

APPENDIX 2: Adult Services Complaints and Compliments

1. Total Complaints received during the reporting period.

- 1.1 **Table 1** shows total complaints received by the complaint team for 2021-22 in respect of Adult Social Services with the previous three years of figures for comparison. The total number of Stage 1 complaints received increased by 11% in comparison with figures for the previous year.
- 1.2 Under the Social Services complaints policy, the legislative framework allows complainants to immediately request a stage 2 investigation. Though efforts to resolve complaints internally are made wherever possible, the number of stage 2 complaints for 2021-22 increased from 10 to 11.

2. Stage 1 Complaints

- 2.1. A detailed breakdown of the Stage 1 Complaints received by service area is shown in **Table 2**. Complaints need to be acknowledged within 2 working days. In 90.5% of cases where complaints proceeded to conclusion, discussions took place within 10 working days, this is higher than the previous year at 82%.
- 2.2 Complaints have been broken down by individual service teams this year, in order to provide greater clarity on specific areas where complaints are being received.

3. Stage 2 Complaints

- 3.1 Complaints are considered at Stage 2 of the complaints procedure either where the Council has not been able to resolve the issues to the complainant's satisfaction at stage 1, or the complainant has requested that the matter be immediately considered at Stage 2.
 - 3.2 Complainants are able to request that their complaint is dealt with directly at Stage 2 should they wish and is not dependent on having been investigated at stage 1 or the outcome at stage 1.
 - 3.3 An independent person is commissioned for a Stage 2 investigation and a formal report is produced. Finding resolutions and applying lessons learned is the prime objective of the complaint's procedure.
 - 3.4 **Table 3** provides a summary of the complaints handled at Stage 2 of the complaints process.
 - 3.5 The timeframe for dealing with Stage 2 complaints is 25 working days under the Social Services complaints policy, or within a reasonable time agreed with the complainant. This may be due to the complexity of a case or where enquiries could be extensive. Where an extension of time is sought this will normally only be granted with the permission of the Director of Social Services.
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In 2021-22, two stage 2 investigations were subject to extended periods of time with the Director's consent.

- 3.6 Whether the complaint is upheld or not, staff maintain confidence and a good working relationship with the service user or their representatives. There have been 11 complaints taken to Stage 2 in this reporting period compared to the 10 last year. Of the 11 complaints taken to stage 2, three were not pursued. Below is a summary of stage 2 complaints which have been upheld.

3.7 **Summary of Stage 2 complaints**

Hospital social work team

Due to family disagreements a social work capacity assessment was carried out on the complainant's husband without notifying her. The reason for this was that other family members were alleging undue influence by her on the husband. This was found not to be the case and an apology was offered that she was not made aware of the visit to her husband until after it had been carried out.

Partially Justified

Lifeline

A relative complained that her mother who was living in warden controlled accommodation had activated her lifeline and had not received a response from lifeline. There was an ongoing fault from another unit, which came through just before her mother activated the alarm. As both calls come through from the scheme, the first call had to be dealt with before moving onto the next call, causing an additional line delay of 1.19 minutes.

Justified

Community Long Term Social Work Team

Two parts to this complaint, one in relation to the lack of a carer's assessment meant that complainant had unmet needs as a carer.

Justified

The second in relation to disability related expenses.

Not Justified

Direct Payments

The delay in direct payments being made to a service user's account caused financial hardship. The findings from the investigation were used to improve processes and procedures.

Justified

Direct Payments

Complaint in respect of the service user's Direct Payments being stopped. The stage 2 complaint process did not proceed as there was an ongoing criminal matter being investigated by the police who were prosecuting for fraud.

Concurrent investigation stage 2 process closed.

Financial Issues

Complainant's mother was sent an invoice after she had passed away. Complaint withdrawn.

Withdrawn

4.0 Complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)

- 4.1 The remit of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is to identify whether a member of the public has suffered hardship or injustice through maladministration or identify where services have fallen below a reasonable standard. There is an obligation for a report to be produced on any investigation the Ombudsman accepts. Section 27 of the Ombudsman's legislation details when a report could be made public. Further details of the role of the PSOW can be found at <http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk>
- 4.2 The council received 12 queries from the Ombudsman in relation to Adult Services. Eight of these were not investigated, two complaints were referred to health, one was referred to the Council to be investigated via Stage 2 of the complaint process and one is still ongoing.

5. Reasons for complaints and their outcome

- 5.1 Further analysis of the reasons for complaints is shown in **Table 4**. Whilst service users have unique and complex individual circumstances, complaints have been grouped under 'best fit' generic headings for reporting purposes.
- 5.2 Wherever possible, lessons are learnt and improvements are made to service delivery when a complaint is upheld. 34.5% of complaints were justified/partly justified this year, an increase compared to last year at 27%.

6. Advocacy

- 6.1 Advocacy services exist to represent service recipients' views and feelings when dealing with organisations. Social Services engage in statutory arrangements to ensure the welfare of clients with mental health and learning disability needs where capacity is compromised and provide signposting to other organisations providing such services for all clients.
- 6.2 The Complaints Officer will work with groups and organisations providing advocacy services, to address issues and promote the provision of assistance to service-users through the complaints process. Effective engagement with advocacy services empowers more individuals and groups to make use of the complaints process at the earliest opportunity.

7.0 Compliments

- 7.1 Adult Services have received in excess of 96 compliments over the course of the year. At the point of service delivery, service users, relatives or friends can convey their appreciation more formally through the Comment or Compliment
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process. Set out in **Table 5** are examples of some of the compliments which have been passed to the complaints team in relation to Adult Services. The individual staff members have been made aware of the compliments concerning them, as has the Head of Service. The Director of Social Services reported compliments throughout the pandemic via mid-week briefing emails.

7.2 Compliments received are an equal reflection of individual and team efforts and Adult Services teams should be encouraged by their successes having regard to compliments received.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 All costs incurred in dealing with complaints have to be covered within existing budgets.

8.2 External Independent Investigators and Independent Persons may be appointed to deal with some complaints in accordance with legislation. The cost to the Authority of providing this service in 2020/21 for Adult & Directorate Services was **£4,532.50** (down by £7,393.75 on the previous year).

Appendices: Appendix A – Statistical Data Tables

Appendix A – Statistical data in Tables

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service Requests	27	48	32	48
Stage 1 Corporate	25	21	17	24
Stage 2 Corporate	0	0	0	0
Stage 1 Social Services	135	150	106	115
Stage 2 Social Services	4	6	10	11
Ombudsman	13	14	9	12
Totals	204	239	174	210

	Total
Bonymaen Residential Home	2
CAP MDT	3
Central Hub	1
CLDT 1	3
CLDT 2	2
CMHT 1	1
Community Initial Assessment Team	16
Contracting	28
Direct Payments	8
Financial issues	5
Financial assessments	8
Hospital social work team	6
Lifeline	2
Long term care and complex team	17
Maesglas Residential Service	2
North Hub	1
Occupational Therapy	3
Older People Team	1
Older People Community MH	1
Referred to Other Agency	4
Rapid Discharge Team	3
Safeguarding	3
Transition Team	1
Transport	1
Ty Waunarlwydd Residential home	1
Unknown	14
West Hub	2
Total number of Stage 1 complaints (includes corporate)	139

Table 3 – Stage 2 Social Services complaints by Service Area		Total
Service	Outcome	ID
CLDT 1	Not upheld	262406
Direct Payments	Concurrent investigation (criminal)	264674
Direct Payments	Upheld	263139
Financial Assessments	Not upheld	262004
Financial Assessments	Partially upheld	262670
Financial Assessments	Not Pursued	261910
Hospital social work team	Partially upheld	260819
Lifeline	Upheld	262262
Finance Team	Withdrawn	260768
Safeguarding	Not Pursued	259180
Safeguarding	Not Upheld	262296

Table 4 Main Reason for Complaints and their outcome	Justified	Not Justified	Partially Justified	Not Pursued	Local resolution (within 24 hours)	Impasse	Dept to Respond Outcome unknown	For Information	Withdrawn	Not Eligible	Referred to NHS	For info	Directed to another Forum	Referred to another Agency	Referred to POVA	Referred for New Assessment	Escalated to Stage 2	Not investigated Historical	Matter in court	Referred to provider
Breach of Confidentiality	1																			
Change in Care Plan																				
Delay in hospital discharge	3		1																	
Delay in assessment	5	1									1					1				
Delay in care package	1																			
Delay in financial assessment	1																			
Delay in service after assessment	3		1	1							1									
Deviating from care plan	1																			
Direct Payments	5			2	1											1				
Disagree with info held																				
Dissatisfaction with assessment	1	1		3					1											
Eligibility Criteria																				
Excessive waiting time																				
Financial Errors	1																			
Financial issues	4	2		1						1										
Lack of carers																				
Lack of consultation/involvement																				
Lack of support				1					1	1										
Misconduct of staff															1					
Not following procedure/policy	1													1						

Poor Communication	4	1	1		2															
Poor standard of care	1										1									
Request for placement move																				
Safeguarding concerns																				
Staff attitude		2																		
Unhappy with action taken	5		3	3			1		2	5	1			1			1	1		
Unhappy with charges levied		4	1					1	1											
Unhappy with decision		2	2			2					1			1					1	
Unhappy with level of service	6	2	2	2	1	1		1				1		1					1	
Unhappy with response																				
Unknown				14								4								
Withdrawal of service																				
Totals	43	15	11	27	4	3	1	2	5	6	5	5	0	3	2	2	1	2	0	2

Table 5 – Examples of Compliments Received	
Teams	Compliments Received
Common Access Point	CAP MDT have been praised by the daughter of a gentleman they have been supporting. The daughter said: "A huge thank you for all your help last week with my dad - I am enormously grateful for all your hard work in pulling off what felt like a miracle! And for being so lovely and supportive and understanding.
Hospital Social Work Team	Social Worker in the Hospital Social Work Team at Morriston has been praised by a family member for her work supporting a gentleman at the end of this life. The son wrote: "I will always be very grateful for all the efforts you made before Christmas, at a busy time for you, in getting him discharged and into the care home so that he could come up to see us at Christmas time. It was the last time I saw him and without your help, it would not have been possible".
Community Initial Assessment Team	Social Worker in the Community Initial Assessment Team has been praised by the son of a service user she was working with. The son said: "SW has been absolutely brilliant and took all the worry away from me". Sandra, you did an excellent job in extremely time-limited circumstances! Well done.
Direct Payments	Direct Payment advisor in the Direct Payments Team has received the following message from a son of one of our DP recipients: "Thank you very much A, your service has been brilliant, and we could not praise you enough".
Homecare	A daughter has contacted us to thank Community Care Assistant M and the Homecare Team for the excellent care they have been providing to her mother.
Safeguarding	A gentleman has written to thank H in the Safeguarding Team for supporting him to care for his wife at home. The gentleman wrote: "I am writing with great sadness and devastation to let you know that my dear wife recently passed away at home. You probably know but I still want to write to say that I will never ever find words to express my gratitude to you. Your help and support have been immeasurable. Setting us up so professionally on the right course from the very beginning and the support you kindly and generously provided throughout our ordeal were incredible. I thank you from the bottom of my broken heart. Very best wishes for a bright future at work and very happy family life".