

# Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)

## Annual Report July 1 July 2023- 31 March 2023

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#### **1. Introduction**

The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 require that each 'Responsible Body' produces an Annual Complaints Report and submits it to the Department of Health and Social Care. Regulation 18 sets out what the report must cover. This report satisfies those requirements for NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)

#### **2. Complaints and MP Letters – Background and Introduction**

All patients or their representatives who are dissatisfied with a service that is funded or provided by the NHS have a right to make a complaint. Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB actively encourage patients and their families to complain when they are unhappy with the service, care, or treatment they receive. Some patients complain to the ICB about something we have done or a decision we have made. Others will have a choice about whether to complain directly to the provider of their care services or to the commissioner.

This means people who use a range of services in our local hospitals, health centres or in their own homes could choose to make a complaint to the ICB. The role of commissioners is set out in the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 and is reinforced by national guidance. NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB has published a Complaint Policy which is designed to support us to ensure that all complaints are well managed; the learning from complaints is identified and used for improvement; and complaints services are accessible, open, and transparent.

We explain how to complain to us on our website and we offer patients the choice to complain by telephone, post, email, or an online form.

We also receive correspondence from our local MPs. This comes in three distinct types. Firstly, enquiries that come directly from MPs about any aspect of local health policy, funding, or services. These enquiries are responded to in a letter with the information and explanations requested. Secondly, some constituents approach their MP with an enquiry or concern about their NHS care and these are forwarded to the ICB for us to respond. Thirdly, our residents make formal complaints through their MPs. We treat these in the same way as a complaint directly from a patient and they are investigated and responded to in line with the legislation.

### 3. Complaints

The table below shows the number of complaints and MP letters relating to individuals received from the inception of the ICB on 1 July 2022 and March 2023 by quarter.

Quarter	Complaints	MP Letters
Quarter Two	138	77
Quarter Three	130	55
Quarter Four	114	68
<b>Total for ICB</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>200</b>

### 4. Complaint and MP Outcomes

227 complaints and 151 MP enquiries were concluded between July 2022- March 2023 . Some of these are resolved informally without a response letter and some result in an administrative closure, for example where we do not secure consent, or the complaint is responded to by another organisation.

Outcome of Complaints	Number
Complaint Not Upheld	67
Complaint Partially Upheld	34
Complaint Upheld	31
<b>Totals</b>	<b>132</b>

Of the 132 complaints with these recorded outcomes, 67 were not upheld and 65 either fully or partly upheld. The Regulations require that we report the number of complaints that are 'well founded' in

the Annual Report. For these purposes, we consider that complaints that are fully or partly upheld meet that definition. This decision is made by each complaint handler with support from their manager and recorded on the complaint file.

## 5. Complaints Performance

We currently measure breaches of the statutory limits of three days to acknowledge a complaint and 26 weeks to respond. The Patient Experience service is the single point of contact for complainants and their representatives, and the service keep them updated throughout.

Indicator	Total
Breaches of acknowledgment within 3 working days	9
Breaches of duty to respond within 6 months	12

## 6. Patient Advice and Liaison Service

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is an informal, confidential, help and advice service for patients, their families, and unpaid carers. It helps people when they need advice, have concerns, or do not know where to turn. It can help to prevent lengthy formal complaints by swift action to resolve concerns. PALS can help with queries about the full breadth of services commissioned by the ICB. Our PALS team can be contacted in a variety of ways and between 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023, we received 657 PALS enquiries.

## 7. Learning from Complaints

Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve. When we resolve a case we always try to identify tangible changes as a result of a complaint. This could be a change for that individual patient or a wider improvement to a service. We share it with complainants as part of the response letter and it is held on the complaint file. During 2023/24 we plan more work to capture and implement learning from dissatisfied patients. Examples of learning from complaints resolved in 2022/23 are below:

You Said	We did
I am concerned about the difficulties my three elderly relatives have experienced when trying to access GP care when they live in a care home setting. I believe this is a wider problem experienced by many other patients.	We contacted the care home on receipt of your concerns to ensure no immediate clinical intervention was required. Our Vulnerable Adult Lead also spoke at length to the Care Home Manager and the GP practice to better understand the issue. The matter has also been escalated to the PCN Clinical Lead. As an ICB, we will remain in discussion with all parties to ensure a consistent approach to the Enhanced Healthcare in Care Homes (EHCH) by all PCNs aligned to the delivery model in Lancashire and South Cumbria.
It was very difficult to find out where my 10-year-old son could receive a COVID-19 booster vaccine. When I did attend a site, they redirected me somewhere else.	We acknowledged the frustration this experience caused and provided further explanation as to why the initial site was unable to offer your son a vaccine. We also

	acknowledged that our website did not clearly explain how patients could locate and access an appropriate COVID-19 vaccine for each age group. We have now updated our website to allow patients to search for this information.
I dispute the way my mother's CHC reimbursement has been calculated and believe there are outstanding funds which have not been taken into consideration.	We extended our apologies for any confusion caused and provided a detailed breakdown as to how the reimbursement calculation had been reached. We accepted that you had not been appropriately informed that we had withheld 20% of the indexation element and the reasons for this. We have therefore fed this back to staff and amended our reimbursement letters to include the information about HMRC deductions to ensure calculations are fully understood.

## 8. The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsmen (PHSO)

The complaints process in England has two stages. The first is called 'local resolution' and includes our complaint response, any meetings we hold with complainants and cases that are reopened and considered a second time. When local resolution comes to an end every complainant has a right to approach the PHSO to request a review of any aspect of how a complaint was handled. The PHSO will then decide whether to consider the case or not.

No cases were sent to the PHSO between 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023.

## 9. Summary

This report is a short summary of activity and outcomes for 2022/23. Our Patient Experience team changed from 1 July 2023 to become a single, unified service made up staff transferred from NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit and NHS England. The scope of the service also extended to encompass complaints about Primary Care made to the commissioner. Our 2023/24 annual report will have additional analysis and a greater focus on learning.