

**MEETING: TRUST BOARD 16 APRIL 2008**

**TITLE: PATIENT FEEDBACK REPORT FOR OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2007**

**SUMMARY:**

The attached report provides information on complaints and the work of the Patient Advice and Liaison Service for **OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2007**. There has been a slight fall in the number of complaints this quarter but there are no apparent trends to explain this. The complaints issues raised are now analysed around the Whittington Promise. The majority of complaints concern the treatment people have received, and the attitude of individual members of staff. Concerns about cleanliness of the hospital feature the least in complaints.

All formal complaints must be responded to within 25 working days of receipt. This report is therefore produced some weeks after the end of the quarter, once all the relevant complaints have been dealt with. 85% of complaints received between October and December were responded to within time, with the year-to-date performance standing at just over 90%. The internal trust target is to achieve 90%.

The numbers of patients who are dissatisfied with the initial response to their complaint have also been reducing during 2007/8. Although the report shows that none of the complaints received during October to December have returned as dissatisfied, this may change in future reports, as there is generally a delay in patients responding to a letter from the trust, if they remain unhappy. The figures for this section are therefore confirmed one quarter in arrears.

The report also details examples of service improvements that have been instigated in response to complaints. This is not an exhaustive list but is intended to recognise the main actions that have been taken when patients have raised concerns, and will give Board members an overview of the scope of actions put in place.

There were two new requests to the Healthcare Commission for Independent Review this quarter. Three reports have been received from the Healthcare Commission, all of which were upheld with recommendations, and there are two other ongoing requests where we are waiting for a decision.

PALS are dealing with more requests than in previous quarters and the additional PALS Advisor has made a significant difference although it has only been a matter of weeks since she joined.

There were 45 formal compliment letters this quarter, which is much higher than previous quarters.

The information in this report will, in future, be included within the new dashboard performance report.

**ACTION: For information and discussion**

**REPORT FROM:** Liz Whitehurst, Information Analyst  
Pam Hanbury-Hirst, Patient Relations Manager

**SPONSORED BY:** Deborah Wheeler, Director of Nursing & Clinical Development



<b>Financial Validation</b> Lead: Director of Finance	Not applicable
<b>Compliance with statute, directions, policy, guidance</b> Lead: All directors	NHS (complaints) regulations, DH 2004 NHS (Complaints) amendments regulations, DH 2006
<b>Compliance with Healthcare Commission Core/Developmental Standards</b> Lead: Director of Nursing & Clinical Development	<b>Reference: C14</b>
<b>Compliance with Auditors' Local Evaluation standards (ALE)</b> Lead: Director of Finance	<b>Reference: N/A</b>
<b>Compliance with requirements of FT application and monitoring regime</b> Lead: Director of Strategy & Performance	<b>Reference:</b>

## 1. SUMMARY

Complaints	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Oct - Dec
<b>Complaints Received</b>					
Total complaints received	316	366	455	317	92
Total Informal complaints received	60	70	47	40	14
Total Out of Time complaints received	15	15	22	23	5
Total formal complaints received	256	296	386	254	73
Total formal complaints responded to on time	174	190	312	230	62
% Formal complaints responded to on time	67.97%	64.19%	80.83%	90.55%	84.93%
<b>Escalation of complaints</b>					
% Dissatisfied Complainants	17%	14%	8%	7%	5%
No of complaints referred to Healthcare Commission	2	11	13	2	1
No of complaints referred to Ombudsman	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Service Improvements</b>					
No of actions following on from complaints	22	14	7	34	20

PALS	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Oct - Dec
<b>Compliments Received</b>					
Total compliments received	87	88	99*	101*	45*
<b>Concerns and Enquiries</b>					
Total Concerns and other enquires handled by PALS	611	588	828*	654*	215*
Average response time for patient enquiries	1.18 Days	1.04 Days	0.98 Days*	1.02 Days*	0.97 Days*

\* PALS figures are estimated because not all cases have a date attached to them

The number of formal complaints in quarter three is very similar to the number in quarter one. For October to December 2007, we:

- ✓ Acknowledged **99%** of formal complaints within 2 working days
- ✓ Answered **85%** of formal complaints within the required standard
- ✓ The number of dissatisfied for this quarter will change should further dissatisfied letters be received relating to the quarter.

The Patient Relations Team is handling a greater volume of concerns and enquiries from patients and visitors, with a total of 654 received so far in 2007/08. The team have responded to:

- ✓ **100%** of concerns and enquiries within 1 working day

## 2. COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

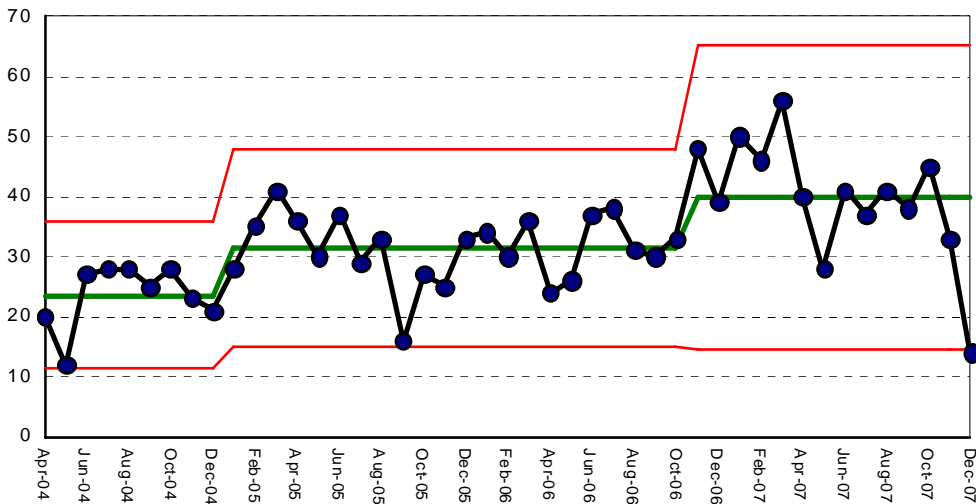
### 2.1 Total Complaints Received

Figure 1 gives the total number of complaints – formal, informal, and those designated ‘out of time’ (ie received more than six months after the event) – received each month since April 2004. Complaints that are subsequently withdrawn or where a patient has not consented to a third party complaining on their behalf have been excluded from these figures.

There have been a total of 73 complaints received in the third quarter (October-December) of 2007/08. This is a drop on the previous quarter, with December in particular seeing a significant drop in complaints received. The figures for January 2008, which will be

included in the next report were, however, higher than usual; some complaints may have been delayed in arriving due to problems with the postal service over the Christmas period.

**Figure 1: Total Complaints Received by Month Since 2004**

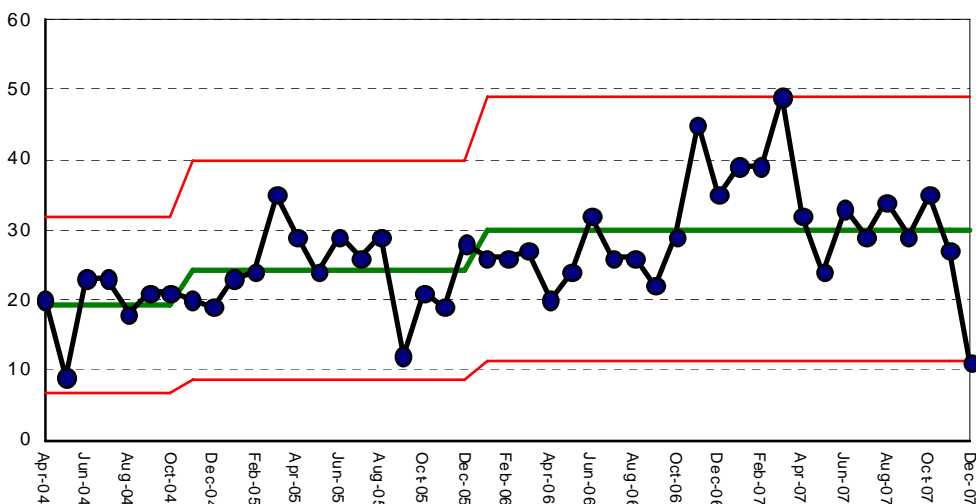


## 2.2 Management of Formal Complaints

Whilst the total picture of complaints received by the Trust is presented above, only formal complaints are monitored and reported centrally to the Department of Health. In addition to the exclusions above, monitored complaints exclude informal complaints and those received 'out of time'.

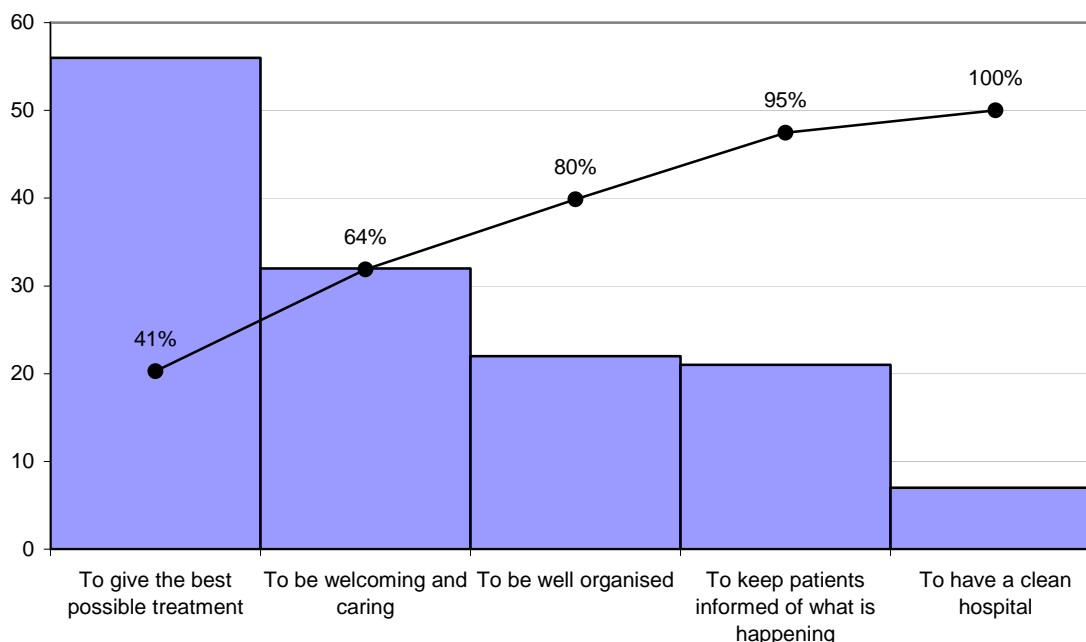
On average in 2007/08, the Trust has received 30 formal complaints each month although December 2007 is significantly lower than the average. The monthly pattern over the last three and a half years is shown below:

**Figure 2: Formal Complaints Received by Month since April 2004**



## 2.3 Formal Complaint Issues

The analysis presented below shows, for 2007/08, the issues that have been raised. The categories have been amended to match the Whittington promise. A third of formal complaints raise multiple issues and cover more than one department. In total 138 issues were logged from the 73 formal complaints in quarter 3 of 2007/08.



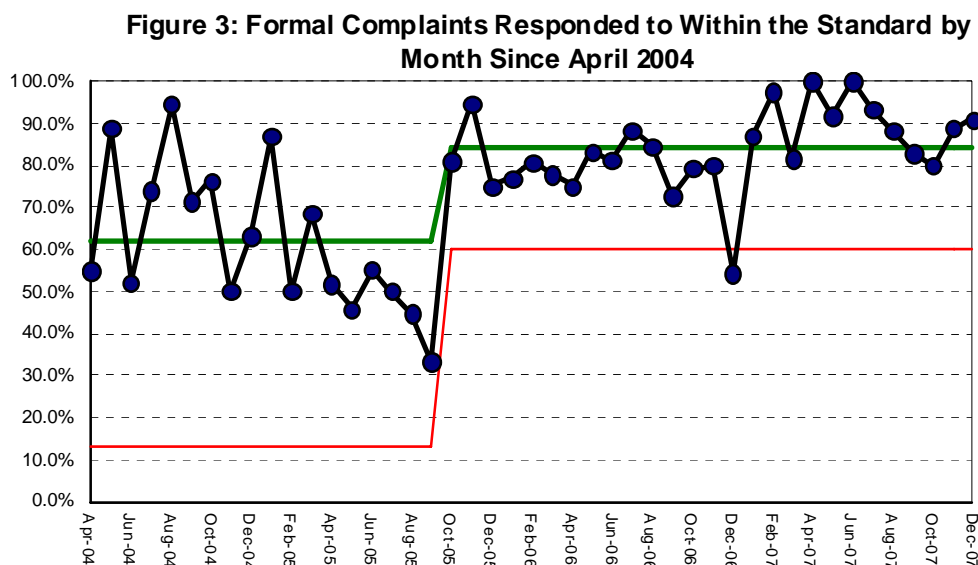
The matrix, below, shows the directorate responsible for the area or department of the complaint by the type of complaint made.

	To be welcoming and caring	To be well organised	To give the best possible treatment	To have a clean hospital	To keep patients informed of what is happening	Grand Total	%
Medicine	10	5	30	1	7	53	28.5%
Surgery	8	6	13		6	33	17.7%
Women & Children Services	3	1	8		4	16	8.6%
Diagnostic & OP's & SS's	2	5			2	9	4.8%
Facilities	1			5		6	3.2%
Medicine & Therapies	2		3			5	2.7%
All Directorates	3		1			4	2.2%
Diagnostic	2	1				3	1.6%
IM&T		3				3	1.6%
Not attributed				1	1	2	1.1%
Nurse & Clin Development	1		1			2	1.1%
Operations		1				1	0.5%
Pharmacy					1	1	0.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>138</b>	
<b>%</b>	<b>17.2%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>30.1%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>		

## 2.4 Formal Complaint Response Times

In quarter 3, the Trust has acknowledged receipt of 99% of formal complaints within 2 working days of receipt in 2007/08.

Since September 2006, the Trust has been expected to respond to formal complaints within 25 working days of receipt. The improvement attained over the last half of 2006/07 has been maintained into 2007/08. 100% of complaints were responded to within time in both April and June, although September and October saw a slight drop in performance.



The response performance by directorate for the issues raised in formal complaints in quarter 3 is presented below. Directorates are maintaining a consistently higher response rate than in previous years.

	To be welcoming and caring	To be well organised	To give the best possible treatment	To have a clean hospital	To keep patients informed of what is happening	Grand Total
Medicine	70%	80%	80%	100%	86%	79%
Surgery & Oncology	75%	83%	77%		83%	79%
Women & Children Services	100%	100%	63%		100%	81%
Diagnostic & OP's & SS's	100%	100%			100%	100%
Facilities	100%			80%		83%
Medicine & Therapies	100%		100%			100%
All Directorates	100%		100%			100%
Diagnostic	100%	100%				100%
IM&T		100%				100%
				100%	100%	100%
Nurse & Clin Development	100%		100%			100%
Operations		100%				100%
Pharmacy					100%	100%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>84%</b>

As the data in this table is based on issues raised within a complaint, the measured performance may differ slightly from the headline figure presented previously.

## 2.5 Dissatisfied Complainants

The number of dissatisfied for the first quarter, April – June 2007, has been amended from 9 to 8 as one had been counted twice. Oct-Dec figures are not yet complete, as some patients may not yet have responded back to the Trust.

	Formal Complaints	No. Dissatisfied	% Dissatisfied
Oct-Dec 2005	68	6	8.82%
Jan-Mar 2006	79	12	15.19%
Apr-Jun 2006	87	4	4.60%
Jul-Sep 2006	76	5	6.58%
Oct-Dec 2006	109	8	7.34%
Jan-Mar 2007	127	17	13.39%
Apr-Jun 2007	89	8	8.98%
Jul-Sep 2007	92	6	6.52%
Oct-Dec 2007	73		0.00%

## 2.6 Service Improvements in the last quarter

- After complaint about a porter a member of staff was disciplined
- Ongoing training of staff and monitoring of standards of care on Jeffrey Kelson Unit (JKU) .
- Disciplinary action has been taken on the JKU following complaints about poor standards of care.
- Deep cleaning of lift walls, floors and door tracks.
- Review of all surgical equipment ordering processes undertaken.
- Emergency Department (ED) doctor reviewing her management of patients who present with certain symptoms to ED.
- Collaboration with the London Development Agency to run a short nutritional course at the beginning of December. This is aimed at staff in the Food Court and is part of the Trust's training programme.
- Tea trolley taken by volunteers to clinics.
- New carry chairs have been ordered for the contract ambulances.
- Visible leadership team to pay special attention to nursing care on Reckitt, Victoria and Coyle wards.
- The availability of emergency theatre time is currently being reviewed.
- Drink vouchers given to patients in clinics when their appointments are likely to be delayed for more than one hour.
- The identification of appropriate consultation rooms for patients in wheelchairs.
- Improvements in the way in which calls are answered in the appointments office.
- In the Antenatal clinic: Increased staff training on breaking bad news  
Documentation of date results are obtained and method for obtaining these.  
Ensuring that all HIV results are recorded appropriately on the computer system in the laboratory.  
Review of the way in which women are seen to discuss abnormal findings (and timing of this compared to antenatal clinic appointments)  
Reiteration to all staff of the availability of senior support out of hours.
- Review of ophthalmology service.

## **2.7 Independent Reviews**

Two new requests for an independent review were received from the Healthcare Commission during this quarter, both relating to complaints originally made in February 2007. This makes a total of three requests received during the current financial year, compared to a total of 13 requests in 2006/7. None of the requests received so far this year have related to complaints made in 2007/8.

Three reports on completed independent reviews were received from the Healthcare Commission; all of the complaints were upheld. There were a further two independent review outcomes still awaited from the Healthcare Commission as at 31.12.07, one of which was originally sent to them in January 2007, and the second in December 2007.

### **2.7.1 Summary of Healthcare Commission findings**

#### **a. 664 – complaint upheld**

The patient complained in February 2006 about the care he received following a right total hip replacement in April 2005. He contracted an MRSA wound infection following the operation and had further surgery in May 2005 to remove the prosthesis. He had initially walked with a Zimmer frame after the hip replacement, and plans were being made to transfer him to a convalescence home, due to his other medical problems. Since contracting MRSA, the patient complained that he could no longer walk and his leg was badly scarred and disfigured.

A response was sent to the patient in May 2006, who wrote again in June as he was unhappy with the response. A meeting was held with the patient's representative in September 2006, with a further meeting in October, and a final response letter being sent in December 2006. The patient remained unhappy and contacted the Healthcare Commission, who wrote to the Whittington in January 2007. The independent review report was received on 7 September 2007, and the trust's response sent on 1 November.

The Healthcare Commission made eight recommendations, including sharing the clinical advisor's recommendations about the management of the patient's initial infection with the orthopaedic surgeons. The trust was also required to provide further information to the patient about infection control policies within the trust, incident reporting procedures and pressure ulcer management. A recommendation was also made about the complaints handling processes within the trust, which had already been actioned.

#### **b. 713 – complaint upheld**

The patient's son complained in March 2006 about the care his father had received on Montuschi ward before his death. A response was sent to his complaint on 2 May 2006, and the complainant wrote again on 18 May, as he remained unhappy. The final response letter was sent on 27 September 2006.

The request from the Healthcare Commission was received in March 2007, and the final report was sent to the trust on 9 November 2007. The Whittington's response to the Healthcare Commission's recommendations was sent to the complainant on 20 December.

The Healthcare Commission made 10 recommendations, the majority of which were concerned with how the patient's care was managed and communication with his family. These have all been addressed in the response to the complainant.

#### **c. 1134 – complaint upheld**

The patient originally complained on 28 February 2007 about the management of her back pain whilst an in-patient and subsequently as an outpatient. She was also unhappy with the physiotherapy she had received. The trust responded on 3 April, and received an email on 4 April from the patient outlining further concerns. A response to this was sent on 19 April.



The patient remained unhappy and contacted the Healthcare Commission, who requested the file from the trust on 6 November 2007. The independent review report was received on 20 December, and the trust's response to the patient was sent on 25 January 2008.

The Healthcare Commission made four recommendations, which concerned giving a more detailed explanation to the complainant on the handling of her concerns, and explaining in more detail the clinical decisions that were made about her treatment.

## 2.8 Ombudsman Inquiries

No complaints have been referred to the Ombudsman during this quarter.

## 3. COMPLIMENTS

There were 45 compliments received by the Executive Office in the third quarter of 2007/08. A breakdown of the compliments is in the table below as per the Whittington promise.

Compliment Category	Total
To give the best possible treatment	37
To be welcoming and caring	5
To be well organised	1
To have a clean hospital	2
To keep patients informed	0

The compliments received were spread amongst many wards and departments with the Emergency Department receiving nine and the Maternity Unit seven. Most of the compliments were about the treatment received from doctors and nurses, but some mentioned the cleaners, porters, imaging and reception staff.

## 4. OTHER ENQUIRIES AND PATIENT CONCERNS

The PALS staff are currently dealing with more than 200 concerns and enquiries each quarter. The current response time for ALL enquiries is 1 day or less. More than a third of all enquiries relate to appointment issues with another fifth related to efficiency.

The new part time PALS Advisor took up her post on 19 November, which means there are now two advisors in the office every day. Her appointment has meant that the PALS team can visit the wards and other areas more frequently.

