



King's College Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient Advice and Liaison Service and Patient Complaints Annual Report 2020-21

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1. Executive Summary

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust provides services to local people across Bromley, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark from one of its five sites that include Denmark Hill, Princess Royal University Hospital, Orpington Hospital, Beckenham Beacon and Queen Mary's Hospital (with the latter four referred to as Princess Royal University Hospital and South Sites).

This report provides a summary of feedback received through the Trust's complaints function and Patient Advice and Liaison Service received between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021. Throughout the period, the Trust received 1,016 formal complaints, 38% increase in the volume of activity.

Analysis of data indicates that key themes arising from complaints included communication with patient, communication with relative and attitude of nursing staff. As a result of the feedback, the Trust will be exploring evidence-based initiatives to improve the way our staff communicate with patients and their loved ones, recognising the diversity of the communities we serve.

Following the lift of the national pause of complaints investigations (in place until July 2020), the build-up of complaints awaiting investigation alongside an increase in the number of complaints received by the Trust, have impacted the Trust performance. Of 1,016 formal complaints received, 33.5% were responded to within the deadline. This is significantly below the Trust's target of 100% but is reflective of the deployment of clinical and non-clinical staff to support patients with Coronavirus (COVID-19).

To ensure that complaints performance improves and meets the target set for 2021/2022, the Trust developed a comprehensive action plan. This action plan includes increased resources, triage and risk-rating to complaints to ensure that timescales agreed with complainants are representative of the nature of the investigation required and using senior clinical staff to assist with resolving complex complaints. In February 2021, the Trust also appointed an Assistant Director of Patient Experience, this post will be key to improving complaints performance.

Between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, our Patient Advice and Liaison Service recorded 7,060 contacts, 42% increase when compared with 2019/2020. Key reasons why individuals contacted the Patient Advice and Liaison Service include being unable to contact service/ area directly, due to information / enquiry regarding outpatients and due to concerns about communication with a patient.

2. Complaints

In 2020/21, King's College Hospital received 1,016 formal complaints; this represents an organisational increase of 38% compared to 2019/2020 where 734 complaints were received. Throughout the year, complaints were received at an average rate of 85 per month.

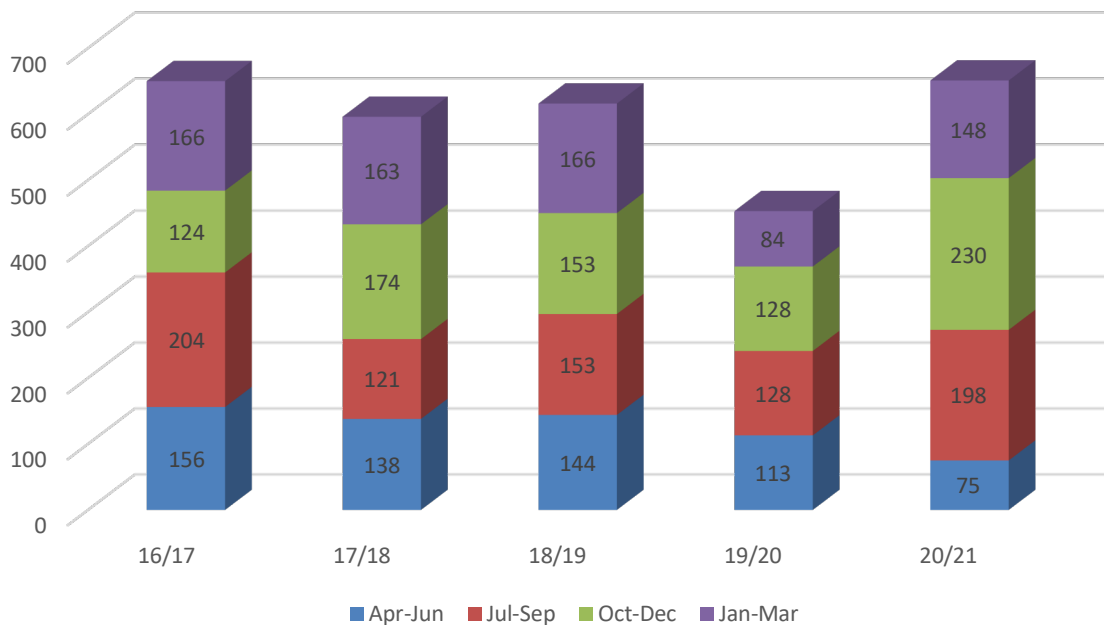
Denmark Hill site	2020/2021	Princess Royal University Hospital and South Sites	2020/2021
Inpatient attendances		Inpatient attendances	
Number of inpatient complaints	227	Number of inpatient complaints	160
Inpatient episodes	99,394	Inpatient episodes	67,492
Complaints per 1,000 attendances	2.3	Complaints per 1,000 attendances	2.4
PALS contacts	730	PALS contacts	738
PALS per 1,000 attendances	7.3	PALS per 1,000 attendances	10.9
Outpatient attendances		Outpatient attendances	
Number of outpatient complaints	301	Number of outpatient complaints	116
Outpatient episodes	742,733	Outpatient episodes	359,760
Complaints per 1,000 attendances	0.4	Complaints per 1,000 attendances	0.3
PALS contacts	2829	PALS contacts	2,086
PALS per 1,000 attendances	3.8	PALS per 1,000 attendances	5.8

Figure 1. Feedback (complaints and PALS queries) measured against Trust activity

2.1 Complaints for Denmark Hill site

Between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, King's College Hospital received 651 complaints relating to its Denmark Hill site. This constitutes 44% increase when compared to the previous year where 453 complaints were received. Just under 10% of complaints (62) were re-opened during the year.

Denmark Hill sites - number of complaints by qtr since 2016/17

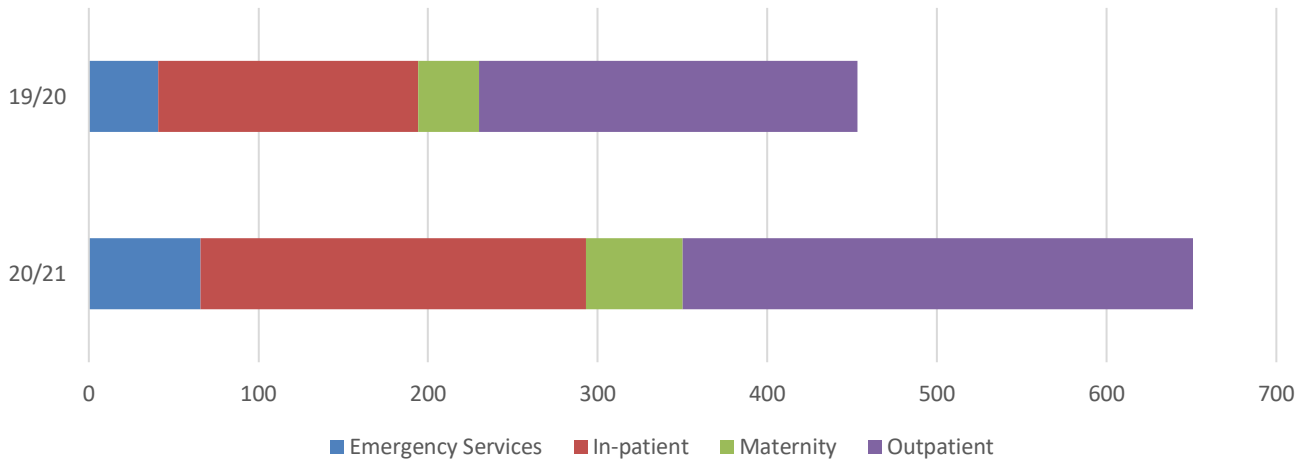


At the Denmark Hill site, complaints related to:

- inpatient care with 227 complaints received (35% of all complaints received compared to 34% in 2019/2020)

- outpatient service with 301 complaints recorded (48% of all complaints received compared to 49% in 2019/2020)
- Emergency Department with 66 complaints received (10% of all complaints received compared to 9% in 2019/2020)
- maternity services with 57 complaints recorded (7% of all complaints received compared)

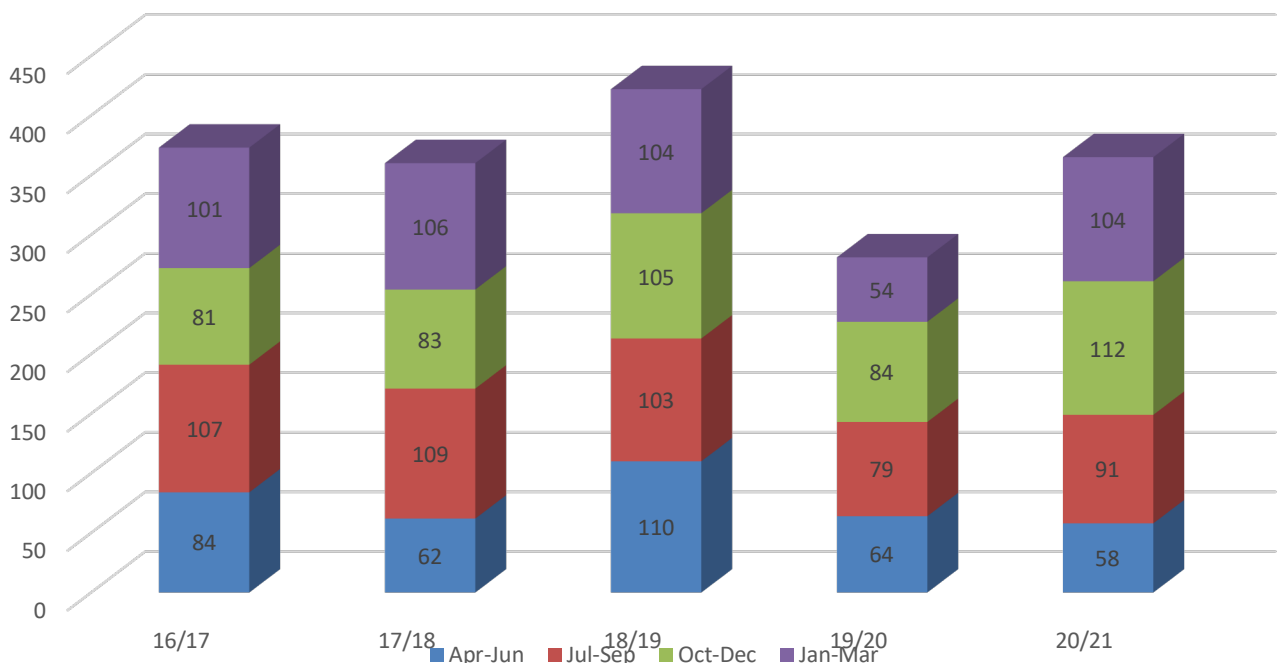
Denmark Hill complaints by service area 2019/2020 and 2020/2021



2.2 Complaints for Princess Royal University Hospital and South Sites

During the reporting period, 365 complaints were received in 2020/2021 for Princess Royal University Hospital and South Sites. The number is 30% higher when compared to the previous year. 5% of complaints (18) were re-opened during the year.

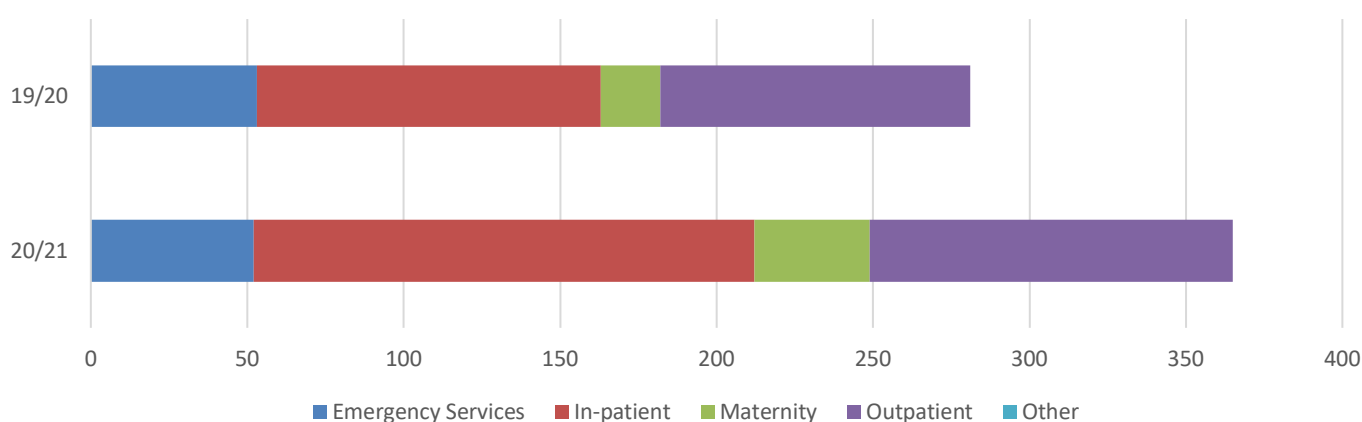
PRUH and South Sites - number of complaints received by quarter



At Princess Royal University Hospital and South Sites, complaints related to:

- inpatient care with 160 complaints received (44% of all complaints received compared to 39% in 2019/2020)
- outpatient service with 116 complaints recorded (32% of all complaints received compared to 35% in 2019/2020)
- Emergency Department with 52 complaints received (19% of all complaints received compared to 16% in 2019/2020)
- remaining 5% of complaints were spread across other services, mainly Maternity

Princess Royal University Hospital and South Sites complaints by service area 2019/2020 and 2020/2021

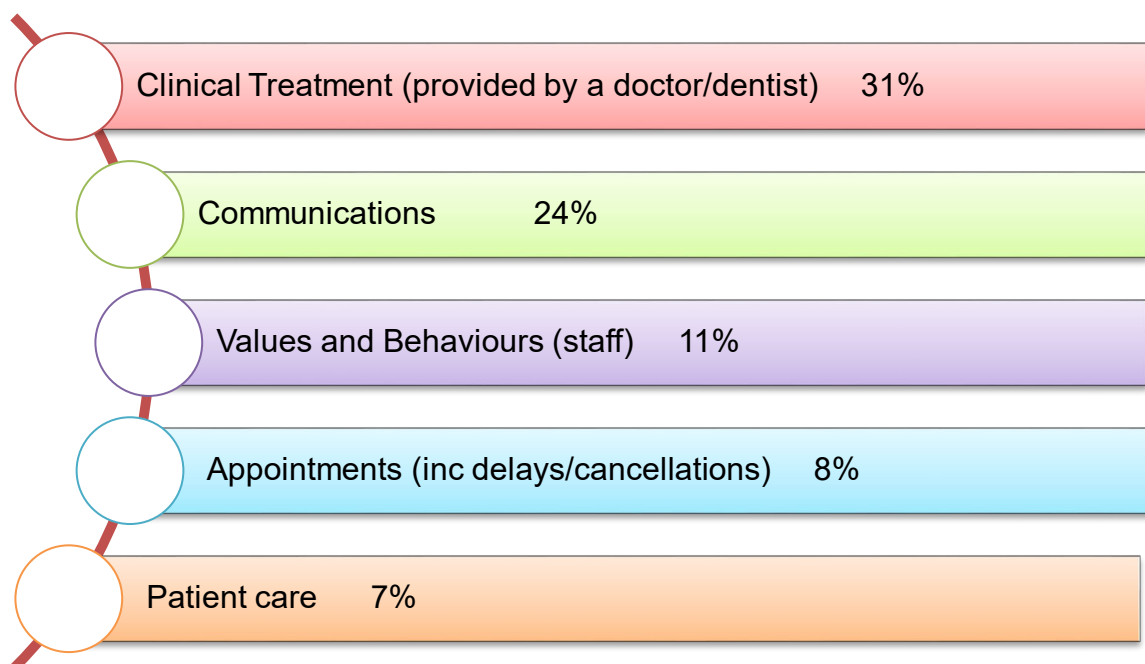


2.3 Complaints themes

Review of 1,016 complaints received in 2020/2021 reveals that Trust-wide complainants shared concerns with regard to:

Access to treatment or drugs	9	1%
Admissions, discharge, transfers	68	7%
Appointments including delays and cancellations	86	8%
Clinical Treatment	317	31%
Communications	241	24%
Consent to treatment	5	< 1%
End of Life Care	1	< 1%
Facilities Services	14	1%
Patient Care including Nutrition / Hydration	69	7%
Prescribing errors	13	1%
Privacy, dignity and wellbeing	23	2%
Trust Administration	18	2%
Values & Behaviours (Staff)	110	11%
Waiting Times	23	4%
Totals:	1,016	100%

This puts the following themes as top five most complained about matters in 2020/21:



Please note that clinical treatment refers only to contact and care provided by a doctor. A separate category is applied for nurse-led care, which includes patient nutrition and hydration.

2.4 Complaints response rate

The Trust set its target at 100% of complaints responded to within the deadline. For 2020/2021, the overall response rate was 33.5% broken down as follows:

Period	Trust-wide	Denmark Hill site	Princess Royal University Hospital and South Sites
01/04/20 – 30/06/20	N/A	N/A	N/A
01/07/20 – 14/01/21	194/664 (29%)	143/451 (32%)	43/213 (18%)
15/01/21 – 31/03/21	84/219 (38%)	64/132 (48%)	18/87 (21%)

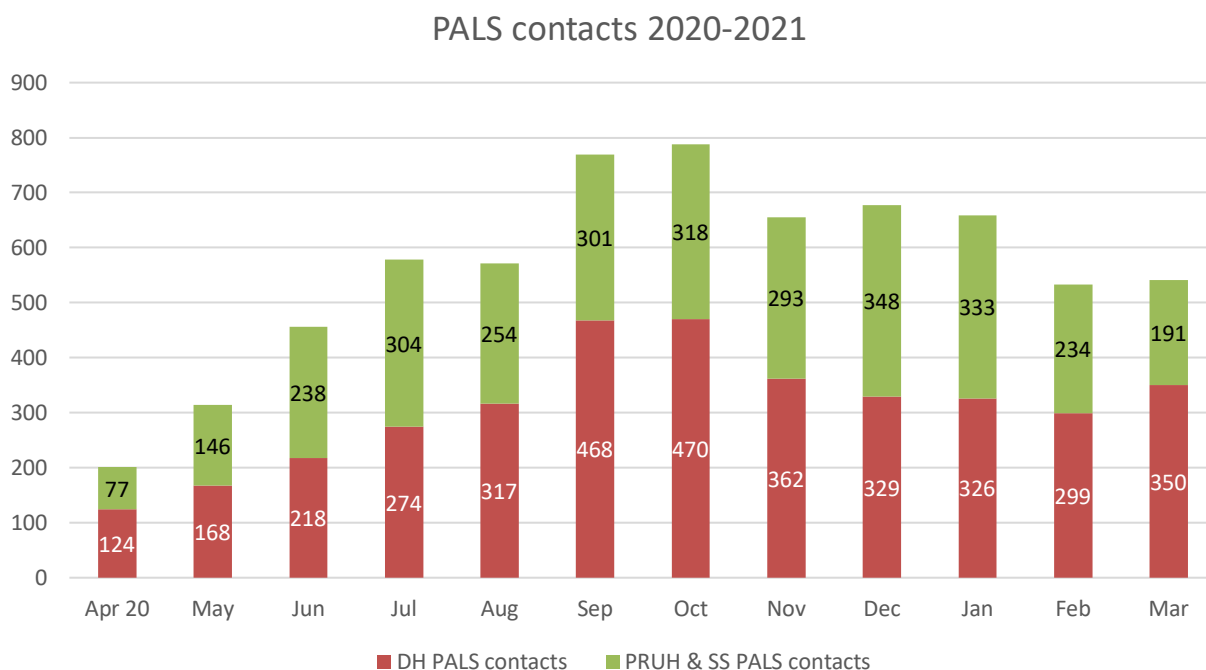
Please note that, in line with the national guidelines, the Trust's performance for the period between 1st April 2020 and 30th June 2021 is being disregarded. Complaints investigations were not prioritised as clinical staff were focussed on responding to the first wave of Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic as stipulated by the national directive.

Following the lift of the national pause of complaints investigations, the build-up of complaints awaiting investigation alongside an increase in the number of complaints received by the Trust, have further impacted the Trust performance. The performance also needs to be considered against the backdrop of staff redeployment to support the subsequent response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) response.

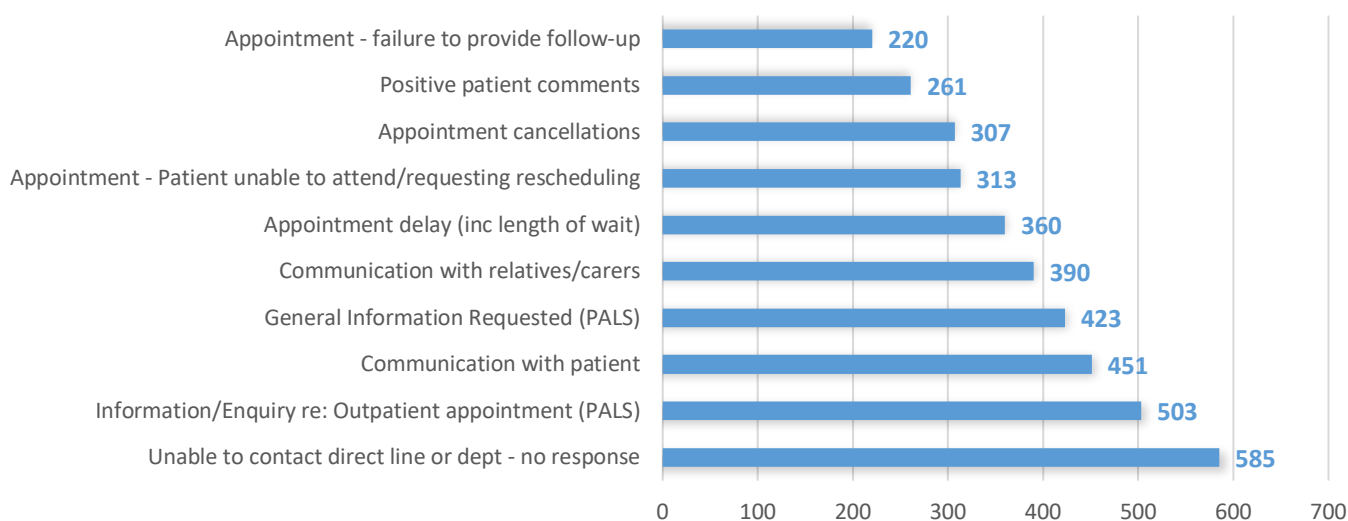
To address the challenged response rate, in mid-January 2021, the Trust modified the targets for responding to complaints introducing 40 working days and 60 working days response timescales. A plan was also put in place to reduce the backlog of overdue complaints through increasing resources and using the experience of senior clinical staff to assist with more complex complaints, as noted previously.

3. Patient Advice and Liaison Service

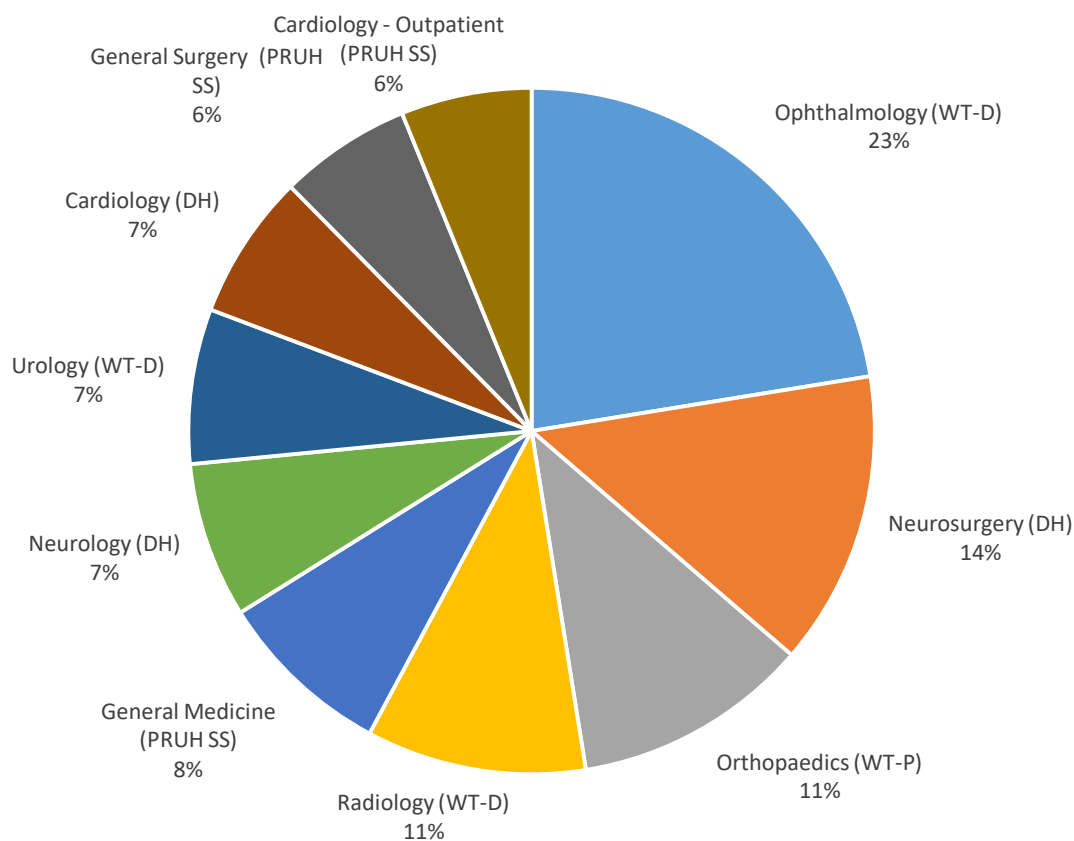
Patient Advice and Liaison Service recorded 7,060 contacts across all sites. The contacts are broken down by month and site as per the following:



Analysis of Patient Advice and Liaison Service’s data reveals that local people approached the service for the following reasons:



Services with most Patient Advice and Liaison Service contacts included:



4. Learning from feedback

Feedback generates opportunities for learning and service improvements and King's College Hospital is fully committed to utilising complaints and Patient Advice and Liaison Service data to transform services to meet the needs of our diverse communities. Throughout the year, Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has affected the Trust's ability to deploy its approach to learning. However, the following systems are in place to facilitate information sharing and to drive improvements:

- regular reporting of themes and trends to:
 - care groups
 - King's Executive Team
 - Patient Safety Committee
 - Patient Experience Committee
- hosting learning events that bring teams across all specialities together to discuss cases and consider changes in practice, where applicable
- developing and implementing action plans where processes or quality of care delivered were below the high expectations that we set for ourselves
- designing and delivering bespoke training for staff or staff groups where concerns about the quality of care delivered have been raised

With the appointment of the Assistant Director of Patient Experience, further opportunities for learning from feedback will be explored and deployed in 2021/2022.

5. Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman investigate complaints where an organisation has not been able to resolve the complaint to the complainant's satisfaction at a local level.

In 2020/2021, 7 cases were referred to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman for further review or investigation. As the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman paused its review process until 30th June 2021 to support local NHS Trust with response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, outcome of the reviews has not been communicated to King's College Hospital.

6. Plans for 2021/ 2022

King's College Hospital is committed to transforming its patient experience function to ensure that the team supports our clinical and non-clinical staff to deliver outstanding experience for our patients, their families and communities.

The appointment of the Assistant Director of Patient Experience to lead this work signifies a breakthrough moment on this journey with plans for 2021/2022 including:

- providing visible leadership and building foundations across all patient experience functions to ensure that services achieve 'good' Care Quality Commission rating
- improving complaints performance alongside mapping and deploying opportunities to embed organisational learning
- streamlining internal processes to maximise use of resources to providing support to our patients, their families and communities
- achieving set targets for our Friends and Family Test response and recommendation rates and driving improvements as a result of patients' feedback
- continuing to develop and deploy new volunteers' roles to support our staff with providing holistic care to our patients
- introducing patient experience bulletin
- delivering key initiatives of the NHS patient experience improvement framework