

Report to:	Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
Date:	21 November 2006
Title of Report:	Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure Annual Review 2005/2006
By:	Director of Adult Social Care
Purpose of Report:	To report on the functioning and effectiveness of the Complaints Procedure

RECOMMENDATION:

The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note and comment on the Complaints Procedure Annual Review Report for 2005/2006 and forward any relevant issues to the next Adult Social Care Lead Member meeting.

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The cost of responding to complaints in 2005/2006 was contained within the Department's budget.

2. Background and Supporting Information

2.1 It is a statutory requirement that a report on the operation and effectiveness of the Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure is compiled and submitted annually to an appropriate Committee. This report (Annual Review on Complaints, Compliments and Comments) is attached at Appendix 1 and provides information about the complaints received by Adult Social Care and related Finance and Business Support services.

2.2 The complaints procedure provides a mechanism for identifying problems, resolving issues and improving services. The analysis of information about complaints at each stage of the procedure gives the department an opportunity to reflect on the quality of the services it provides to the service users and consider how well it listens and responds to their needs.

2.3 Compliments also provide valuable information about the quality of services we provide.

2.4 In the preparation of the report, there was consultation with those who have used the procedure, or have an interest in its functioning.

3. Complaints and Compliments

3.1 Adult Social Care services received 446 complaints, an increase of 7% on the previous year. Significantly, this increase is solely related to the rise in complaints received about delays in releasing funding for services which accounted for 46% of all the complaints made, compared to 37% last year (see section 4.3).

3.2 354 (79%) of the complaints related to older people.

3.3 Finance & support services recorded 47 complaints; an increase of 30% from last year.

3.4 97% of all complaints were resolved at local resolution - stage 1. As complaints are often complex and sensitive, this demonstrates the time, effort and commitment of staff in trying to resolve problems.

3.5 The average time for responding to complaints was 12 calendar days, which is well within the 21-day timescale and an improvement of 4 days on the previous year.

3.6 Of the 242 complaints that were not related to funding 26% of the complaints were upheld and 35% were partially upheld. 89% of the 204 complaints about funding were upheld.

3.7 Only 11 complaints were not able to be satisfactorily resolved at the local resolution stage and moved into the formal investigation stage. A reduction of 3 on the previous year's figures.

3.8 5 complaints went on to a complaints review panel. This is 2 more than the previous year.

3.9 The Ombudsman received 14 complaints regarding Adult Social Care. On these, 3 settlements were made to achieve a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

3.10 430 compliments were recorded, which represents an increase of 15% on the previous year.

4. Themes & Learning from Complaints

4.1 Information from complaints is an important tool for indicating where services may need adjusting and assists in the planning, development and continuous improvement of the experiences of those eligible for and receiving our services.

4.2 The main complaint themes were delay in releasing funding, quality of services and communication.

4.3 The delay in releasing funding was dominant throughout the year. The majority of complaints were about the delay in transfers from hospital and the time spent by service users waiting in residential respite units for a package of care or a move to a permanent residential/nursing home placement. Nearly all complainants referred to the stress and anxiety caused by these delays.

4.4 The attached Annual Review Report gives further details about themes and learning from complaints. Examples of learning include:

- Review of the department's charging policy for adult placement service users who receive respite in our own learning disability respite units
- That a checklist for risk management on case closures is incorporated in the revised Adult Social Care Management Manual.

5. Change

5.1 The new Local Authorities Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006 and guidance produced by the Department of Health (Learning from complaints) were implemented on 1 September 2006. These changes are intended to create greater consistency in complaints handling nationally and improve and develop a positive culture around our response to complaints locally. Changes include alterations to timescales, the range of what can be complained about and a change in the membership of the review panel. Key objectives and changes are set out in the Appendix of the Annual Review report.

6. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

6.1 The Complaints Procedure Directions 1990 states that the Council will monitor the operation of the complaints procedure. The Representations Procedure guidance states that an annual report dealing with the operation of the complaints procedure should be compiled and presented to an appropriate committee. This is the annual report for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

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Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: Annual Review on Complaints, Compliments and Comments
2005/06



Adult Social Care

Comments, Compliments, Complaints

Annual Report

2005 - 2006

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1. Introduction

Adult Social Care works with and serves a large number of vulnerable people throughout the County. The Department provides and arranges a wide range of support services to enable people with care needs to stay in their own homes and when this is not possible will support residential or nursing care. The services provided relate to the personal care and confidential circumstances of individuals and their families, often at difficult times in their lives.

The Department is committed to providing quality services but also recognises that, given the nature of the services it provides, sometimes things can go wrong. The complaints procedure provides us with a mechanism for identifying problems, resolving issues and improving services. The analysis of information about complaints at each stage of the procedure, gives the department an opportunity to reflect on the quality of the services it provides to our service users and consider how well it listens and responds to their needs.

The numbers of compliments received by the Department provide valuable information regarding the quality of our services.

Adult Social Care is required by law to have a complaints procedure. The procedure has three stages but there is a strong emphasis on the resolution of complaints at the earliest possible opportunity.

The three stages are:

- Local resolution – stage one
- Formal investigation – stage two
- Complaints review panel – stage three

If the complainants are still dissatisfied, they may take their complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman.

It is also a statutory requirement that a report on the operation and effectiveness of our complaints procedure is produced annually.

This report will therefore look at the complaints, comments and compliments received by Adult Social Care during 2005 - 06 and identify what we have learnt from them. In addition, it will look at the complaints and compliments received by Financial and Business Support (FABS) services, which are integral to the provision of community care services. The report will also provide an update on the implementation of the new Local Authority Social Services Complaints Regulations (2006).

2. Who Complained?

The complaints procedure aims to be as accessible as possible. The Department publicises information about how to make a complaint in its leaflet 'Comments, Compliments and Complaints' and has a specific leaflet available for people with learning disabilities.

Complaints can be made in person, by telephone, in writing, by text or email, either directly to the team or to the Complaints Unit; whichever is easiest.

All service users, whatever their circumstances, should feel able to make a complaint. Last year the Complaints Unit reported that it was in the process of developing its monitoring of equalities data and this work goes on.

Of the complaints made during the year, 74% of complaints were made on behalf of service users. The sons and daughters of service users made almost half of these complaints, but others include spouses, parents, advocates and neighbours.

Independent advocacy providers were recorded as assisting 6 service users to make a complaint. Advocacy services however, are not necessarily in direct contact with the Department about complaints but they do provide information,

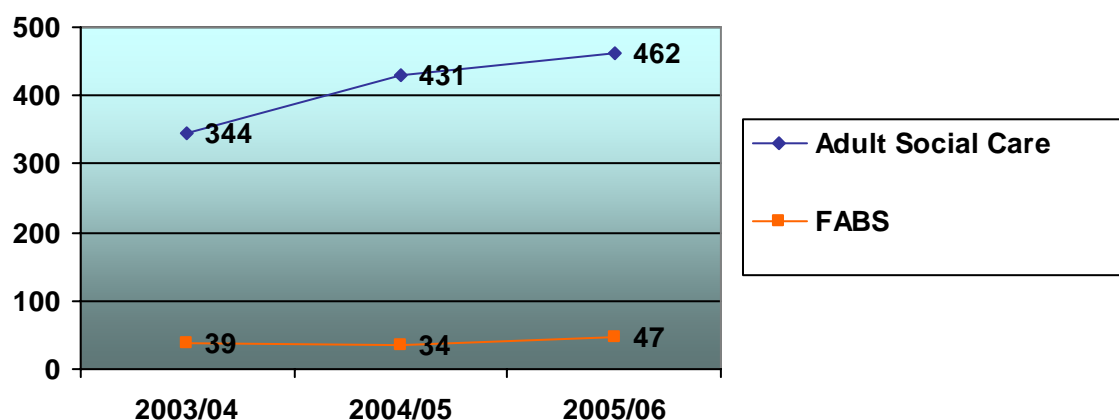
guidance and support to service users to assist them to exercise their right to comment or complain about local authority services.

Information about the service users' ethnicity was known in 372 cases. 96% of complaints were made about service users who were White British. 79% of complaints made were in relation to older people.

3. Overview of Complaints

Between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2006, Adult Social Care and Finance and Business Support (FABS) received 509 complaints, at all stages of the procedure.

3.1 Total number of complaints received



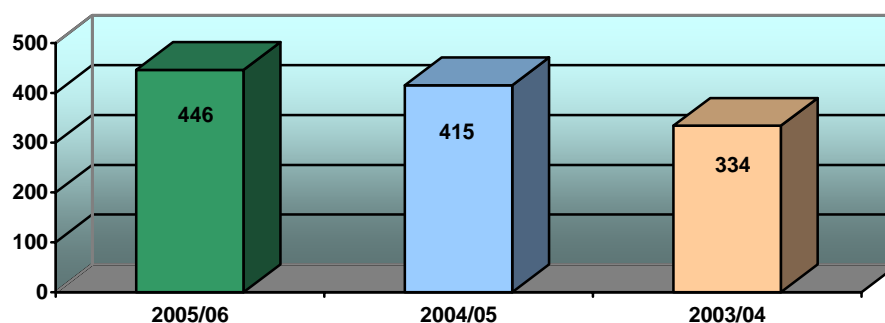
3.2 Complaints broken down by stages

Service	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Adult Social Care	446	11	5
Finance and Business Support	47	0	0

4. Local Resolution (Stage 1)

Adult Social Care

4.1 Number of complaints received at stage 1

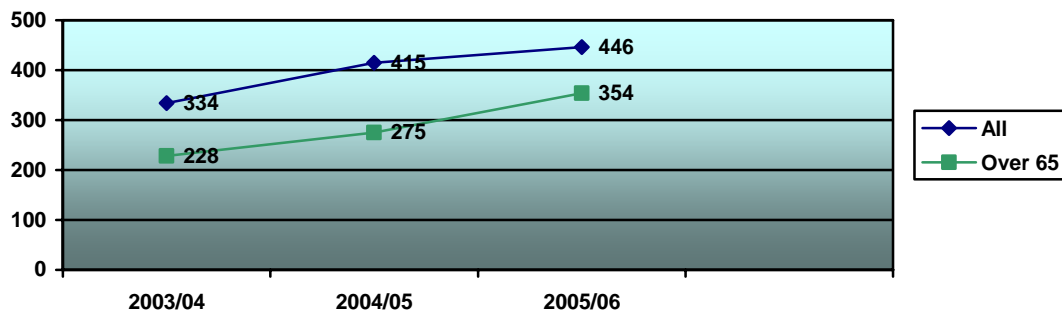


446 complaints about Adult Social Care services were received during the year. This presents a 7% increase in the total amount of complaints received at stage 1 over those received last year (415).

Of these, 97% were resolved locally. This reflects the Department's commitment to achieve resolution as quickly and as close to service delivery as possible.

It is important to acknowledge that the emphasis that is placed on this part of the process involves time and effort, particularly as complaints are often complex and sensitive. However, it is clear that the high level of input required of staff and their managers does generally result in far more satisfactory outcomes for the complainant and the Department

4.2 How many complaints were about services for people who are over 65 years?



Of the 446 complaints received, 354 (79%) of complaints made were in relation to older people; a 13% increase from last year.

4.3 Complaints by service

The table below sets out the number of complaints recorded for each service

Adult Social Care Services	Number of complaints
Blue Car Badges	3
Duty and Assessment Teams	6
Day Care- In House	8
Emergency Duty Service	3
Home Care- In House	6
Home Care – Independent	6
Hospitals	147
Assessment and Care Management Teams	110
Learning Disability Assessment and Care Management	7
Learning Disability Day Care	6
Learning Disability Community Support; Residential Respite	21
Living at Home Programme	1
Mental Health <65	27
Mental Health >65	51
Physical Disability Assessment; Adaptations/ Daily Living Equipment	17
Residential – In House	14
Residential – Independent	1
Respite	5
Sensory Locality Services	2
Social Care Direct	5
Total	446

4.4 What were the complaints about?

The main themes of complaints in 2005/06 were:

- Delay in funding services
- Quality of services
- Communication

Types of Complaints	No. of complaints 2005 - 06	No. of complaints 2004 - 05
Funding issues	204	156
Service Provision (response to referral; assessment and outcome; eligibility)	78	78
Service Delivery (quality and communication)	117	107
Staff Response	24	30
Behaviour of others	2	6
Independent sector complaints	12	31
Equalities	2	1
Policy (general)	7	6
TOTAL	446	415

4.4.1 Delay in releasing funding for services

Regrettably, throughout this year, the demand for funding for services has been greater than available resources. Of the 446 complaints received 204 related to funding issues, of which 199 were specifically regarding delay in releasing funding.

This is reflected in the significant rise in complaints received by the Assessment and Care Management Teams, Hospital teams and Older Peoples Community Mental Health Teams. These teams are responsible for identifying and organising services and this includes the funding application process.

Funding complaints received by Assessment and Care Management Services

Team		Complaints Funding Delays	% of actual complaints received
Hospital Teams		117	80%
Assessment & Care Management Teams		52	47%
LD Services		2	37%
MH Services	under 65	1	5%
	over 65	27	53%
Total		199	45%

These complaints were mainly about the delay in transfers from hospital and the time spent by service users waiting in residential respite units or community hospitals for a care package or a move to a permanent residential/nursing home placement. Delay in receiving funding for direct payments for services was also an issue for some people.

This reflects one of the key challenges faced by Adult Social Care in terms of rising demand for services set against the limited availability of resources.

It is important to note that at the time of writing, the County Council has set aside significant new investment in order to make sure our services continue to get better and to meet the challenges that we face. Alongside this investment, Adult Social Care has developed a three year plan, starting from 2007/08, which sets out a significant programme of change that will affect all the services we deliver and help us be more productive and efficient.

4.4.2 Other themes

Other issues for the assessment and care and management teams related to users' perception of the assessment process and not receiving the outcome that they wished for, including their choice of service or feeling that the amount of support provided was insufficient.

Complaints about service delivery presented an increase of 9% over last year. These covered a range of issues, many of which related to the quality of

services provided falling below expectation or feelings that staff were providing inadequate or not enough care.

Communication issues continue to feature in many service users and carer's dissatisfaction with services. For example, when people were unhappy and frustrated with the delays in getting services in place, they wanted to know how long they would be expected to wait and to be kept up to date with the situation. Some service users and carers were unhappy with the attitude of staff and felt that they had not been listened to properly or their views had been ignored.

Complaints received by the unit about independent sector providers showed a significant decrease from last year. However, in relation to home care agencies, user feedback forms have indicated that there are still concerns about missed calls, timekeeping and inconsistency of care workers. The Contracts and Purchasing Unit is involved in taking up the issues with the appropriate provider both on an individual level and by the regular monitoring of contractual arrangements. This is an area that has had significant attention over the year. Links with the complaints unit have been strengthened to ensure that these concerns however received, are dealt with as necessary.

4.5 How many complaints about were upheld?

Out of the 242 complaints that were not related to funding, 26% of the complaints were upheld, 35% were partially upheld and 39% were not upheld.

Of the 204 complaints received about funding, 181 (89%) were upheld.

4.6 How long did it take to reply to complaints?

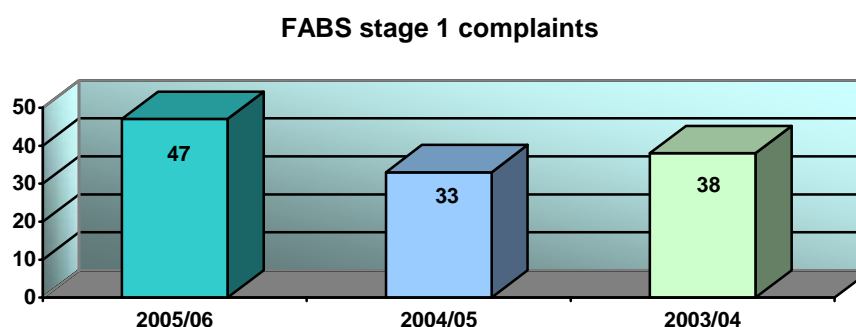
The target time for responding to complaints at the Local Resolution stage is 15 working days (21 calendar days).

73% of complaints received a response within the timescales, with an average time of 12 calendar days. This is well within the 21-day timescale and demonstrated an improvement of 4 days on last years average response time of 16 days. This improvement is positive and again, demonstrates the department's commitment to respond quickly to concerns.

5. Local Resolution (Stage 1)

Financial and Business Support

Financial and Business Support (FABS) recorded 47 Complaints for 2005/06, an increase of 30% from last year.



5.1 What were the complaints about?

Types of Complaints	No. of complaints 2005/06	No. of complaints 2004/05
Invoicing (query, error or arrangements)	9	6
Poor quality service	5	4
Delay	8	9
Assessment (outcome and quality)	2	5
Agreements/procedures not followed	0	1
Poor communication	3	1
Inappropriate action	7	1
Unwelcome decision	6	2
Charges	6	5
Information/records inaccurate	1	0

Whilst there is no one key theme for FABS complaints, in most instances complainants felt that they had been given inadequate or incorrect information

about charges for services. Otherwise complaints were about delays in receiving information.

5.2 How long did it take to reply to complaints?

77% of complaints were responded to within the 21 calendar day timescale. This represents a significant improvement on last year.

6. Formal Investigation (Stage 2)

There were 11 formal investigations in 2005/06 directly related to Adult Social Care and 1 formal investigation about transition from Children's Services to Adult Social Care that spanned both Departments.

Service Area	Number of formal investigations
Learning Disability Services	2
Mental Health Teams	2 (1 working age and 1 older people)
Social Care – Assessment & Care Management	5
Social Care - Hospital	2
Supporting People Team	1

In 2005/06 all of the investigations were carried out by external Investigating Officers. One investigation required an Independent Person to be appointed. Whilst this is not a requirement of the procedure, in instances where the service user is vulnerable and/or there are complex issues, it is considered good practice that an Independent Person monitor the investigation to ensure that it is fair and thorough.

At this stage of the procedure the complaints are usually complex, covering a range of issues.

The main themes were:

- Issues about partnership working between Education, Children's Services and Adult Social Care and the differing agencies status in contributing to the decision making process
- Decisions being delayed leading to uncertainty and anxiety for carers
- Timely information about charges for services
- Case transfer from the Assessment and Care Management Team to Mental Health Services for Working Age Adults
- Carer's views being taken into account
- Choice of respite provision for Adult Placement Service Users
- Provision of alternative or appropriate services when a placement breaks down or a transfer was required

In all instances, recommendations were made to the department in order to achieve improvements in services. Examples of the learning from formal investigations are:

- Protocol to be developed for transfer between Assessment & Care Management Teams and Mental Health Services
- A review of the department's charging policy for adult placement service users who receive respite in its own learning disability respite units
- Information about the transition process needs to be developed
- To improve systems used by administrative staff to record phone calls and messages received from external callers
- The need for accurate and comprehensive case file recording
- That explicit responsibility for random checks by supervisors on case file recording is incorporated in the current staff supervision policy
- That a checklist for risk management on case closures is incorporated in the revised Adult Social Care Management Manual

- That the department work with health colleagues to ensure that any individual with a dementia type illness has been fully assessed by a suitably qualified mental health professional
- Distinction between Adult protection meetings need to be clarified and notes of these meetings need to be improved

The statutory timescale for completing an investigation and sending a response to the complaint is 28 working days with a maximum of 3 months if the complaint is complex. In 2005/06, it took an average of 63 days to complete and send a response to the investigation. However, given the complexity of the complaints at this stage, the timescale often has to be extended.

7. Complaints Review Panels (Stage 3)

Review Panels are chaired by an Independent Chairperson, who is joined by an Elected Member and an Assistant Director. Complainants and the Department's Representatives are invited to make both written and verbal presentations to the Panel Members and there is the opportunity for open discussion about the issues still in dispute. The Panel listens, reaches conclusions and makes recommendations, where appropriate, for action and remedies to the Director of Adult Social Care. A copy of the confidential Panel report is sent to the complainant and other participants. The Director considers the Panel's report and recommendations and then responds to the complainant within 28 days of the Panel meeting.

There were 5 Panels held during 2005/06, 2 more than last year.

The Panels reviewed the investigation of complaints about:

- Mental Health Services and the role and support provided by and to the Assertive Outreach Team.
- Information that is given to carer's about charges for services

- Learning Disability Services and the social care assessment, carer's assessment process and the sharing of service user's information with other agencies.
- A social care assessment and the care plan being budget led rather than needs led.

The Director agreed all the recommendations made by Panels in 2005/06.

8. Local Government Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is concerned with maladministration causing injustice and normally requires complainants to have used the Council's procedures before accepting a complaint for investigation.

The Ombudsman received 14 complaints regarding Adult Social Care services. From these we agreed 3 local settlements and were positive about how we responded to their suggestions about this. There were no Ombudsman investigations during this period.

The Ombudsman also reported good working relationships with the Council and was complimentary about the time taken to respond to their enquiries.

9. What did the Department learn from complaints?

It is crucial that there is learning from complaints at all stages of the procedure, resulting in improved services and delivery, wherever possible.

At an organisational level, learning has resulted in:

- changes to processes to ensure a timelier undertaking of financial assessments and informing service users of the assessment outcome
- a review of the protocols for joint working between Assessment and Care Management Teams and Directly Provided Services

- all decisions at Adult Protection Strategy meetings are recorded and a standing item for all strategy meetings is introduced to consider informing relatives/friends in line with the principles of recording abuse
- additional advisors being recruited to Social Care Direct to meet the high volume of calls being received

Learning at a team level has included:

- Improving communication with service users and their carers, examples are:
 - discharge procedures in respite units to include feedback to carer's and/or family members and this is recorded on discharge notes
 - systems at a day care service were reviewed to ensure that carer's were informed of any changes to services, including delays in transport
 - information that is communicated to service users that is given over the phone is followed up in writing
 - ensuring that information is given to users/carers about the charge for intermediate care services after 6 weeks

Other examples of team learning include:

- medication in residential units is counted weekly in order to confirm that medication has not been mismanaged
- changes to the way that respite dates are entered into records at day services
- tightening up of procedures in a respite unit when any service user sustains a fall
- handovers in a residential unit have been changed to ensure that all confidential information is locked away in a central location

Learning at an individual level has included:

- reminding staff about confidentiality and the need to maintain a professional approach at all times

- when a relative complains on behalf of a service user we cannot assume that the service user has given their authority and that we can share personal information
- importance of regularly checking peoples circumstances when they are waiting for an assessment
- the need to be sensitive to individual service users lifestyles

In relation to the independent sector:

- an independent home care provider revised their policy regarding service users failing to answer the door and now instigate their emergency procedure on every occasion
- an independent residential home has made their system for recording property more robust

10. Compliments

Compliments provide valuable information regarding the quality of services that are provided and identify where they are working well.

Teams	No. of compliments 2005/06	No. of compliments 2004/05
Independent Living Teams, Hospital & Contact Teams	91	80
Learning Disability Services	14	27
Mental Health	13	31
Physical Disability	24	29
Sensory Impairment	11	32
Older People Services	156	97
Home Care	58	54
FABS	63	16
Total	430	366

The number of compliments recorded in 2005/06 were higher than last year.

The following are examples of some of the compliments received:

"The assessor was genuinely helpful and understanding of their situation and a credit to Social Services"

"Many thanks for your prompt response to my request for a stair rail. It has made a huge difference to my quality of life"

"My Aunt has had the assistance of your staff for many years. She has greatly appreciated and indeed welcomed the staff you have supplied. She could not have stayed in her own home without them."

"Many, many thanks for all you have done for my sister and me to get the funding for our mother. Your kindness and understanding have been a great help to us."

"Thank you for your department's prompt and efficient service in the matters of my fathers blue badge. The speed with which this was dealt with was very helpful."

"Thank you for helping my parents. Your efforts, support and co-operation have made it possible for them to be where they can be properly looked after."

"I would like to thank you for all your help, you never fail me."

"I feel so much more confident and less isolated at home on my own now. I can go into the garden without missing the phone or the doorbell, thank you for your help."

"Most grateful for the help and considerate way you dealt with my queries."

"We felt supported and our meeting was productive, with a high level of professionalism."

"Thank you for all your help getting me back on my feet. Thanks so much."

"You have made what could have been a difficult situation very easy."

"The services received were second to none."

"The voucher scheme was most useful in enabling me to have a break from time to time and I wish the scheme every continued success."

11. Consultation

People who use the complaints procedure are routinely asked about their views about the complaints procedure. Whilst not all survey questions were answered, the comments received indicate that most people feel well informed about the procedure and have found staff helpful and responsive in dealing with their concerns. Generally complainants wanted their experience to inform and improve service delivery.

Preparation for the report included consultation with those who have an interest in promoting the procedure or support service users to access it. This included a wide range of voluntary organisations, Independent People, external Investigating Officers, those involved in Complaints Review Panels. Team Managers, Operations Managers, Heads of Service and Assistant Directors throughout the department were also asked their views.

In total, 30 responses were received. From these it was evident that the complaints procedure was well known and the support provided by the Complaints Unit, at all stages of the procedure, was considered helpful.

12. New Complaints Regulations for Adult Social Care

The new Local Authorities Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations, 2006 and guidance produced by the DoH (Learning from Complaints) were delayed throughout 2005/06.

The new procedures were implemented on 1 September 2006. Clearly this is after the period covered by the report, however a summary of the changes has been included to ensure awareness of the changes.

The new regulations and guidance are intended to create greater consistency in complaints handling nationally and to improve and develop a positive culture around our response to complaints locally. Changes include alterations to timescales, the range of what can be complained about and who can complain and a change in the membership of complaints review panels. Key objectives and changes are set out in the Appendix.

These regulations and guidance are complimented by the National Health Service (Complaints) Amendment Regulations 2006 (SI 2006 N0.2084) and the Department of Health Guidance – Supporting Staff, Improving Services.

13. Future Developments

The focus for the coming year will be in implementing the new regulations and assessing the impact of these.

14. Conclusion

It is important to have in place effective and accessible means for service users' comments and complaints to be heard, and responses to be made. The complaints procedure provides this opportunity.

Regrettably, things can and do go wrong and with resources stretched and prioritised to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, complaints will be made. However, this year's report shows how comments, complaints and compliments can influence service development and improve services.

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Appendix

The Reform Agenda - Key Objectives and Changes

1. The **objectives** of the reform across adult social care services are to:
 - ensure the service user is central to the process, promoting and safeguarding their welfare
 - ensure young people are able to make their views known about services, without framing their comments as complaints
 - ensure greater consistency across local authorities
 - ensure commitment to resolve concerns swiftly and locally through clearer timescales
 - promote support through advocacy for people who are vulnerable or find it hard to voice concerns
 - promote a listening and learning culture; developing partnership working with service users, where complaints are part of a systematic quality assurance system that influences and improves services
2. The key **changes** to the procedure are as follows:

Stage 1 – local resolution

- Introduction of a 12 month time limit to make complaints
- An expectation that most complaints are responded to and concluded within 10 working days (formerly 15 working days)
- This can be extended to a further 10 days if the complaint is complex or an advocate needs to be appointed
- The maximum amount of time that stage 1 should take is 20 working days
- The Complaints Manager should inform the complainant of their right to move to stage 2 of the procedure if the timescale for stage 1 has elapsed and they have not received a response

Stage 2 – formal investigation

- The investigation to be completed and a response sent by the adjudicating officer (usually the Head of Service) within 25 working days (formerly 28 working days)
- If this is not possible stage 2 may be extended by a further 40 days (maximum of 65 working days)
- Further consideration of the complaint after stage 2 can include, in a limited number of cases, an early referral to the Local Government Ombudsman and/or proposals for alternative dispute resolution
- The complainant has 20 working days in which to request a Review of their complaint (formerly 28 days).

Stage 3 – Review Panel

- Increased independence of the Review Panel. For adult social care, the Chairman should always be independent, as should one of the other two

panellists. The local authority can choose to use an elected member for the third panellist.

- The Panel must be arranged within 30 working days of receiving the request
- The Panel must record their findings and recommendations and notify the complainant and the Council in writing within 5 working days (formerly 24 hours)
- The Director must send the Council's response to the Panel recommendations to the complainant within 15 working days from receipt of the Panel's recommendations (formerly 28 days)

- 3 The regulations require local authorities to designate an officer, known as a Complaints Manager. This role replaces the role of Designated Complaints Officer as set out in previous guidance.
- 4 The guidance provides clarification of relationships with other procedures including health, cross boundary issues and complaints involving regulated services.
- 5 The guidance recommend links are built within the local authority's other complaints procedures, in order to develop the overall corporate obligation of the local authority to provide a high quality service.
- 6 The monitoring and reporting arrangements on complaints activity remain as previously, with the annual report now being used as part the annual Performance Assessment Framework.