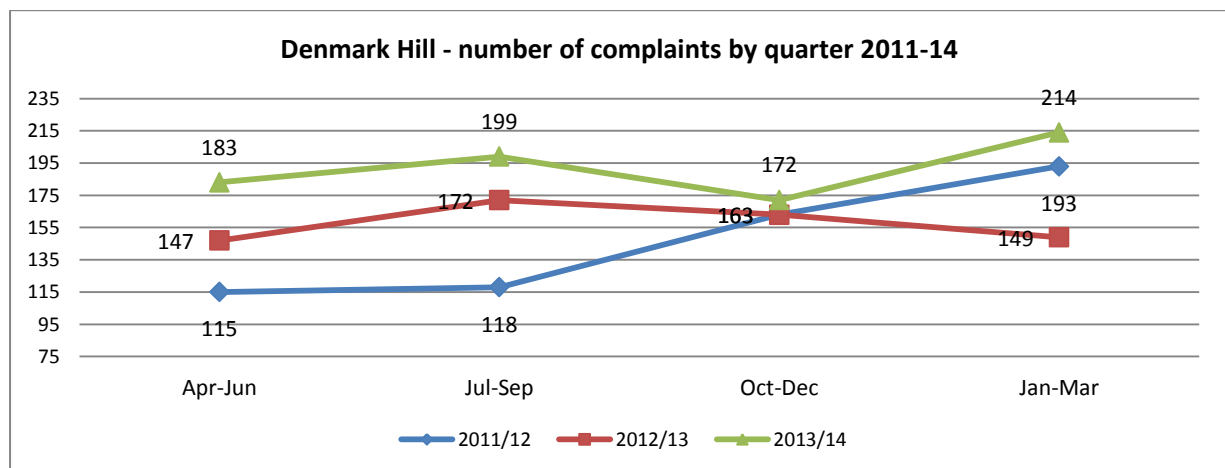
Denmark Hill

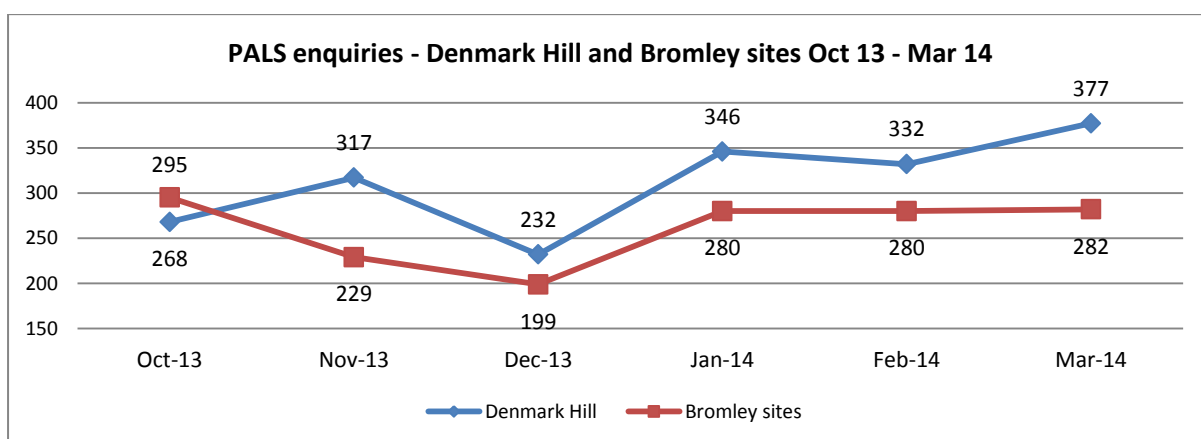
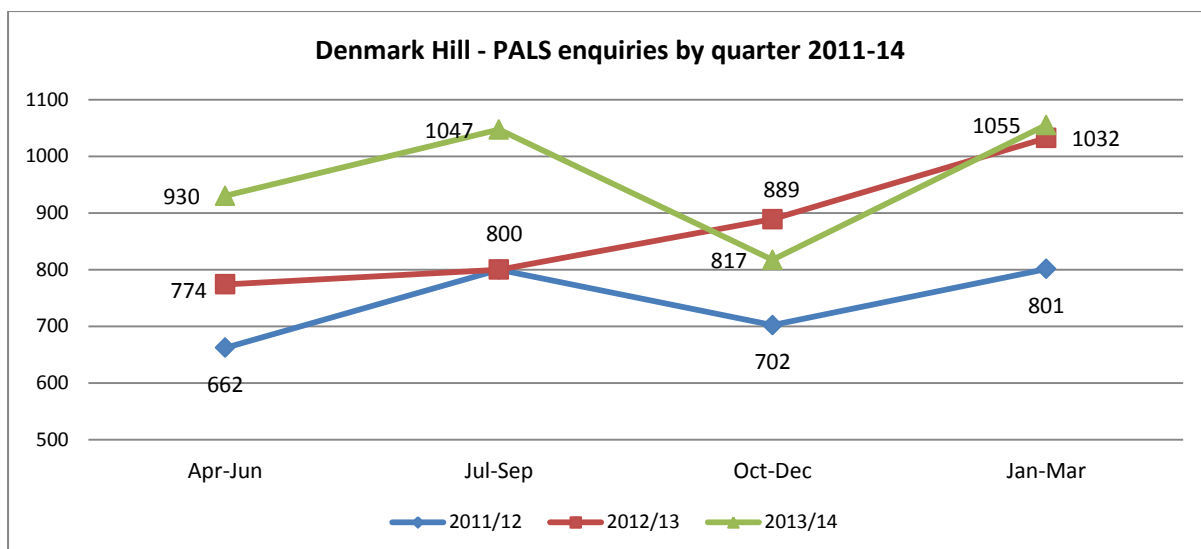
768 complaints were received in 2013/14 which is an increase of 20% in complaints compared to 2012/13 (638). The end of year performance in responding to complaints within 25 working days was 43% which is significantly below the internal target of 70%. This position was noted by the Board through the quarterly Quality and Governance – Patient Experience Report, and performance was reviewed and monitored through the Performance Improvement Group. 7% of complaints (51) were re-opened during 2013/14 for further response which represents no change from the previous year.

Bromley sites

199 complaints were received following October 2013 with 36% performance in responding within 25 working days. 3% of complaints (6) were re-opened during 2013/14 for further response. 74 legacy complaints were transferred to King's to investigate – these related to patient care and service issues prior to acquisition. A further 5 complaints, closed prior to acquisition, were re-opened for further response.

The charts below illustrate the number of complaints and PALS contacts received over a three year period, comparing activity quarter on quarter, and then monthly activity on both Denmark Hill and Bromley sites since October 13.





Complaints numbers on the Denmark Hill site were fairly consistent throughout 2013/14, whilst an increase overall compared to last year. This should be considered though against the context of continuing performance and capacity challenges. Complaints relating to our Bromley sites were low in the first few months but increasing in the second half of the 6-month period since takeover.

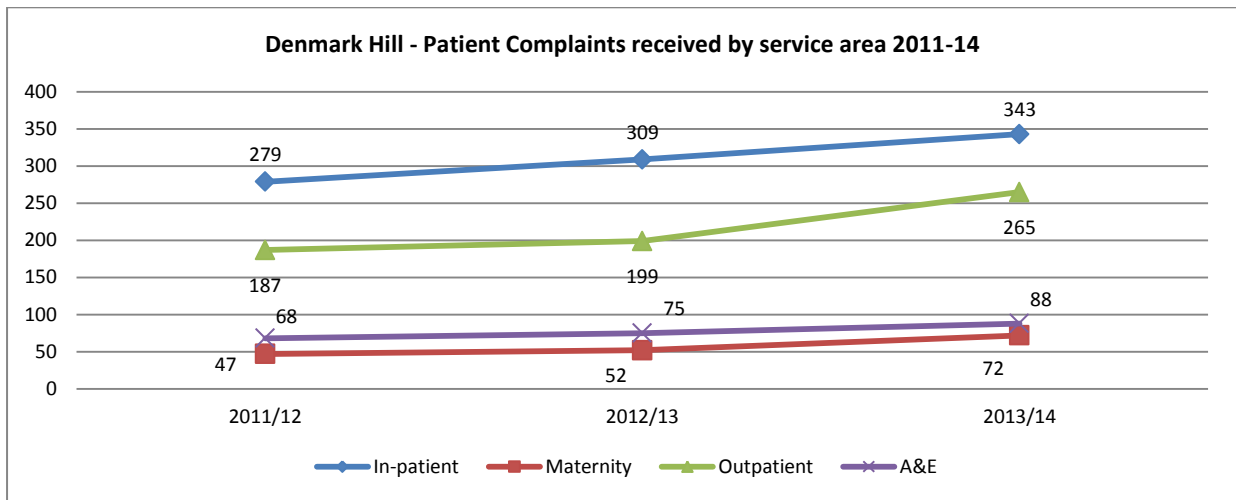
Overall PALS activity on the Denmark Hill site increased by 10% compared to 2012/13 but as an enlarged organisation we have received and assisted with around 5,500 enquiries with future growth anticipated at around 7,000 contacts in future years.

The Trust also regularly receives positive patient experience stories via patient opinion websites, HRWD, through social media networks, Twitter and Facebook.

Service area

The following charts illustrate the split of complaints between the service areas of patient care over the past three years. On the Denmark Hill site there was an 11% increase in inpatient complaints in 2013/14, but this mirrors the growth between 2011/12 and 2012/13. Whereas the number of outpatient complaints received in 2013/14 increased by 33% (265) compared to the previous year (199). This reflects an increase in the second half of the

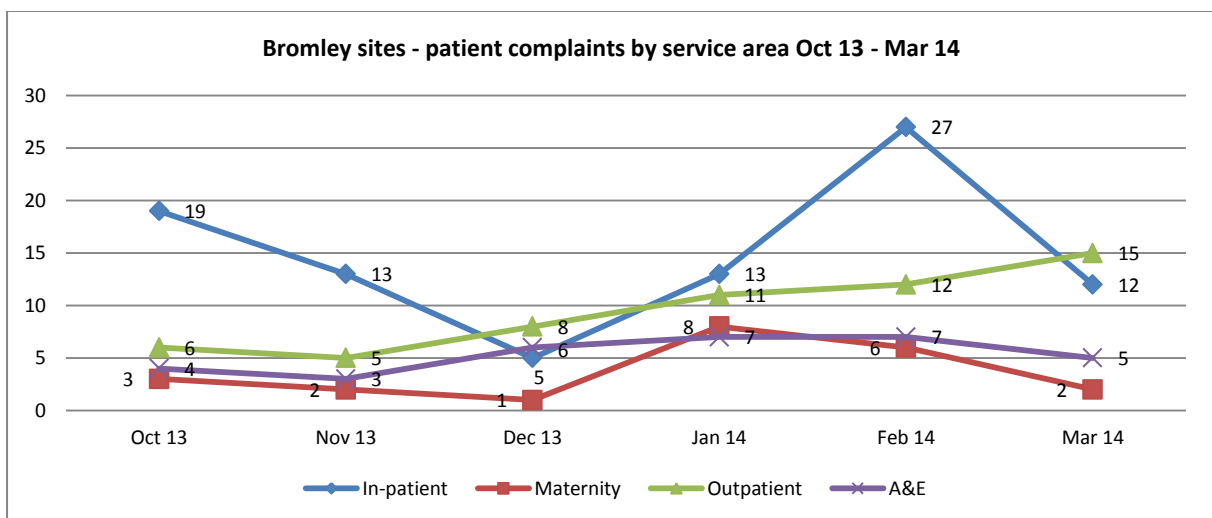
year and in the main, related to administration and process issues rather than clinical treatment. Emergency Department complaints have remained similar to last year while there was a slight increase in maternity complaints.



	In-patient	Maternity	Outpatient	A&E
2011/12	279	47	187	68
2012/13	309	52	199	75
2013/14	343	72	265	88

In 2013/14 there were 135,788 attendances through the Emergency Department, creating additional pressures on capacity across the Trust. Complaints about the Emergency Department represented 0.6 per 1000 attendances for emergency care. This proportion represents no change for a second consecutive year.

The following chart illustrates the service area for the complaints received at our Bromley sites in the 6-month period since October 2013. Maternity and Emergency Department complaints were low overall; outpatient complaints showed a rising trend from December 13, and inpatient complaints peaked in February 14 before returning to a lower level.

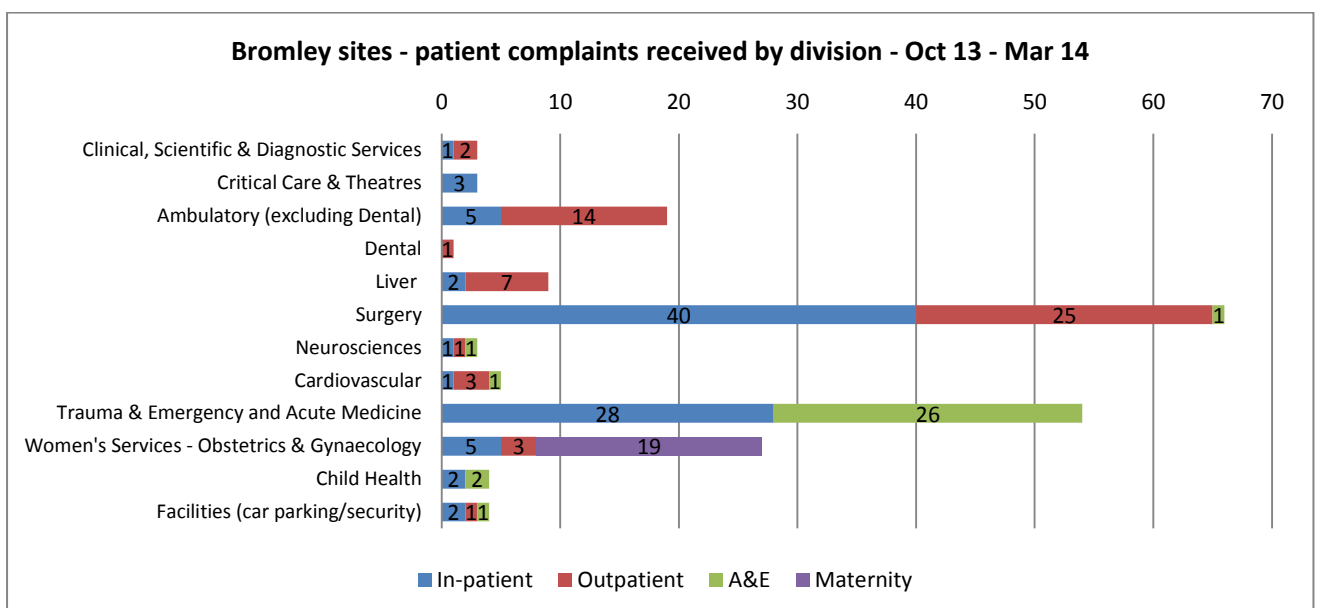
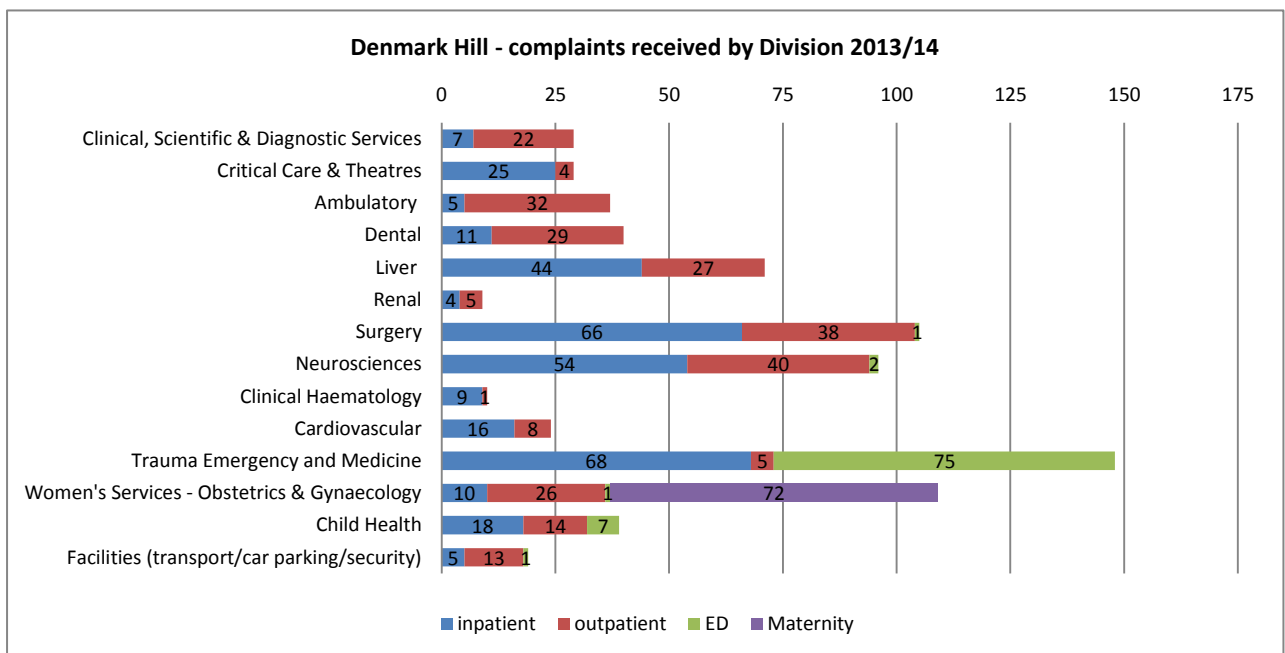


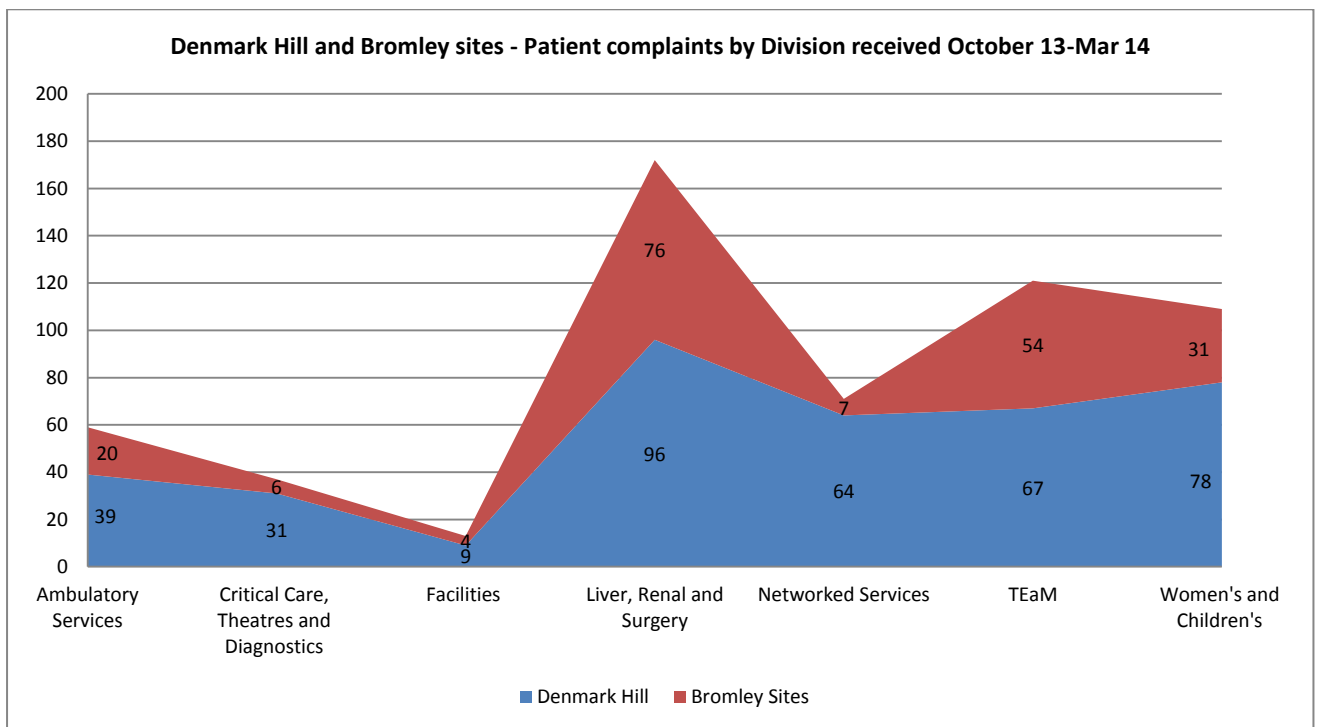
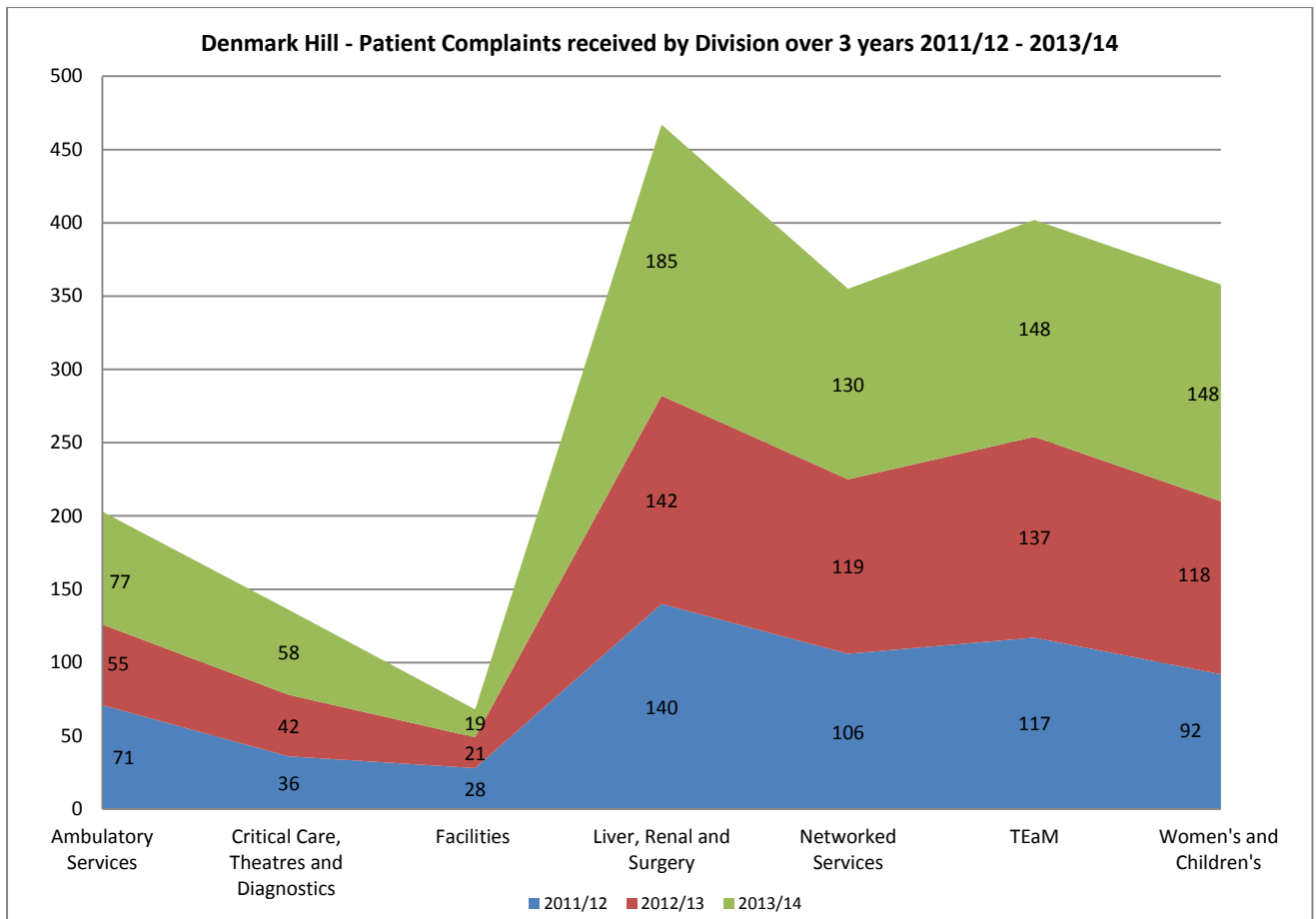
	In-patient	Maternity	Outpatient	A&E
Since Oct 2013/14	91	19	57	32

In the 6 month period Oct 13 – Mar 14, 35,510 patients have attended the Emergency Department at the PRUH, and a further 23,022 through the Urgent Care Centre. As a proportion to ED attendances only, complaints have represented 0.9 per 1000 patients which is marginally higher than on the Denmark Hill site.

Complaints by Division

The following tables illustrate the distribution of complaints by division during 2013/14 for Denmark Hill and Bromley sites (6 months).





It is worth noting in particular that:

Denmark Hill

Ambulatory Services and Local Networks (including Dental) had an overall increase of 40% in complaints compared to 2012/13. The increase relates to a rise in dental complaints compared to the previous year but fall in line with numbers in 2011/12 which suggests that last year's activity was particularly low (35 11/12; 26 12/13; 40 13/14). Complaints often reflect the anxiety of patients associated with attending for treatment, and relate to treatment plans and outcomes.

Liver, Renal and Surgery (LRS) had an increase of 30% compared to 2012/13. In surgery, there were 5 complaints per 1000 inpatient attendances; but the ratio for outpatient attendances is low at 0.4 per 1000. The increase in surgery complaints relates predominantly to the cancellation of elective admissions from (10 in 2012/13 to 22 in 2013/14). Liver complaints (71) increased by 60% compared to 2012/13; 44 complaints about inpatient treatment and 27 outpatient complaints. Similarly to Surgery, more than 50% of liver inpatient complaints relate to process issues including elective admission cancellations and discharge arrangements. The remainder relate to clinical treatment (19). These include information about care plans and surgery decisions in transplant cases. Outpatient complaints (27) are also a mix of clinical and process issues.

Women's and Children's had an overall increase of 25% in complaints which mirrors the increase in 2012/13 from the previous year. Gynaecology complaints decreased significantly from 26 to 13 whereas maternity (obstetric) complaints saw an increase of 44% (50 12/13; 72 13/14). There was an overall increase in complaints about communication, staff attitude, treatment and care for antenatal and postnatal patients.

Complaints measured against Trust activity

The tables below illustrate the proportion of patient complaints to patient attendances at Denmark Hill over the past three years, and from October 2013 for the Bromley sites. On the Denmark Hill site, despite the increase in the Trust's activity, the number of complaints received in 2013/14 has remained consistent as a proportion of patient attendances.

Demark Hill	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Inpatient attendances			
Number of inpatient complaints	326	361	415
Inpatient episodes	119,899	129,428	138,020
Complaints per 1000 attendances	3	3	3
Outpatient attendances			
Number of outpatient complaints	187	199	265
Outpatient episodes	746,847	774,789	873,716
Complaints per 1000 attendances	0.3	0.3	0.3
ED patient attendances			
Number of ED complaints	68	75	88
ED episodes	129,211	132,364	135,788
Complaints per 1000 attendances	0.5	0.6	0.6

Bromley sites	Since Oct 2013/14
Inpatient attendances	
Number of inpatient complaints	110
Inpatient episodes	36,246
Complaints per 1000 attendances	3
Outpatient attendances	
Number of outpatient complaints	57
Outpatient episodes	124,343
Complaints per 1000 attendances	0.5
ED patient attendances	
Number of ED complaints	32
ED episodes	35,510
Complaints per 1000 attendances	0.9

Divisional activity to patient attendances – inpatient and outpatient

Denmark Hill 2013/14 – 2011/12

Inpatient Complaints	13/14	Patient episodes	complaint per 1000 episodes	12/13	Patient episodes	complaint per 1000 episodes	11/12	Patient episodes	complaints per 1000 episodes
Ambulatory	5	14,346	0.3 ↓	5	13,169	0.4	8	10,639	1
Dental	11	13,346	1 ↑	4	11,846	0.3	2	11,700	0.2
Liver	44	10,576	4 ↑	24	9,516	2.5	27	8,982	3
Renal	4	1,583	2.5 ↓	6	1,537	4	4	1,525	3
Surgery	66	13,977	5 ↑	55	12,830	4	58	12,073	5
Cardiac	16	6,587	2 ↓	17	6,551	3	22	6,878	3
Haematology	9	12,995	1	10	12,121	1	9	10,194	1
Neurosciences	54	8,615	6	50	8,332	6	50	7,722	6.5
TEAM	68	18,911	4	67	16,854	4	54	14,712	4
Child Health	18	13,871	1	18	13,471	1	19	13,049	1.5
Gynaecology	10	5,147	2 ↓	24	5,370	4.5	6	4,885	1
Obstetrics	54	16,869	3	53	17,018	3	47	16,818	3
Outpatient Complaints	13/14	Patient episodes	Complaint per 1000 episodes	12/13	Patient episodes	Complaint Per 1000 episodes	11/12	Patient episodes	Complaints Per 1000 episodes
Ambulatory	32	174,384	0.2 ↑	22	154,088	0.1	28	148,535	0.2
Dental	29	167,380	0.2 ↑	21	155,827	0.1	32	144,602	0.2
Liver	27	40,986	0.7 ↑	18	38,468	0.5	12	38,476	0.3
Renal	5	21,657	0.2 ↓	6	21,372	0.3	2	20,625	0.1
Surgery	38	91,235	0.4	32	84,621	0.4	32	86,258	0.4
Cardiac	8	30,445	0.3 ↓	11	27,017	0.4	5	25,752	0.2
Haematology	1	22,388	- ↓	3	20,537	0.1	3	19,562	0.2
Neurosciences	40	43,953	0.9 ↑	27	38,594	0.7	17	35,881	0.5
TEAM	5	118,788	-↓	9	103,822	0.1	4	110,407	-
Child Health	14	37,995	0.4 ↑	5	34,944	0.1	2	33,560	0.1
Women's Health	39	106,856	0.4 ↑	12	79,961	0.2	12	76,847	0.2

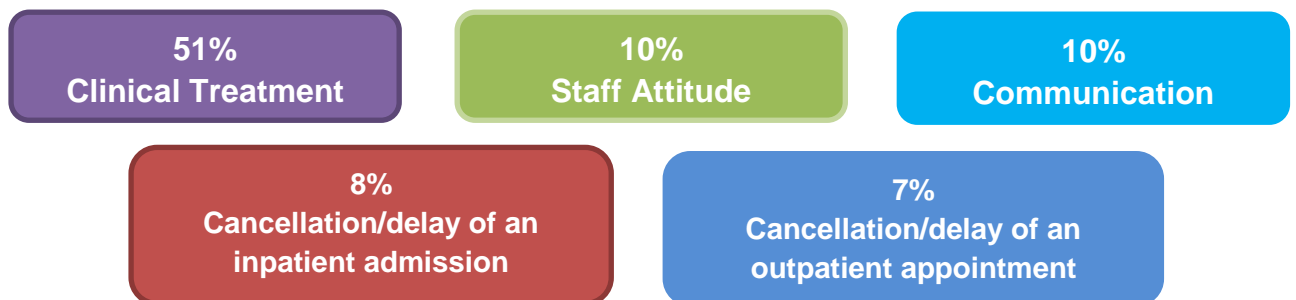
PRUH - October 13 to March 14

Inpatient Complaints	No of complaints	Patient episodes	Complaints per 1000 episodes
Ambulatory	5	4,744	1
Dental	0	269	-
Liver	2	1,908	1
Surgery	40	9,566	4
Cardiac	1	925	1
Haematology	0	2,300	-
Neurosciences	1	266	-
TEAM	28	6,990	4
Child Health	2	3,265	0.6
Gynaecology	5	1,528	3
Obstetrics	16	3,001	5

Outpatient Complaints	No of complaints	Patient episodes	Complaints per 1000 episodes
Ambulatory	15	24,855	0.6
Liver	7	2,810	2.5
Surgery	25	36,433	0.7
Cardiac	3	4,642	0.6
Haematology	0	37,174	-
Neurosciences	1	2,864	0.3
TEAM	0	2,373	-
Child Health	0	279	-
Gynaecology	3	6,113	0.5
Obstetrics	3	5,110	0.6

Causes of complaint

Each complaint is considered on a case by case basis to ensure we address the issues in the most appropriate way. By recording the primary subject we can gather intelligence to help us to understand the areas where we need to focus on. Many complaints, particularly those relating to an admission, can often be multi-faceted and may require us to review treatment over a prolonged period of time in order to address the complaint. Including the new sites, over half of the complaints received concern clinical treatment (496)



Denmark Hill

Primary subject of complaint	2013/14	% of complaints	2012/13	% of complaints
Admissions, discharge and transfer arrangements	33	4	38	6
Aids and appliances, equipment and premises	10	1	6	1
Outpatient appointments – delay/cancellations & delay in clinic	54	7	35	5
Inpatient – delay/cancellations	54	7	28	4
Attitude of staff	80	10	58	9
Clinical Treatment – all aspects	390	51	357	56
Communication – oral and written	76	10	55	9
Consent to treatment	3	0	2	0
Privacy and Dignity	13	2	18	3
Patient's property and expenses	7	1	3	0
Personal records	9	1	10	2
Failure to follow agreed procedure	1	0	0	0
Transport (ambulances and other)	15	2	15	2
Hotel Services (including food)	1	0	3	0

Bromley sites

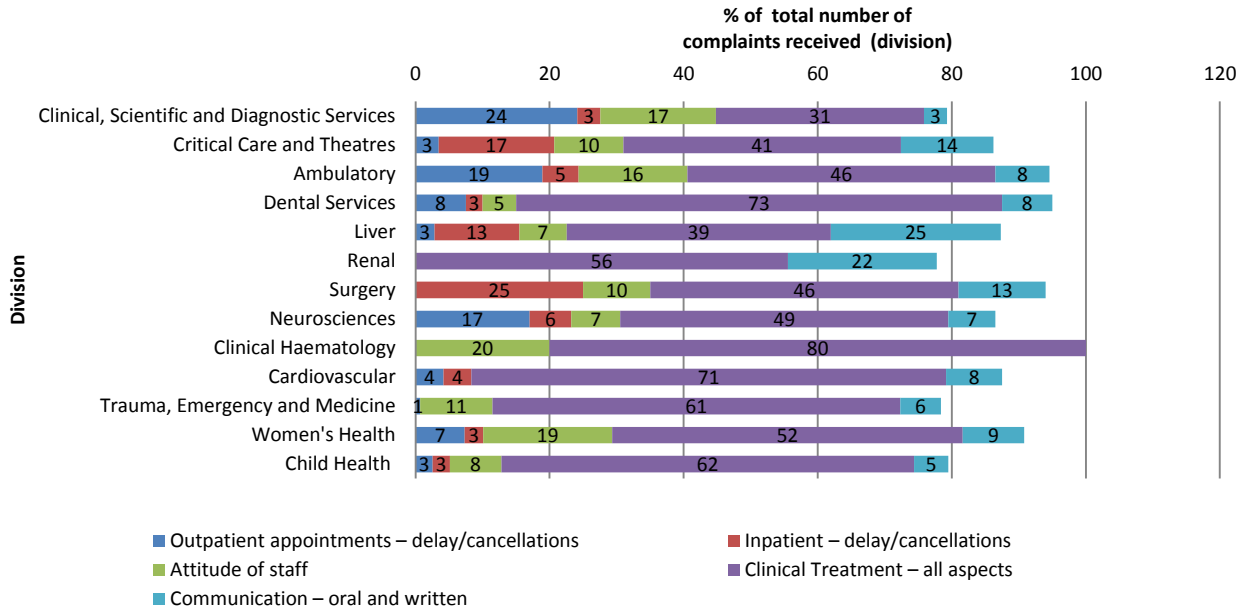
Primary subject of complaint	From Oct 2013/14	% of complaints
Admissions, discharge and transfer arrangements	9	5
Outpatient appointments – delay/cancellations & delays in clinic	11	6
Inpatient – delay/cancellations	20	10
Attitude of staff	15	8
Clinical Treatment – all aspects	106	54
Communication – oral and written	25	13
Consent to treatment	1	1
Privacy and Dignity	1	1
Patient's property and expenses	1	1
Personal records	3	2
Transport (ambulances and other)	2	1

While the greatest increase in the number of complaints received at Denmark Hill relate to clinical treatment, overall these types of complaints has decreased as a proportion of the total number of complaints since last year (56% to 51%). However complaints relating to inpatients – delay/cancellations has increased (28 – 4% to 54 – 7%) reflecting the activity pressures which have impacted on elective admissions during the year. Complaints relating to outpatient appointments (delay and cancellations), communication (oral and written) and staff attitude have also increased.

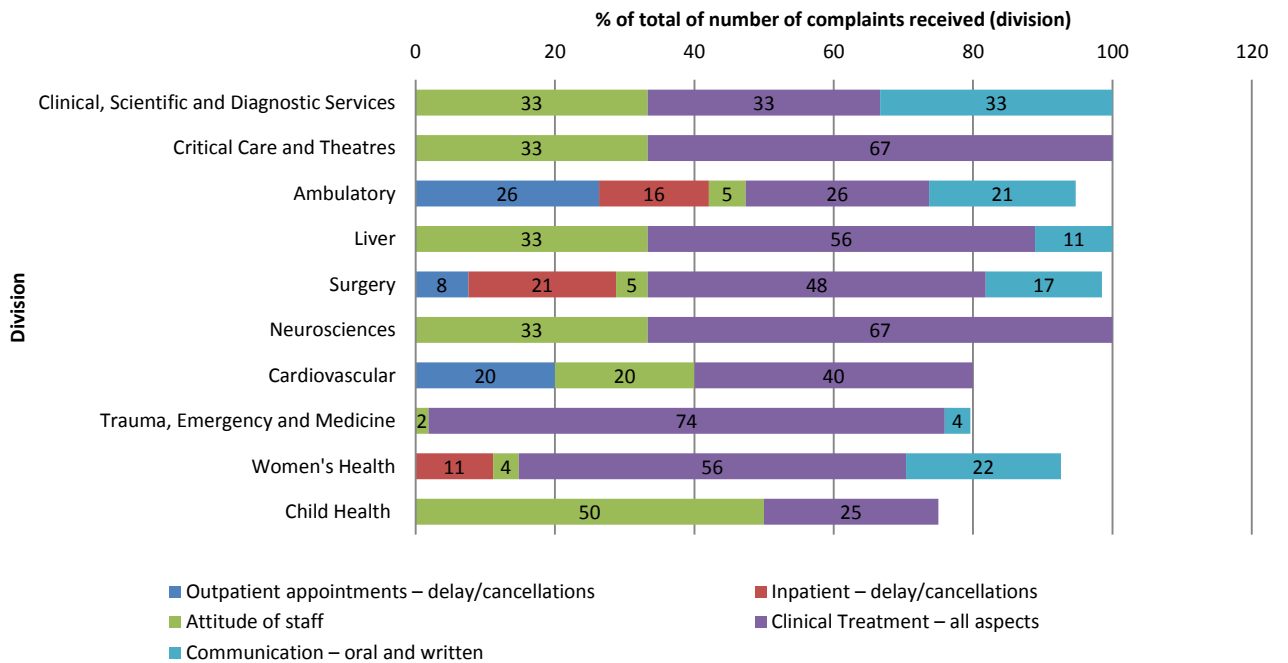
Reviewing the 6-month data available from the Bromley Sites, there are five main areas which mirror the causes of complaint on the Denmark Hill site. Apart from clinical treatment, complaints about communication and inpatient – delay/cancellations were the two highest causes for a complaint.

The following two tables illustrate the top 5 causes of complaints, by site and division, as a % proportion of the complaints received in each area.

Denmark Hill Top 5 causes of complaint by Division (as a % of complaints received) 2013/14



Bromley sites - Top 5 causes of complaint by Division (as a % of complaints received) Oct 13 - Mar 14



Grading and outcomes of complaint

All complaints are graded for severity using the Department of Health's grading guide. The table below illustrates the severity of complaints received in 2013/14. Overall 50% of the Trust's complaints received last year concerned an unsatisfactory service or experience and were graded low in severity. All complaints that indicate an adverse incident may have occurred are flagged as a high priority for the investigating team and the Risk Management team notified.

Grading	Denmark Hill Number of complaints & %	Bromley sites (From Oct 13) Number of complaints & %
Low <i>unsatisfactory experience</i>	391 – 51%	98 – 49%
Medium <i>service or experience below reasonable expectations</i>	236 – 31%	77 – 39%
High <i>significant issues regarding standards and quality of care</i>	138 – 18%	22 – 11%
Serious <i>serious failure causing serious harm</i>	3 – 0%	2 – 1%

During 2013/14, over half of the Trust's complaints investigated have issues (either in full or in part) which were considered to be substantiated. Denmark Hill - 53% were upheld compared to 55% in 2012/13 and 57% in 2011/12. Bromley sites – 49% were upheld.

Outcome	Denmark Hill Number of complaints & % of cases closed	Bromley sites (from Oct 13) Number of complaints & % of cases closed
Complaint not upheld	321 - 47%	63 – 43%
Complaint upheld	361 – 53%	86 – 59%

Ethnicity, age of complainants and access

The ethnicity of patients on the Denmark Hill site is fairly consistent with previous years, with a slight increase (4%) in patients stating their ethnicity as White British. 16% of patients chose not to disclose their ethnic background to the Trust. Since October 13, we have recorded ethnicity for our Bromley site complaints – 69% of complaints were made by patients who state their ethnicity as White British; a further 29% have not disclosed their ethnic background to the Trust.

Ethnicity	Denmark Hill % of complaints	Bromley sites % of complaints (from Oct 13)
White British	49%	69%
White Irish	2%	-
White – other	4%	-
Asian – other	3%	-
Black Caribbean	6%	-
Black African	5%	1%
Black – other	9%	1%
Other ethnic category	4%	1%
Not stated	16%	29%

The following table shows the age range of patients captured, who are affected by the concerns raised with the Trust. Comparing this profile with 2012/13, there is an increase in the number of complaints in the Under 20 age group (50 - 69), and in the 60-80 age group (117 – 147). Data for the Bromley sites was not available before October to compare, however the 60-80 age group has the highest number of complaints, which accords with the Denmark Hill data.

Age	Denmark Hill % of complaints	Bromley sites % of complaints (from Oct 13)
Under 20	69 – 13%	12 – 7%
20-40	134 – 25%	33 – 20%
40-60	144 – 26.5%	30 – 18%
60-80	147 – 27%	48 – 29%
80+	48 – 9%	44 – 26%

During the year we refreshed our information on making a complaint and a new leaflet has been introduced for our Bromley sites. This includes signposting our PALS service at the Princess Royal site which has been improved since October with the addition of extra staff and a consulting room offering privacy to patients/carers who seek some assistance.

During 2013/14 the predominant method for making a complaint was by letter/email – 54% Denmark Hill and 80% Bromley sites; 21% were made online via the Trust’s website or by a complaint form – 14% Denmark Hill and 7% Bromley sites; and 45% were either referred to patient complaints via PALS, taken in person or by telephone – 32% Denmark Hill and 13% Bromley sites.

A complaint form was introduced in October 2013 to provide a convenient method for patients making a complaint, especially on our Bromley sites – while only 6% of the trust’s complaints were made using this form in the last second part of the year, it is an indication that it provides a helpful route to making a complaint.

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) helps to investigate complaints where individuals feel they have received poor NHS care. They are entirely independent and are accountable to Parliament. In response to the *Francis Report* and *Clwyd and Hart* review of the NHS complaints handling system, the PHSO lowered the threshold for investigating complaints and increased their casework in order to be more transparent and accountable. In 2013/14, the PHSO assessed 7,760 NHS complaints of which 3,900 became formal investigations – six times as many as the previous year.

In 2013/14 the Trust was informed of 12 complaints that had progressed to the Ombudsman for independent review, and a further four legacy complaints were referred in the second half of the year. Overall this is an encouraging decrease on the numbers referred in the preceding two years, as shown in the chart below.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Number of cases referred	21	18	12 (additional 4 SLHT legacy complaints)
Number of cases Investigated	1	1	5
Reviews partially/fully upheld	0	Ongoing	5
% of cases referred against number of complaints received	3%	3%	2%

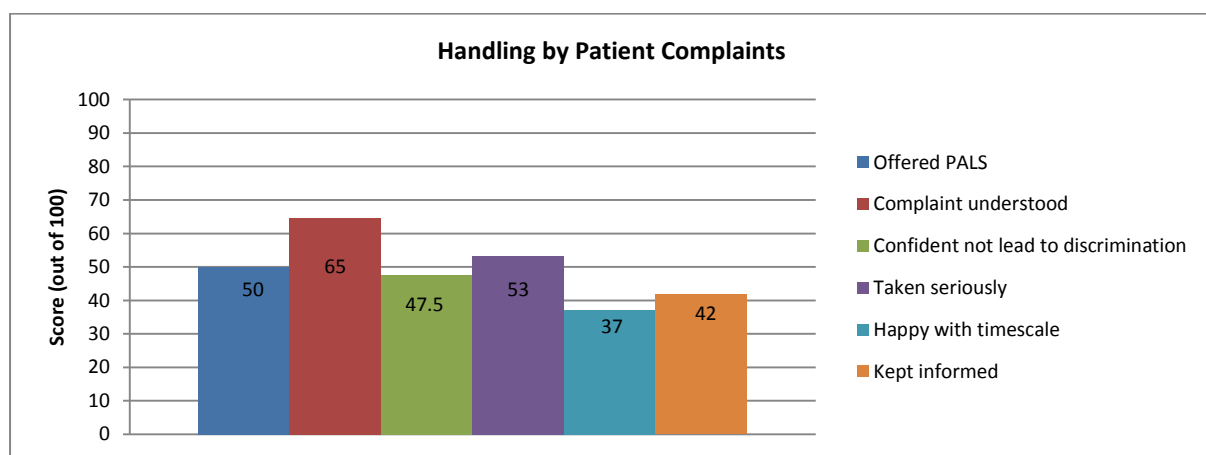
However of the 12 cases referred, 5 were investigated which is an increase from previous years but not unexpected in light of the changes to the PHSO process. Five cases investigated were either partially upheld or upheld and the Trust has responded to two cases (Maternity and ED) with a further three cases being considered (Child Health, Liver and Neurosciences).

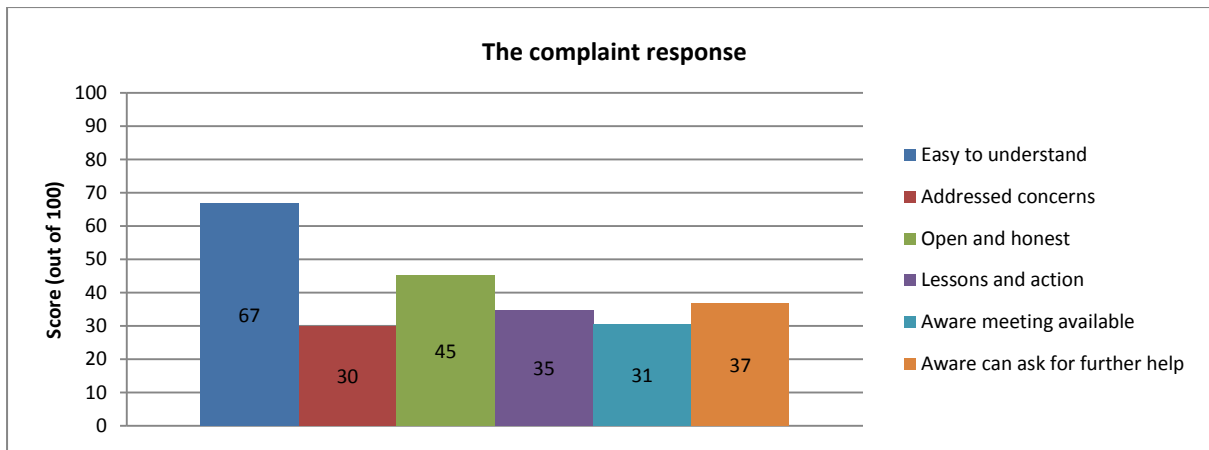
Learning from feedback

Complaint handling evaluation

In response to the *Francis Report and Clwyd/Hart review* which emphasises the importance and focus on providing a responsive and transparent complaints process, a questionnaire was posted out to 363 complainants who had received a response to their complaint between April and October 2013. 62 completed surveys were returned which is a 17% return rate.

The results from this initial survey have been useful in pinpointing areas that matter most to complainants. While a majority of complainants felt the trust response was easy to understand, they commented that it did not address their concerns adequately, nor did patients feel the trust learnt from their complaint. The lowest satisfaction was with the length of time to investigate the complaint and less than half were satisfied they were informed of the progress of the investigation where there was a delay.





Through the Serious Complaints Committee we will be taking forward some of these issues, making changes to the way we handle our complaints and also providing support to clinical staff involved in responding to complaints with some specific training. The survey is ongoing, and will be used to measure the impact of changes to the complaints process over the coming year.