



NHS Highland Complaints Annual Report 2021/22

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Introduction

NHS Highland Feedback and Complaints Annual Report 2021-2022 is a summary of the feedback received by NHS Highland from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. This includes a description of the lessons learnt and improvements made. A summary of the approaches taken to proactively gather feedback to inform and develop local services is also included in this report.

Encouraging and Gathering Feedback and Complaints

NHS Highland welcomes and encourages feedback from patients, carers and family members about the services we provide. Information about how to provide feedback is made available to patients, carers and family members via the NHS Highland website [Giving us Feedback \(scot.nhs.uk\)](https://www.scot.nhs.uk/giving-us-feedback/) the Feedback information leaflet for patients, relatives and carers both of which encourage individuals how to provide feedback and make a complaint. Sign posting to the Care Opinion website and complaints leaflets are advertised throughout all of NHS Highland patient areas.

NHS Highland gathers patient feedback in a number of different ways; this includes but is not limited to:

- Patients, carers and family members can provide feedback to any NHS Highland member of staff who will be happy to help them. Correspondence can be received via letter, email, telephone and in person. Alternatively they can contact the Feedback Team as follows:
 - NHS Highland Feedback Team
PO Box 5713
Inverness
IV1 9AQ
01463 705997
Nhshighland.feedback@nhs.scot
- Patient feedback provided by other organisations
- Online feedback through Care Opinion www.careopinion.org.uk
- NHS Highland website [Giving us Feedback \(scot.nhs.uk\)](https://www.scot.nhs.uk/giving-us-feedback/)
- Feedback in the local press
- National patient experience surveys
- Letters and information from elected members of Parliament on behalf of patients and families.

Based on feedback received during 2021/2022 we know that the majority of our patients are happy most of the time with the care and treatment provided by NHS Highland. However, on occasion the care and treatment provided does fall short of the high standards we expect. When this happens it is very important that we hear about it in order that we can learn from mistakes made and improve the way we do things in future.

NHS Highland has a dedicated centrally based Feedback Team which supports patients to provide feedback and make complaints. This provides a single point of contact, offers ease of access and a level of consistency for the patient or member of

public. All NHS Highland staff is also open to providing front line resolution of complaints where applicable.

To support patients to provide feedback the Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS) is delivered by the Citizens Advice Bureaus in:

- Argyll and Bute
Riverside, Oban Road
Lochgilphead, Argyll
PA31 8NG
Tel: 01546 605 550
Tel: 01546 605556 (Direct)
- Inverness, Badenoch & Strathspey
29 Union Street
IV11LX
Tel: 01463 237 664
- Ross & Cromarty
Suie House
Market Square
Alness
IV17 0UD
Tel: 01349 885937 (Direct)
- Skye and Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau
The Green
Portree
IV51 9BT
01478 612032
- Lochaber Citizens Advice Bureau
Dudley Road
Fort William
PH33 6JB
Main number: 01397 705 311
Direct dial: 01397 709 098

At the Clinical Governance Committee complaint reports and SPSO reports are tabled on a quarterly basis. The SPSO report details the outcome of the SPSO investigation and what action the Board has taken.

Care Opinion Report 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

NHS Highland received 85 stories within this timeframe with over 10,009 views. Not all the stories were about NHS Highland but were made by either NHS Highland residents attending NHS Highland or other Boards as well as visitors utilising NHS Highland's services. This is an increase of 17.5% in the number of stories reported compared to the previous reporting period. The number of views to NHS Highland stories remains consistent of just over 10,000 views.

Care opinion continues to provide a useful tool for learning and improving our services, however, we are still not fully utilising the service due to ongoing review. The large increase of views to our stories shows the great potential for using Care Opinion as an open forum for sharing information and has possible implications of reducing the number of complaints and enquiries if used to its optimum.

We saw a down turn in our figures from last year as our positive stories dropped from 77% in 2020-2021 to 73% in 2021/2022. These stories are considered positive or minimally critical.

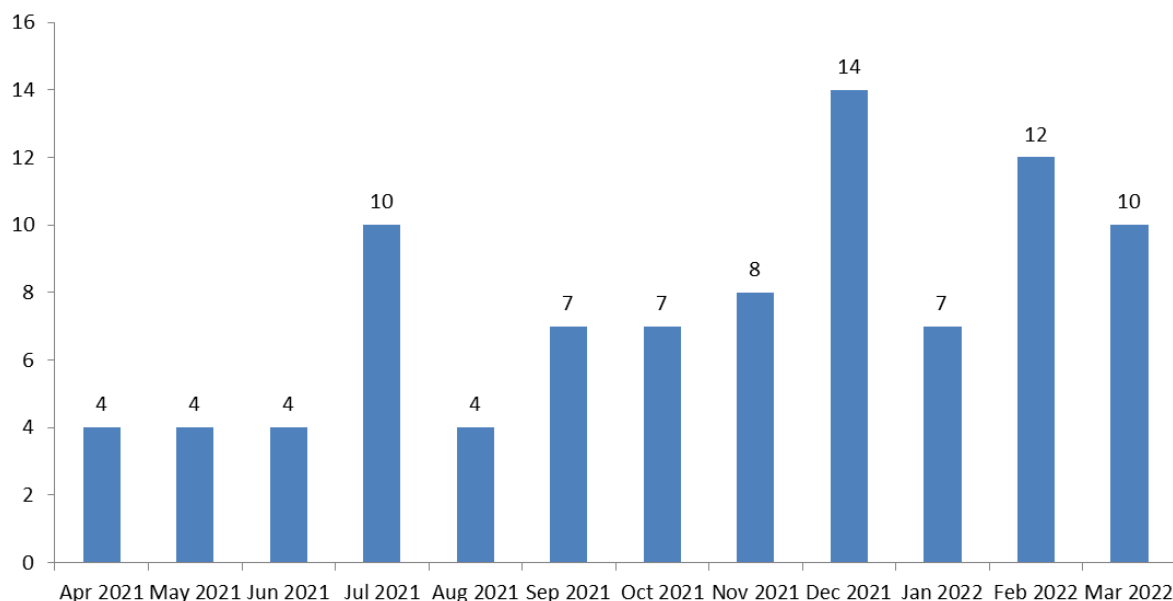
The response rate in 2021/2022 was 68%. Due to Covid there had been some delay to NHS Highland reviewing the way it responds to Care Opinion stories, however, the process is still ongoing with discussions between the Board and Care Opinion as to how we can best utilise the system. NHS Highland continues to look at improving response times to patient stories and how the information is used to improve our services and feedback on the open forum.

The report tells us that NHS Highland's staff and care provision are good but that there is room for improvement with regards communication, conflicting information, hospital discharge and referral.

In mid 2022 discussion have been held with various stakeholders across the divisions to review the process of responding to Care Opinion stories in a bid to improve the response rates.

Indicator One – Learning from Complaints

2021/2022 Compliments Received



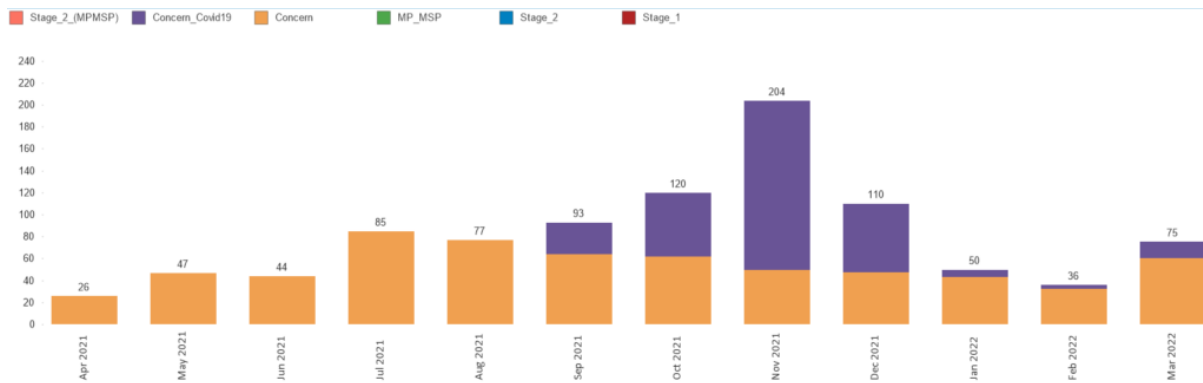
During 2021-2022, 91 compliments were received by the Feedback Team. These compliments were forwarded to the staff involved and the Chief Executive. Examples are used in the Chief Executive's weekly communication with staff.

Comments

- "I have had a very anxious few years with Cancer concerns and it came down to terminal with the Oncologist giving me a set time frame of life. I however chose Quality of life over the gruelling period of Chemotherapy which was not a cure anyway. The phone consultations I have had with Dr XXX have been reassuring and comforting during this trying time. I insisted on quality of Life and Dr XXX did not hold back on giving me the reality of it all, but in such a way that he was thorough, precise and optimistic the whole time. His calming confident guidance makes this period of concern much easier to cope with and he is always ready to respond or advise at a moment's notice. The NHS has a good man in their team and I thank him and of course the NHS for all of the wonderful works in this difficult time."
- "I had a Hernia Repair on 30/06/2021. I was, and am, completely satisfied with my treatment from start to finish. I would appreciate it if you could pass on my thanks to Miss XXX and her team, the Anaesthetist and her team and the nurses in the recovery ward and in Ward 5C. I was looked after with the utmost care possible. I would also like to pass on my thanks to Pre-assessment clinic for their care and help during the tests. I found the "Patient Information for Consent" document (GS01) very informative but would have preferred to have had it before my Pre-assessment."

- “I would like to thank the A & E staff and Ward B for their care and concern for me when I was on holiday and had to be admitted overnight after a vasovagal syncope and very high blood pressure. The Nursing staff was exceptional as were the staff in the A&E department. Many thanks for your care”
- “I've benefited from 'in person' physio regularly over the last 10months. The team have an excellent combination of being friendly and approachable as well as professional, and have offered encouragement and support, adapting exercises to suit where I'm at and presenting them in a way that is understandable and easy to engage with.”
- “I wish to thank you for the superb service and treatment afforded my wife following a fall at our rented holiday house near Kingussie. The ambulance paramedics were very good and sympathetic in their diagnosis and treatment. The response to the 999 call was excellent. Raigmore A&E treated her very well and she is now on the road to recovery.”
- “The care and kindness from every single member of staff was so appreciated and far exceeded my expectations. My labour ward experience was just more than I could have hoped for (being a first time mum).”

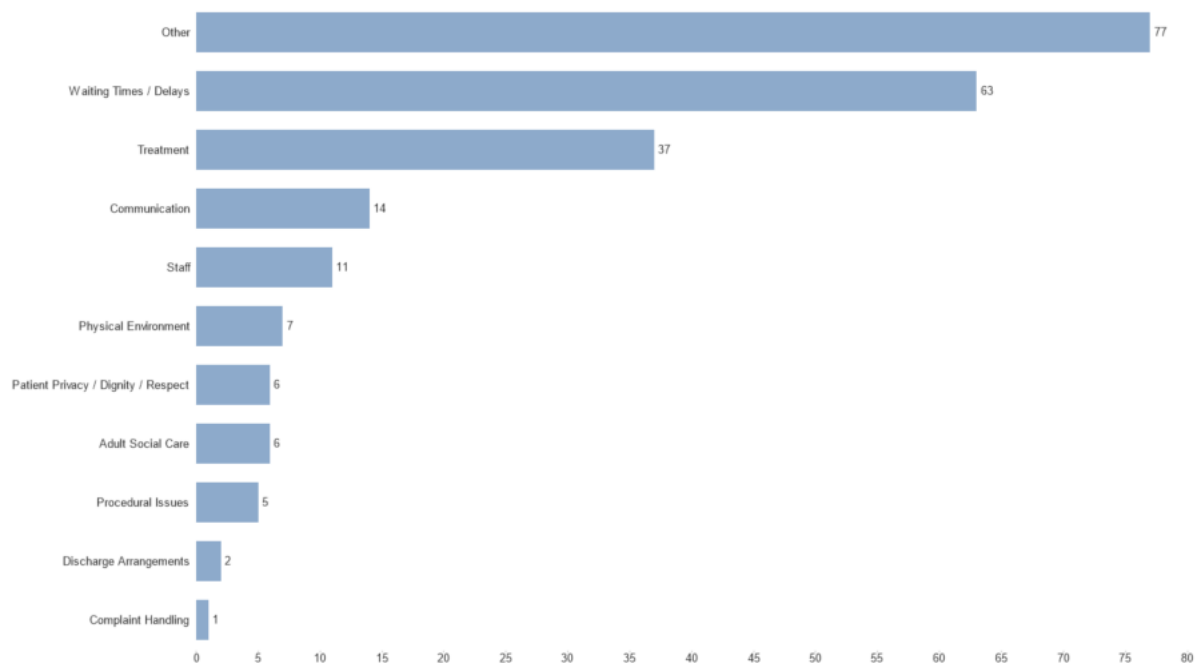
In 2021-2022, 967 concerns (categorised as Concern and Covid-19 Concern) were received. Concerns were dealt with by the service in which the concern was raised.



Comments

- Enquiry regarding hospital visiting at Invergordon Community Hospital.
Passed to the area manager who made contact directly with the patient to discuss concerns and agree resolution.
- Patient at New Criags wanted to raise the concern of a window not being opened wide enough.
Sent to ward manager to review and discuss with patient directly.
- Patient looking for information on how to access details regarding a vaccination.
Directed the patient to the Vaccination Hub.
- Concern regarding a GP appointment delay. This was related to the Prison service.
Concern passed to the Manager for review and response directly to patient.
- Requests for change in frequency of medication administration.
Matter resolved with patient at the weekly review meeting.

Stage 1 complaint Issues

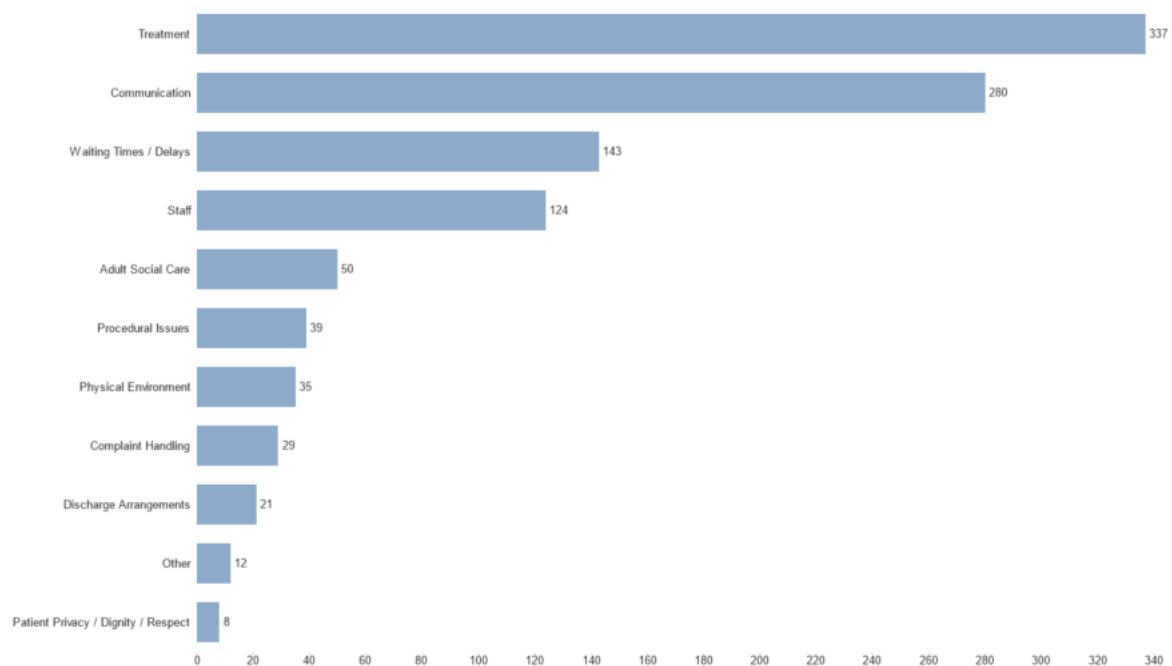


*Other – this relates to covid related complaints.

The issues for Stage 1 Complaints

- Delay with appointment with psychiatrist.
Appointment arranged immediately.
- Patient's father states that a member of staff was rude to the patients' mother at an outpatient appointment and commented that the child's behaviour was not normal.
Service Manager spoke to Mr XXXX on 31.03.2021. Unfortunately, comments made during the consultation were perhaps perceived differently than intended.
- Continuation of orthodontic treatment. Does not feel that orthodontic treatment was completed.
A&B Senior Dental Officer responded in writing to complainant, detailed policies and procedures.
- Embarrassment caused when an invalid chair was arranged for me to get to my appointment without my permission when I did not need assistance.
The admin team made contact via telephone to give an apology.

Stage 2 complaint Issues



The issues for Stage 2 Complaints

- The care and treatment of your late father in Raigmore Hospital. The delay in him receiving his medication. The delay in his transfer to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. That a DNACPR was in place but no discussion had taken place with your family. The poor communication from Raigmore Hospital; and That the only copies of your father's medical records were sent to Edinburgh with him.
An apology was given. As well as a review providing reflection to support communication improvements.
- The attitude and behaviour of a consultant psychiatrist.
An apology was given. Identified that the patient felt that the questions asked were read from a check list, when they were standard questions used by the consultant.
- A Care Package for your constituent to enable him to return home to his children.
Investigation concludes that the patient is not well enough to be out of hospital.
- The care and treatment your client has received from NHS Highland; A delay in your client's diagnosis.
Apology Given. Misunderstanding that the Haematology team declined to see the patient during this time. Addressing the TTP and 2 previous biopsies in letter to GP. In retrospect, the two prior node biopsies did not support a diagnosis of Hodgkin lymphoma.

All actions taken and improvements made as a result of complaints are recorded on Datix. Example of actions taken/improvements made are:

- Doctors are checking the availability of Voncento so that the hospital can ensure that they have access to it (or an equivalent) when required in an emergency.
- Review process for dispensing medications; the practice team plan to review the process around prescription ordering and dispensing, and will ask patients to acknowledge receipt of their prescriptions.
- NHS Highland is reviewing how ECG data is presented to clinicians to prevent future errors.
- Patient Specific Action - An alert will be placed in patients' electronic notes to ensure the letter is accessed any time they are brought in to hospital.
- Consultant has initiated a weekly relative's clinic where appointments are booked to ensure there is dedicated time to communicate with families.
- To have a dedicated resource to manage the equipment required for surgical appointments.
- CPN and wider CMHT have agreed to ensure that all patients being discharged from their service are sent a letter advising them of their discharge and information on how to access support in the future.
- Alternative routes to accessing care are further promoted within the letter sent to families when they are added to the waiting list for a care at home package.
- NHS Highland Hub is reviewing the induction and training programs for staff dealing with telecare responses, and will be supporting all staff with improving their customer care.
- Treatment plan for post exposure will be shared widely within the medical staff and nursing team at CGH to prevent another incident such as this reoccurring
- Introduction of a Parkinson Disease Medication Box in the Emergency Department and Ward GC
- Improvements to the way the department communicates with families is being discussed at QPS meetings

The Feedback Team are responsible for ensuring that actions are progressed.

Indicator Two - Complaint Process Experience

It was decided that throughout the pandemic the patient experience surveys would be put on hold, therefore, there is no data provided for this section of the report this year.

Indicator Three – Staff Awareness and Training

Complaints training have been restricted this year due to Covid-19. Ad hoc training has been provided as required.

Larger planned training sessions have now being planned via Teams and will commenced late in the summer 2021.

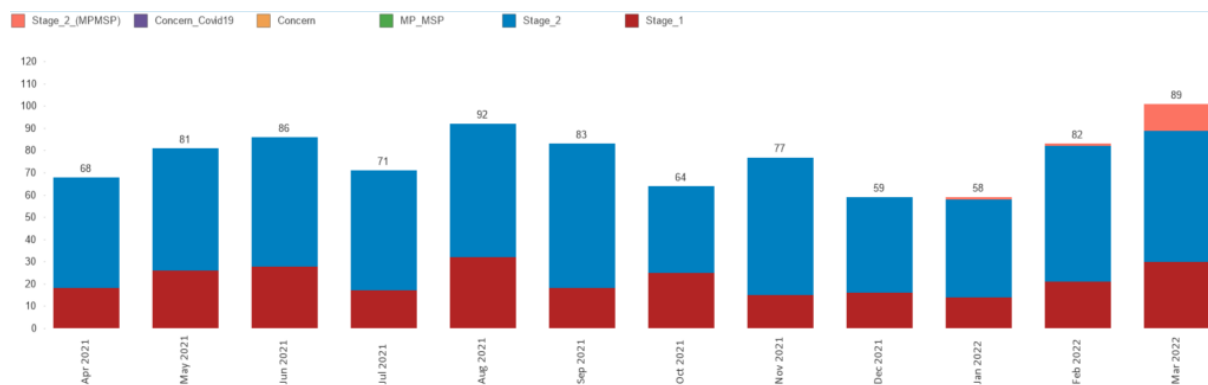
Indicators

- Indicator four
 - The total number of complaints received
- Indicator five
 - Complaints closed at each stage
- Indicator six
 - Complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld
- Indicator seven
 - Working days to respond
- Indicator eight
 - Complaints closed in full within the timescales
- Indicator nine
 - Number of cases where an extension is authorised

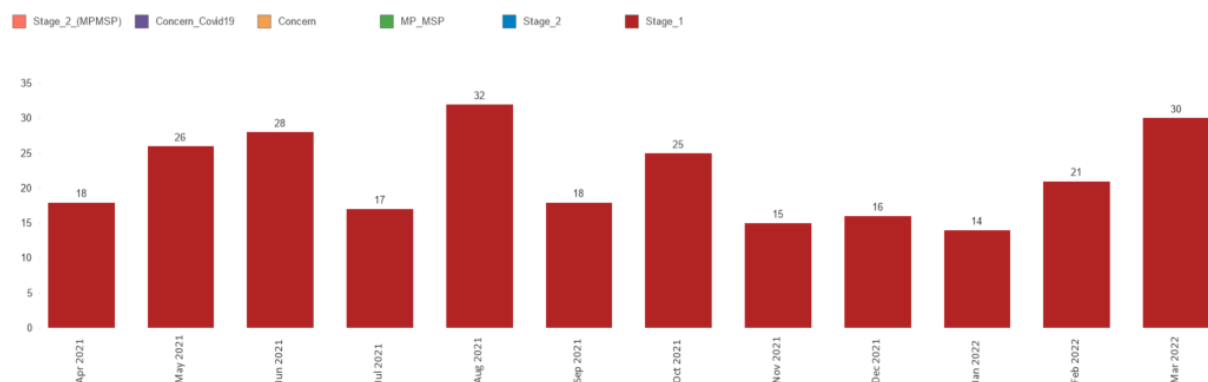
Indicators

Indicator four – Number of complaints received

Number of Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints combined

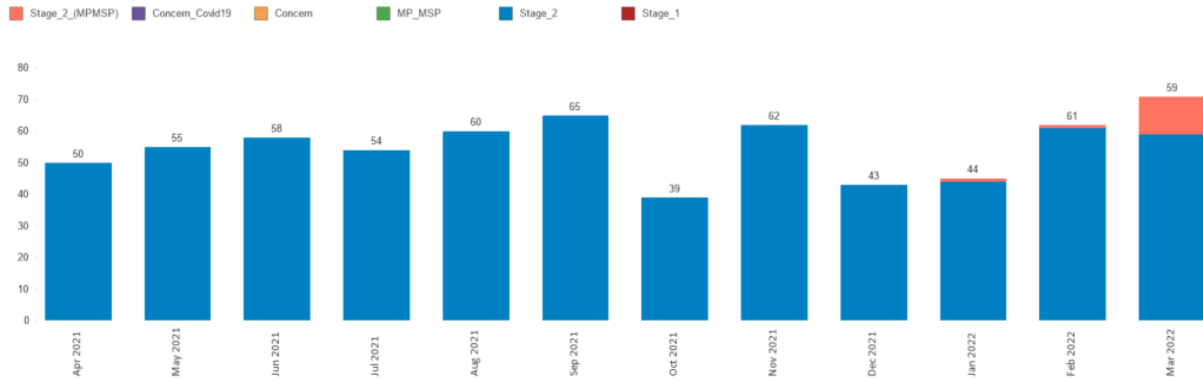


Stage 1 only



The number of stage 1 compliant received decrease in the last six months.

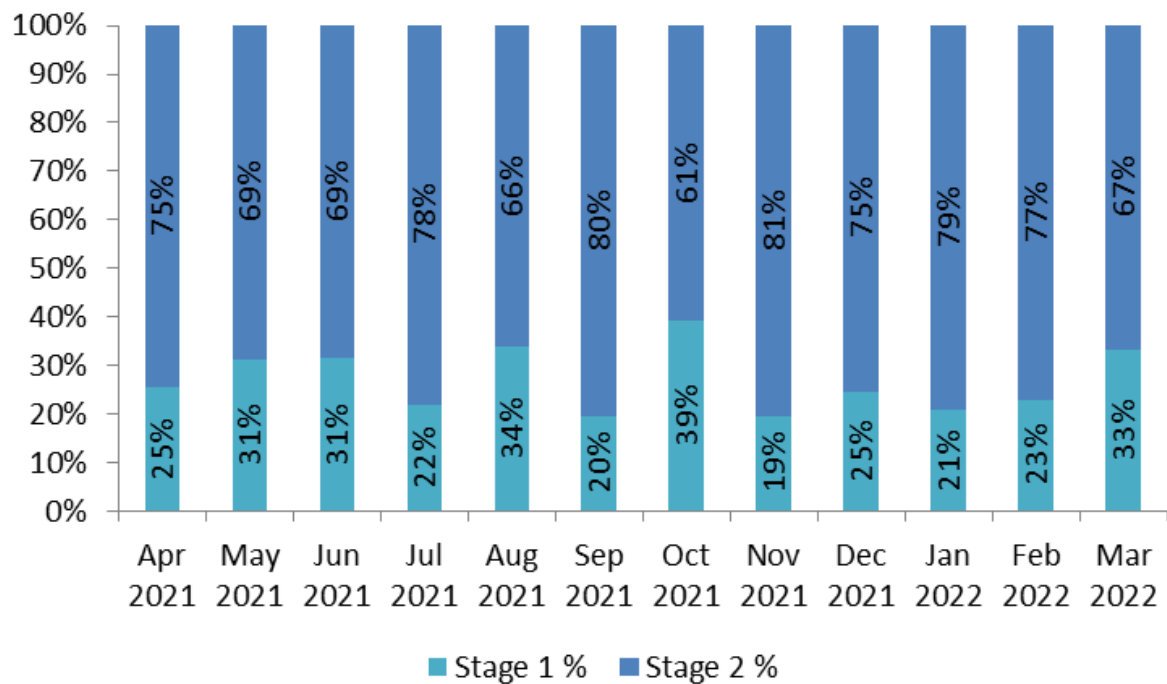
Stage 2 only



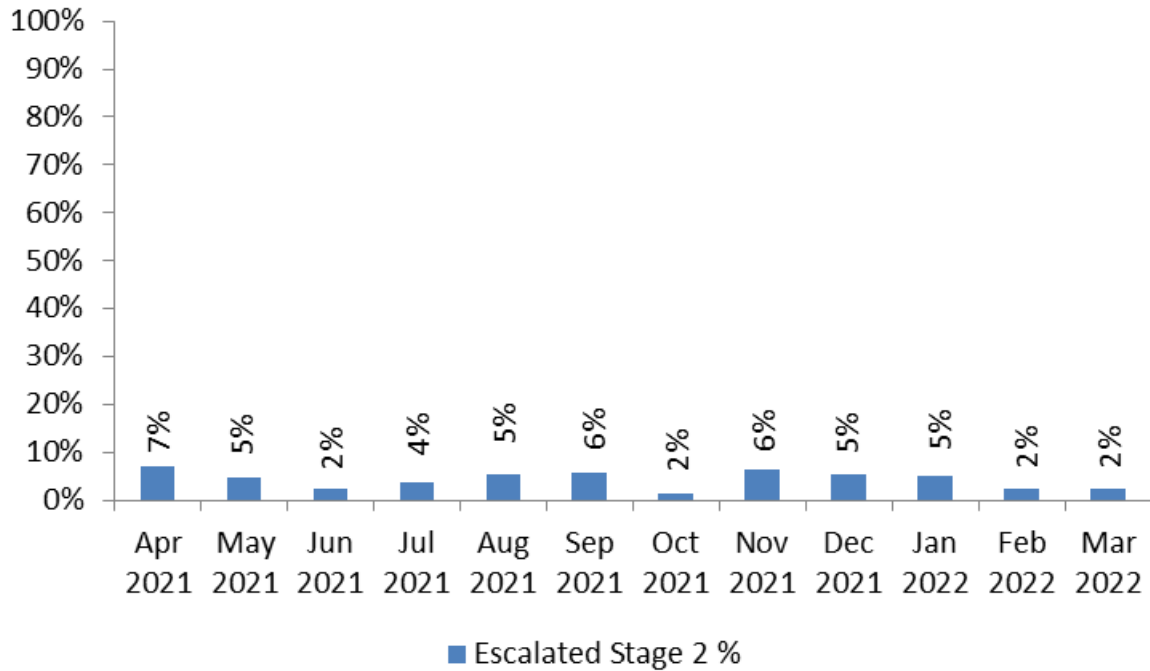
The number of stage 2 complaints received reduced significantly at the beginning of the pandemic and started to increase before reducing again. Stage 2 complaints started to rise again towards the end of the financial year.

Indicator five – Complaints closed

The number of complaints closed at stage one and stage two as % of all complaints



The number of complaints closed at stage two after escalation as % of all complaints

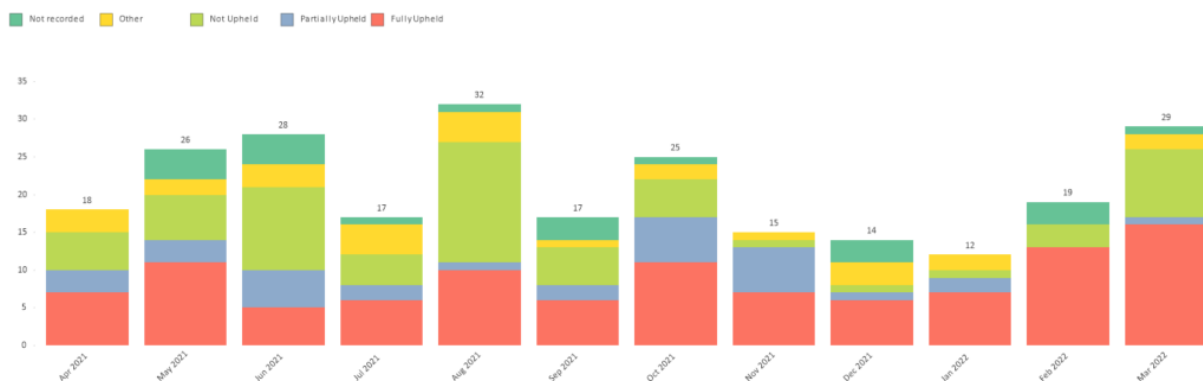


The empty months represent no escalated stage 1 complaints in that month.

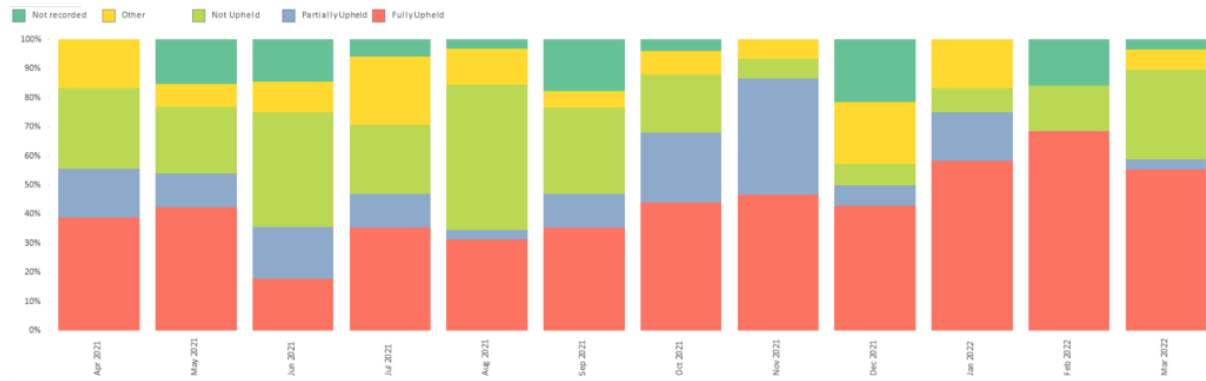
Some stage 1 complaints are escalated and they are not resolved. This graph shows the percentage of stage 1 complaints escalated as a % of all complaints, which is, therefore small.

Indicator six – Complaints outcome

The number of stage 1 complaints not upheld, partially upheld and fully upheld. An assessment is made of the complaint outcome.

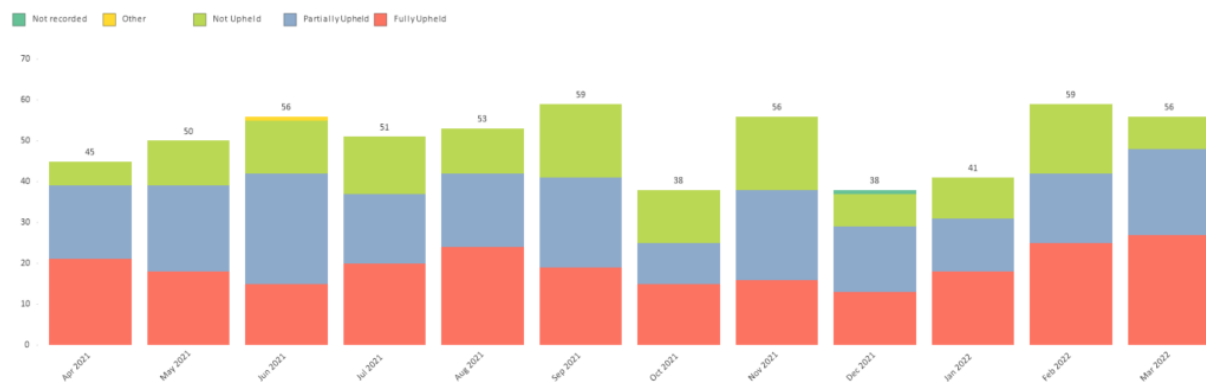


Stage 1 complaints not upheld, partially upheld and fully upheld as a % of all closed stage 1 complaints

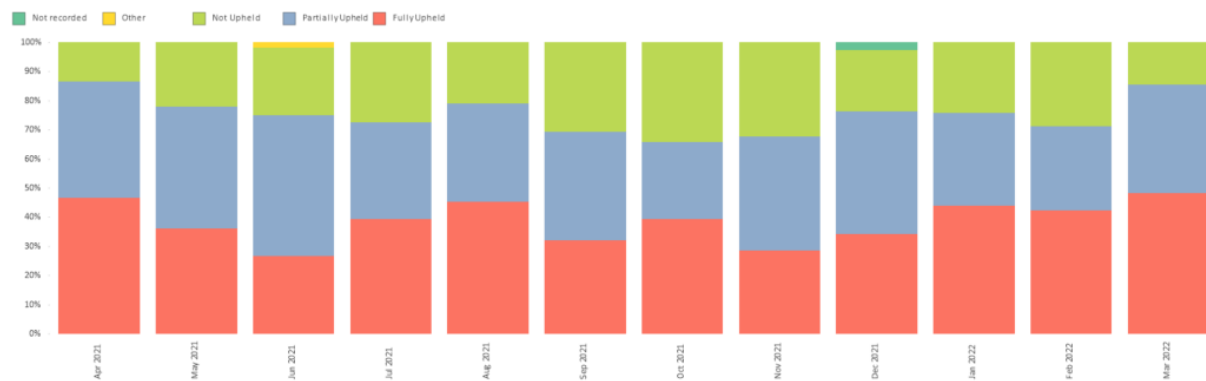


'Other' represents the grouping of other codes selected in the outcome field. These include 'transferred to another unit', 'irresolvable', 'unreasonable complaint', 'conciliation', 'complaint withdrawn'. In most cases this is irresolvable and they are escalated to be dealt with as a stage 2 complaint.

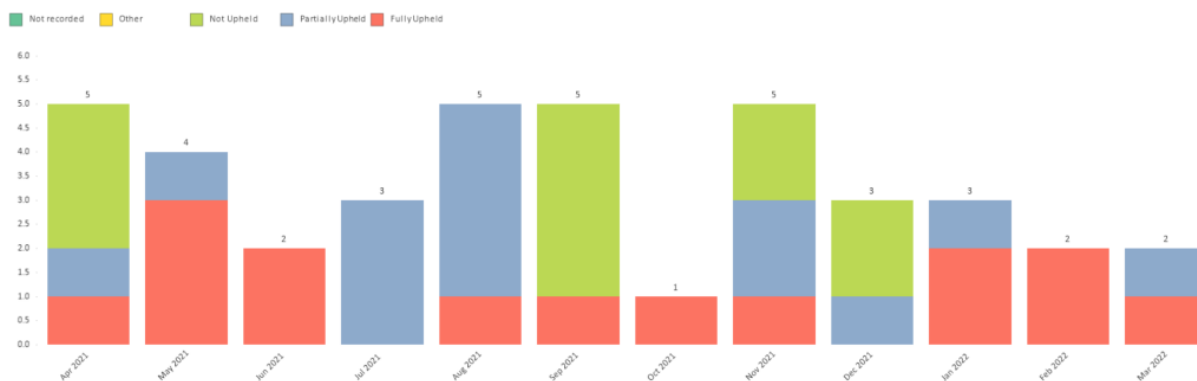
The number of stage 2 complaints not upheld, partially upheld and fully upheld



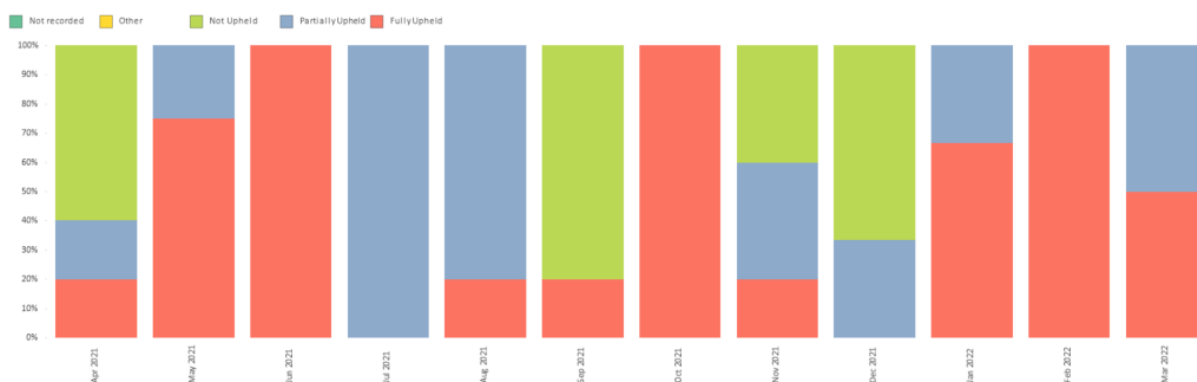
Stage 2 complaints not upheld, partially upheld and fully upheld as a % of all closed stage 2 complaints



The number of escalated complaints not upheld, partially upheld and fully upheld. This represents the number of stage 1 complaints that have been escalated.



Escalated complaints not upheld, partially upheld and fully upheld as a % of all closed escalated complaints



Indicator seven - Average time in working days to respond (closed only)

Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1. Stage 1 complaints should be responded to within 5 working days (extended to 10 working days)

Average of Working days	
Month Year	Total
Apr 2021	6
May 2021	4
Jun 2021	7
Jul 2021	10
Aug 2021	6
Sep 2021	4
Oct 2021	11
Nov 2021	14
Dec 2021	10
Jan 2022	8
Feb 2022	9
Mar 2022	15

Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2. Stage 2 complaints should be responded to within 20 working days.

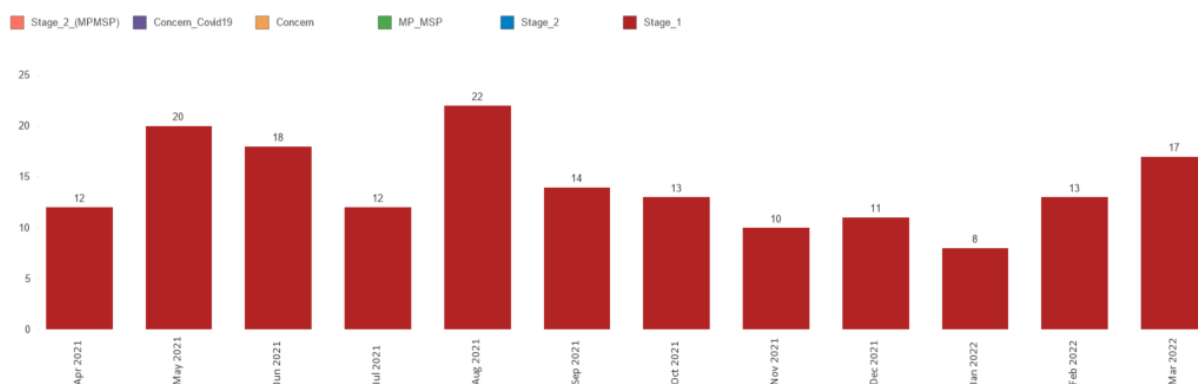
Average of Working days	
Month Year	Total
Apr 2021	37
May 2021	37
Jun 2021	46
Jul 2021	44
Aug 2021	47
Sep 2021	52
Oct 2021	53
Nov 2021	41
Dec 2021	39
Jan 2022	44
Feb 2022	38
Mar 2022	33

Average time in working days to respond to escalated complaints (only)

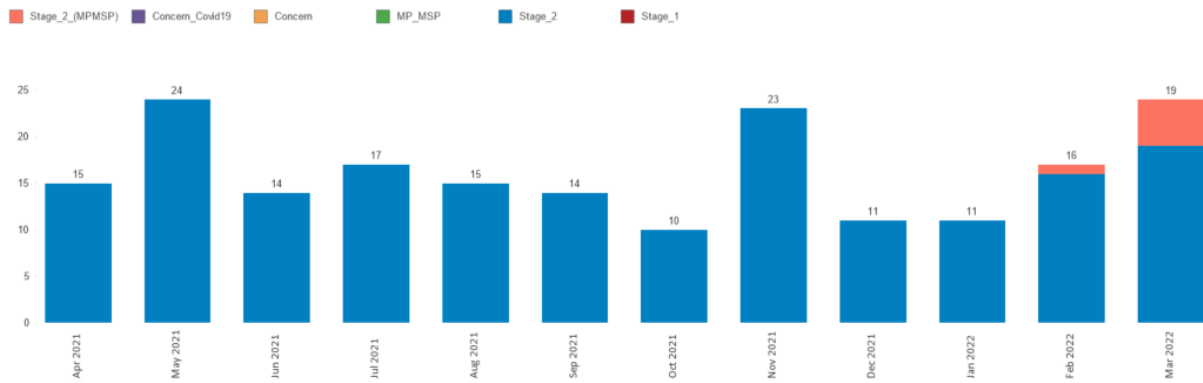
Average of Working days	
Month Year	Total
Apr 2021	46
May 2021	18
Jun 2021	22
Jul 2021	28
Aug 2021	30
Sep 2021	33
Oct 2021	12
Nov 2021	42
Dec 2021	37
Jan 2022	64
Feb 2022	73
Mar 2022	22

Indicator eight - Complaints closed in full within the timescales

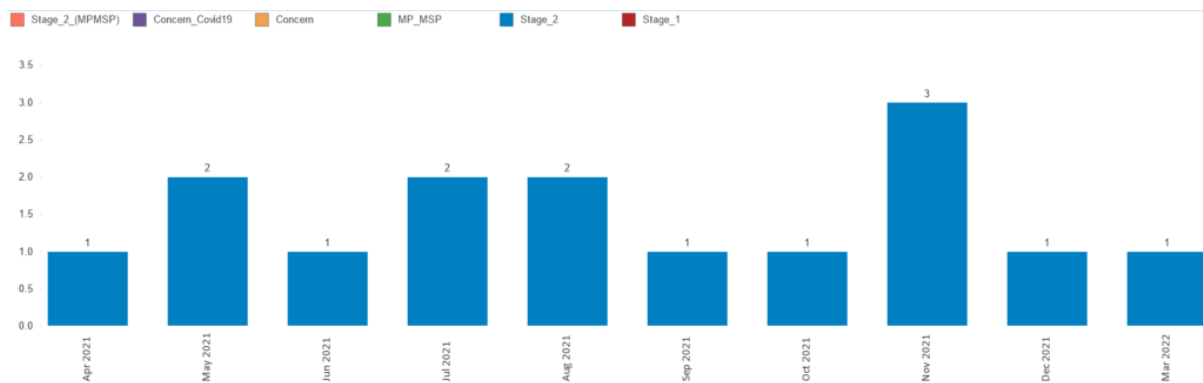
The number of stage 1 complaints closed within 5 working days. The number of complaints closed in desired timescale decreased after August 2020.



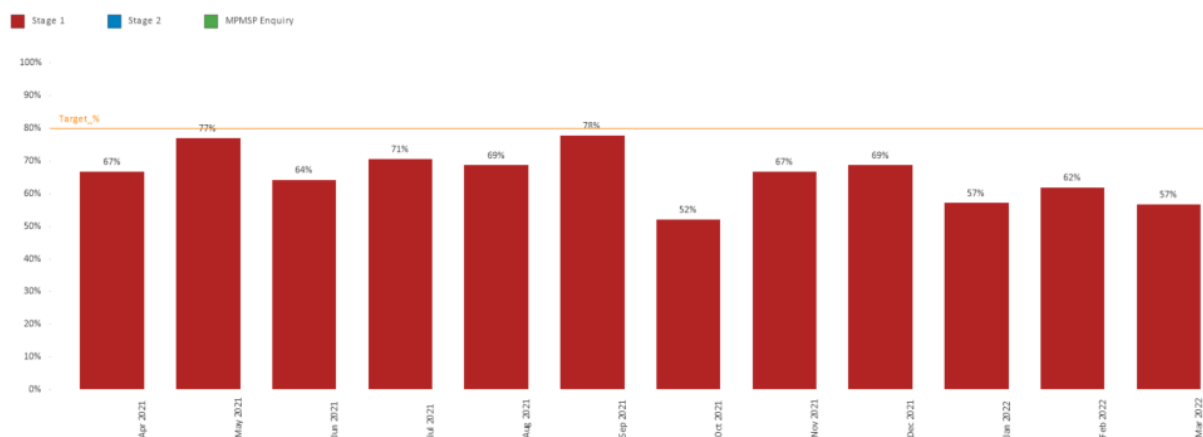
The number of stage 2 complaints closed within 20 working days. The number of complaints closed in desired timescale decreased after October 2020, this was a result of the pandemic across divisions.

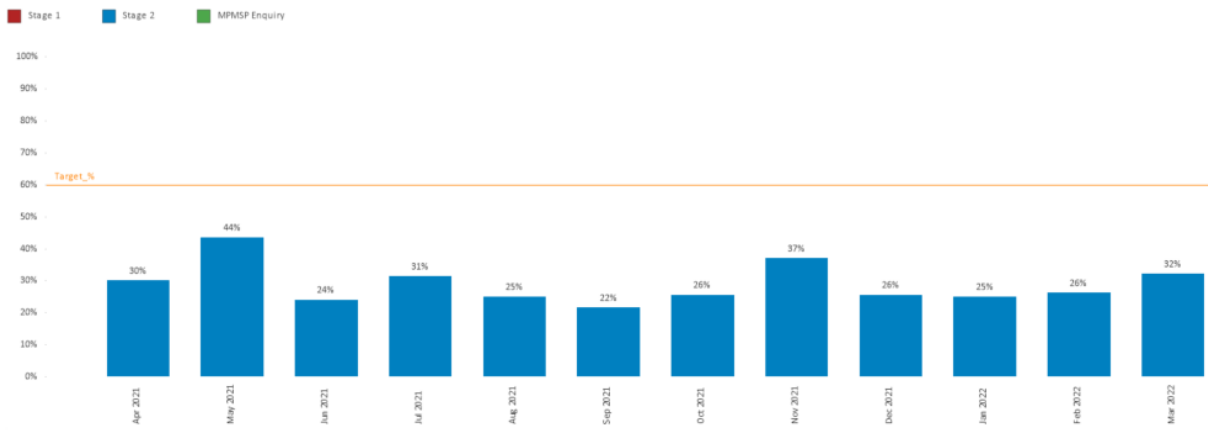


The number of escalated complaints closed within 20 working days

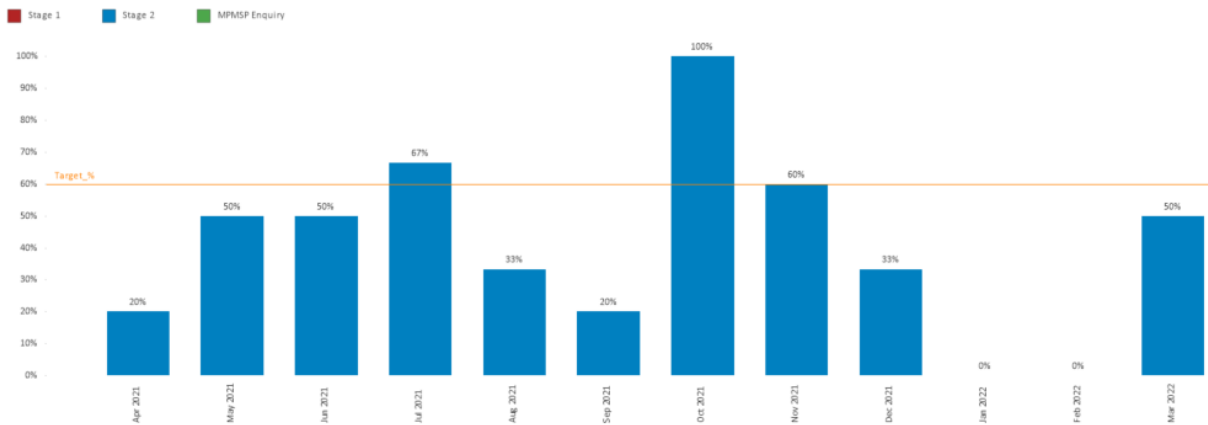


% of complaints closed within working days target (stage 1 and stage 2)





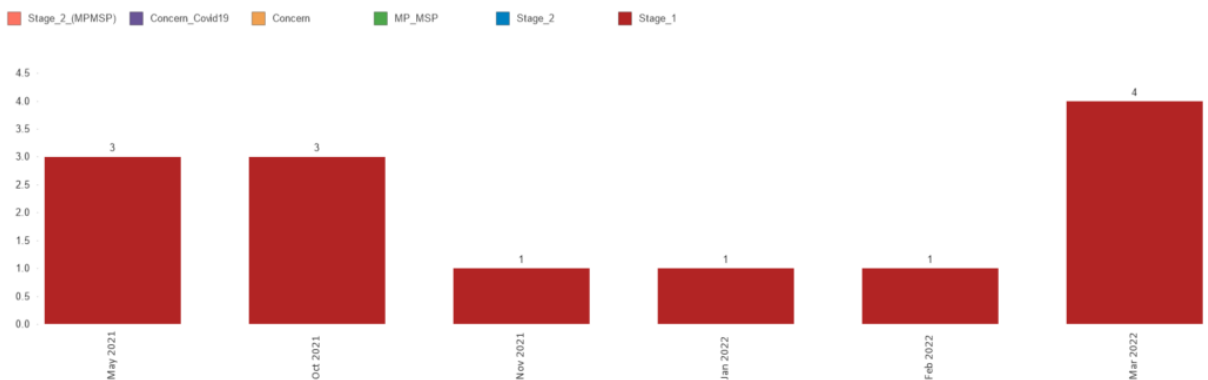
% of complaints closed within working days target (escalated)



The empty months represent no stage 1 complaints were escalated for the month that had escalated complaints

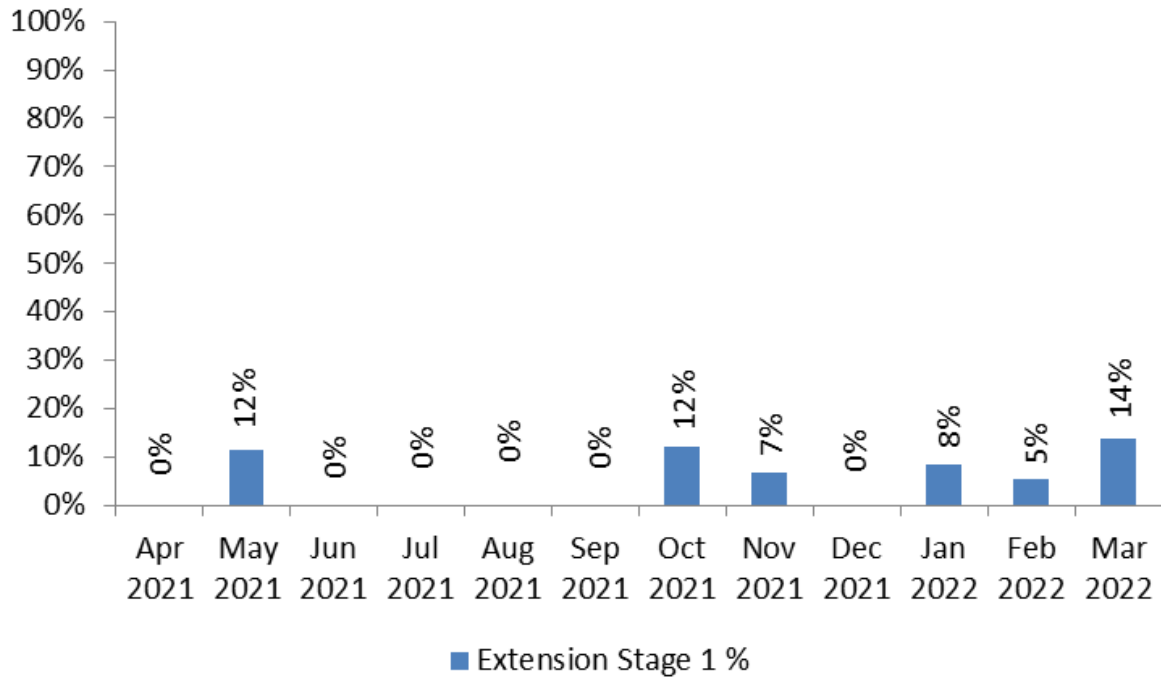
Indicator nine – Authorised extensions

Number of complaints closed at stage 1 where extension was authorised



Complaints response timescale can be extended to 10 working days with approval

Closed stage 1 complaints where extension was authorised as a % of all complaints at stage 1



The empty months represent stage 1 extensions in that month

Complaint Improvement Activity

Work commenced in May 2021 to improve performance. A Board wide improvement plan included:

1. A range of performance measures for complaints.
2. A training programme to include training for complaints investigators, feedback team, executive team and operational unit management team
3. A weekly report to identify open complaints in a RAG status format, along with a breakdown in themes and complaint raised as High Level.
4. Reintroduction of a Feedback Newsletter

NHS Highland

Annual Report on Feedback and Complaints

Performance Indicator Data collection

2021/2022

Performance Indicator Four:

Summary of total number of complaints received in the reporting year (Stage 1 and Stage 2)

***Does not include withdrawn, SPSO or further correspondence complaints**

Number of complaints received by the NHS Territorial Board or NHS Special Board Complaints and Feedback Team	910
Number of complaints received by NHS Contractors (<i>Territorial Boards only</i>)	n/a
Total number of complaints received in NHS Board area	910

NHS Board - sub-groups of complaints received

Prisons	39
NHS Board Managed Primary Care services:	71
GP	43
Dental	10
Ophthalmic	16*
Pharmacy	2

***Ophthalmology as specialty?**

***All numbers in above table taken from specialty filter**

NHS Contractors – complaints received

GP	n/a
Dental	n/a
Ophthalmic	n/a
Pharmacy	n/a
Total	n/a

Performance Indicator Five

The total number of complaints closed by NHS Boards in the reporting year (*do not include contractor data, withdrawn cases or cases where consent not received*).

Number of complaints closed by the NHS Board	Number	As a % of all NHS Board complaints closed (not contractors)
Stage one	204	24%
Stage two	600	71%
Stage two - Number of escalated complaints	40	5%
Total complaints closed by NHS Board	844	

Performance Indicator Six

Complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld

Stage one complaints

	Number	As a % of all complaints closed by NHS Board at stage one
Number of complaints upheld at stage one	105	51%
Number of complaints not upheld at stage one	67	33%
Number of complaints partially upheld at stage one	32	16%
Total stage one closed complaints	204	

*% scores do not total 100%, as the total complaint closed includes outcomes that are not fully held/partially upheld/not upheld

Stage two complaints

	Number	As a % of all complaints closed by NHS Boards at stage two
Number of complaints upheld at stage two	231	38.5%
Number of complaints not upheld at stage two	147	24.5%
Number of complaints partially upheld at stage two	222	37%
Total stage two closed complaints	600	

Stage two escalated complaints

	Number	As a % of all escalated complaints closed by NHS Boards at stage two
Escalated stage 2 closed complaints only		
Number of escalated complaints upheld at stage two	15	38%
Number of escalated complaints not upheld at stage two	11	28%
Number of escalated complaints partially upheld at stage two	14	35%
Total stage two closed escalated complaints	40	

Performance Indicator Eight

Complaints closed in full within the timescales

This indicator measures complaints closed within 5 working days at stage one and 20 working days at stage two.

	Number	As a % of complaints closed by NHS Boards at each stage
Number of complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days.	170	47%
Number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days	174	49%
Number of escalated complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days	15	4%
Total number of complaints closed within timescales	359	

Performance Indicator Nine

Number of cases where an extension is authorised

This indicator measures the number of complaints not closed within the CHP timescale, where an extension was authorised*.

	Number	As a % of complaints closed by NHS Boards at each stage
Number of complaints closed at stage one where extension was authorised	13	93%
Number of complaints closed at stage two where extension was authorised	1	7%
Total number of extensions authorised	14	

***Note:** The SPSO confirm that there is no prescriptive approach about who exactly should authorise an extension – only that the organisation takes a proportionate approach to determining an appropriate senior person – and this is something that NHS Boards should develop a process for internally. This indicator aims to manage the risk of cases being extended beyond the CHP timescale without any senior officer approval.

Completed by:

Name:	Position:
Tel:	E-mail:
Date:	