

Publication Report



NHS Complaints Statistics

Scotland 2011/12

Publication date – 25 September 2012



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Introduction

The NHS Complaints system can be a powerful driver for change, both for individual complainants and for the wider NHS. It is the key feedback mechanism for patients and epitomises the culture of person-centredness, reflective learning and quality improvement which is a cornerstone of the Healthcare Quality Strategy for NHS Scotland.

The NHS complaints procedure was introduced in April 1996, with a subsequent revision in April 2005 - with the purpose of providing a simple, flexible, impartial and easily accessible system for the public as well as being fair to NHS practitioners and staff.

Complaints about the NHS are a valuable way of identifying issues and areas in need of change within the service. Acknowledging these issues and taking steps to rectify associated problems is vital in creating an open and honest NHS. In order to make a complaints management process truly effective, front-line staff, managers and executive officers need to have defined responsibilities in relation to promoting feedback from patients and to take ownership of complaints when they arise. It is crucial that complaints intelligence drives the search for improvement in the organisation and does not act as a mechanism for apportioning blame.

The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011 introduced a right to give feedback, make comments, raise concerns or make complaints about the health care received from the NHS in Scotland. Secondary legislation to support the implementation of the Act came into force on 1 April 2012 and revised Good Practice Guidance was issued to the NHS in March 2012. Further details on the new complaints procedure is available in Appendix A1. This makes NHS Boards directly responsible for the collection, monitoring and reporting of complaints received in relation to services they provide and places additional responsibility on Boards for the collection and monitoring of complaints received by their Family Health service providers. These changes are effective from April 2012 and do not impact on the statistics reported in this publication. However, this means there will be a change in the level of detail reported for Family Health Services. Details of the proposed changes to reporting are currently under review and the impact and outcome of national reporting will be made available on the ISD website.

Data presented in this publication includes:

- the number of complaints received;
- the time taken to deal with complaints;
- issues raised in complaints;
- staff groups who were the subject of complaints; and,
- the outcome of complaints.

The latest reporting year relates to complaints received between 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2012. These data are presented for NHS Boards and Special Boards (e.g. Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS 24). Family Health Services data within this report are restricted to the volume of complaints received by primary care service providers and is presented on the basis of NHS Boards.

NHS Boards submit their hospital complaints data to ISD after the end of each quarter of the financial year. These data are validated by ISD and checked with individual boards after submission. The Family Health Services statistics relating to GP and dental services are collated via an aggregated annual return of the total number of complaints made during the previous financial year.

It was decided from 2006/07, all Special Boards and a number of National and Support Organisations would submit complaints data to ISD at the end of each financial year. Below is a list of links to the websites of these organisations if further information is required:

- [Scottish Ambulance Service](#)
- [NHS 24](#)
- [Scottish National Blood transfusion Service](#)
- [The State Hospital for Scotland](#)
- [The National Waiting Times Centre](#)
- [NHS Education for Scotland](#)
- [NHS Health Scotland](#)
- [NHS Healthcare Improvement Scotland](#)
- [NHS National Services Scotland](#)
- [Scottish Health Council](#)

Key points

Hospital and Community Health Services, April 2011 – March 2012

- There was a 15% rise in Hospital and Community complaints received with 8,117 in 2011/12 compared to 7,055 in 2010/11. This is the largest increase since the revision of the complaints procedure in April 2005.
- Of the 8,117 complaints made about Hospital & Community Health Services in 2011/12, 6,235 (77%) related to the Hospital acute service group.
- The number of complaints relating to Hospital Acute Services rose from 5,217 during 2010/11 to 6,235 in 2011/12; this represents a 20% increase. Within this category and over the same period, percentage increases in the number of complaints relating to Inpatients, Day Cases, Outpatients and Accident and Emergency were 14%, 24%, 22% and 26% respectively.
- The percentage of complaints acknowledged within the national target timescale of three working days from receipt was 90%, the lowest since the revision of the complaints procedure in April 2005. This compares to 96% in 2010/11.
- The percentage of complaints dealt with within the national target of 20 working days was 65%, slightly lower than that achieved in 2010/11 (68%).
- The median time taken to deal with complaints was 19 working days in 2011/12, consistent with 2010/11.
- There was a 15% rise in number of issues raised by complainants with 11,472 in 2011/12 compared to 9,980 in 2010/11.
- The most prevalent issue raised in 2011/12 complaints was 'Treatment' (36%), followed by 'Staff' (33%), 'Environment/domestic' (11%) and Waiting Times (10%).
- Nurses, midwives and health visitors remain the most prevalent group of all Staff Issues (41%) followed by medical and dental staff (37%).
- In 2011/12, 27% of complaints were fully upheld, 33% were partially upheld and 38% were not upheld.
- There has been a 15% increase in the number of complaints received between 2010/11 and 2011/12, the number of complaints upheld or partially upheld has increased by 12%.

Family Health Services, April 2011 – March 2012

- In total the number of complaints about Family Health Services in 2011/12 was 3,538. Excluding NHS Highland, which was unavailable for 2010/11, there were 3,483 complaints for comparison purposes in 2011/12. This represents an increase of 8% since 2010/11. The majority of the increase relates to medical complaints, rising by 9%. This compares to a 1% increase in dental complaints over the same period.
- In 2011/12 84% of Family Health Service complaints related to the medical service area.

Special Boards, National & Support Organisations, April 2011 – March 2012

- The total number of complaints relating to the Special Health Boards and National & Support organisations was 693 in 2011/12, a 15% reduction since 2010/11.
- For the second year in succession there has been a large decrease in the number of complaints to the Scottish Ambulance Service; 214 during 2011/12 compared to 374 in 2010/11. This represents a 43% decrease.
- Complaints to the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service reduced by 10% (256 in 2010/11 to 231 in 2011/12).

- The number of complaints to NHS24 increased slightly in 2011/12; 88 complaints were recorded, compared to 71 in 2010/11. This represents a 24% increase.
- The number of complaints to the National Waiting Times Centre decreased for the second consecutive year; 38 complaints were received during 2011/12 compared with 47 complaints in 2010/11. This represents a 19% decrease.
- In 2011/12 the number of complaints to the State Hospital Board for Scotland has risen to 79, compared to 42 complaints in 2010/11. This represents their highest number of complaints since 2006/07.

Results and Commentary

Hospital & Community Health Services

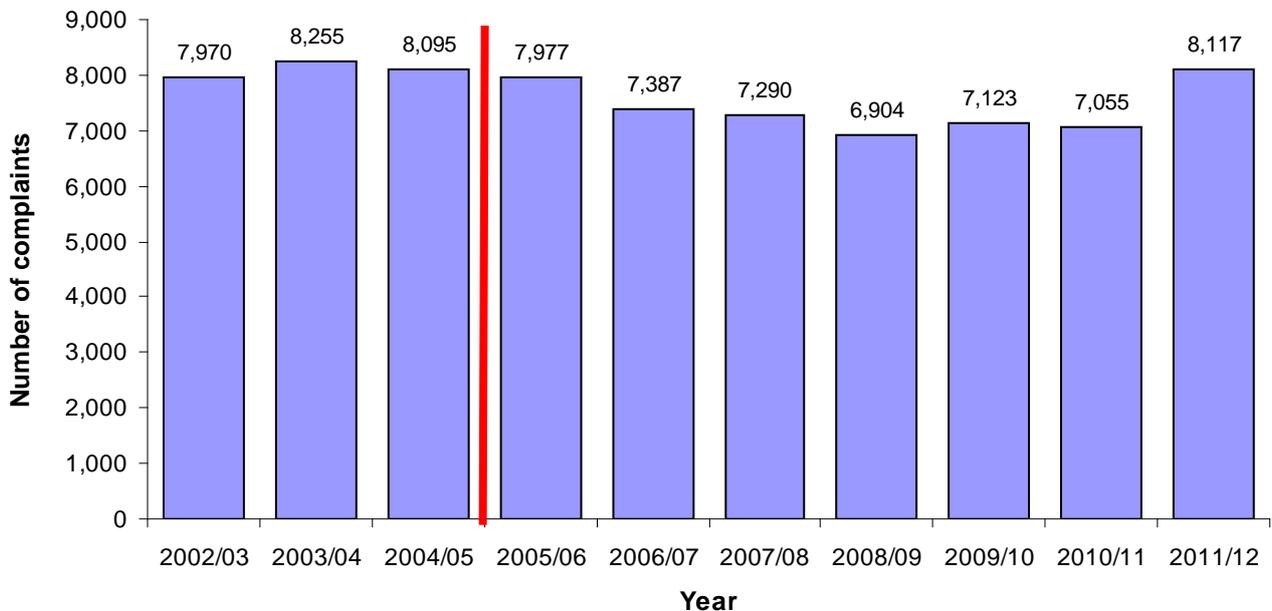
Information is presented at Board level with a further breakdown by Division, if available. Prior to 2004/05 the breakdown by Acute/Family Health Services is shown under each NHS Board.

The statistics presented relate to the number of complaints submitted to ISD. This includes all formal written complaints. In some NHS Boards/organisations, telephone and other formal oral complaints are also recorded in their submission to ISD.

432 records have been excluded from the statistics that were either Withdrawn, Transferred to another unit, or Consent not received..

- After a gradual rise in the number of complaints received about Hospital and Community Services from 1999/00, the figure declined to 6,904 in 2008/09. This remained relatively stable in 2009/10 and 2010/11 but has increased to 8,117 complaints in 2011/12.
- There was a 15% rise in Hospital and Community complaints received with 8,117 in 2011/12 compared to 7,055 in 2010/11. This is the largest increase since the revision of the complaints procedure in April 2005.

Figure 1: Number of complaints received for Hospital and Community Health Services^{1,2}, Scotland: 2002/03 to 2011/12



1. Hospital & Community Health Services only (excludes Special NHS Boards, National and Support Organisations)

2. Red line: New NHS Complaints Procedure took effect from 01/04/2005, caution should be exercised when comparing statistics prior to this date.

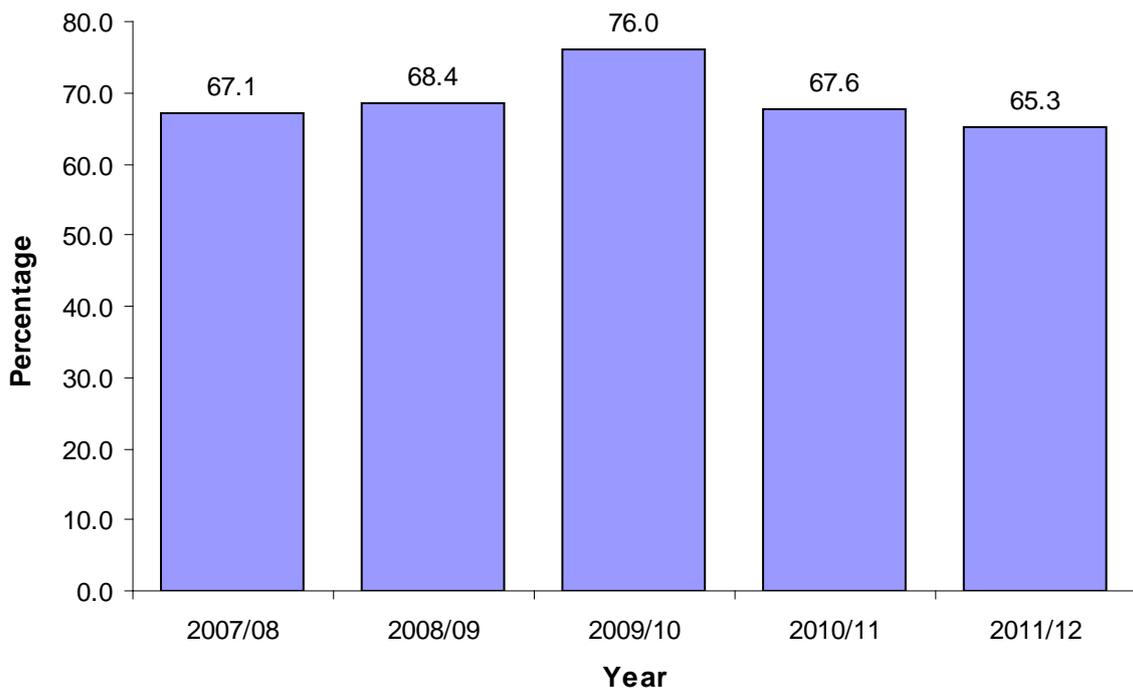
- The largest increase in the number of complaints received between 2010/11 and 2011/12 was for NHS Lothian (31%). NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and NHS Forth Valley had similar increases (27% and 29% respectively).
- NHS Dumfries and Galloway and NHS Shetland had the greatest decrease in complaints received in 2011/12 compared to 2010/11 (34% and 7% respectively).

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received, by Health Board: 02/03-11/12](#)

Response Time

- The percentage of complaints acknowledged within the national target timescale of three working days from receipt has fallen from 96% in 2010/11 to 90% in the latest year. This represents the lowest percentage since the NHS complaints procedure changed in April 2005 and ranges from 73% in NHS Forth Valley to 100% in NHS Western Isles.
- The percentage of complaints dealt with within the national target of 20 working days was 65%, slightly lower than that achieved in 2010/11 (68%). This ranges from 28% in NHS Tayside to 93% in NHS Lanarkshire in 2011/12. NB. Public holidays have been taken into account when response times were calculated.

Figure 2: Percentage of complaints responded to within 20 working days for Hospital and Community Health Services¹, Scotland: 2007/08 to 2011/12



1. Hospital & Community Health Services only- excludes Special NHS Boards, National and Support Organisations and the Scottish Health Council.

- The median time taken to deal with complaints in 2011/12 remains the same as 2010/11 (19 working days). This ranges from 15 working days in NHS Orkney to 27 working days in NHS Tayside.

[!\[\]\(7e49c700e4adaed94ad5398cf2e7059e_img.jpg\) !\[\]\(105c2c389d5b789f412badb05651c8ab_img.jpg\) Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received and response times, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

Service Area

- Of the 8,117 complaints made about Hospital & Community Health Services in 2011/12, 6,235 (77%) related to the Hospital acute service group.
- The number of complaints relating to Hospital Acute Services rose from 5,217 during 2010/11 to 6,235 in 2011/12, a 20% increase. Within this category and over the same period, percentage increases in the number of complaints relating to Inpatients, Day Cases, Outpatients and Accident and Emergency were 14%, 24%, 22% and 26% respectively.

Table 1: Number of complaints regarding hospital acute services by service area¹, Scotland: 2007/08 to 2011/12

Service area	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Inpatient	2383	2177	1992	1889	2150
Day case	194	170	252	226	280
Outpatient	2179	2083	2028	2263	2761
Accident & Emergency	448	458	521	471	592
Delivered in the community	86	33	15	21	13
Other	0	0	373	347	439
Total	5290	4921	5181	5217	6235

1. Hospital & Community Health Services only, excludes Special NHS Boards and National & Support Organisations

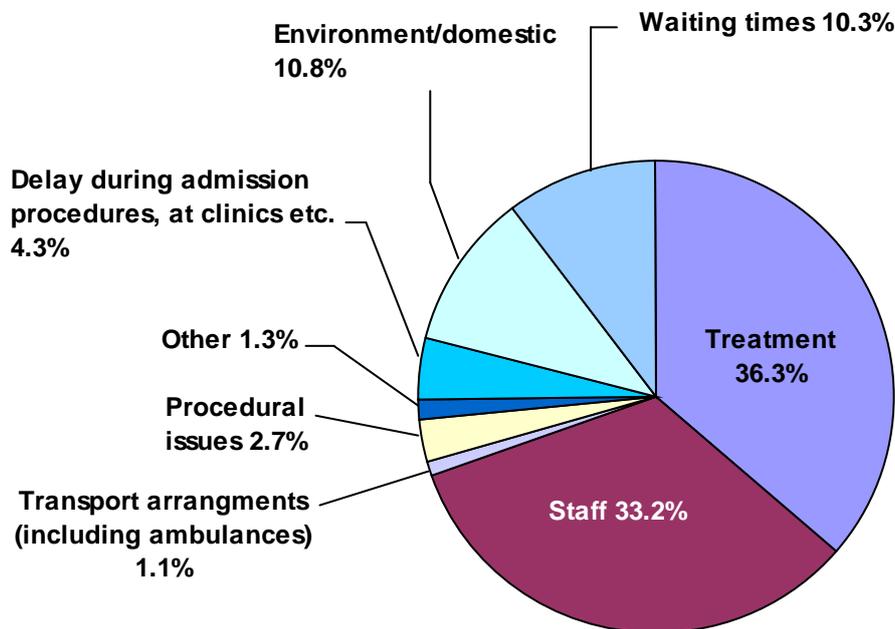
[!\[\]\(fc3a57079704ef1b99671c8cafae23be_img.jpg\) !\[\]\(d3051b8cca72a0146dd96a85cbb43ff6_img.jpg\) Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Service Area, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

[!\[\]\(0ac73c45806a78de248a19d9a2dbe7a6_img.jpg\) !\[\]\(8d9d43d9f7500adebe1b57d821f10a8c_img.jpg\) Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Service Area, Scotland: 03-04-11/12](#)

Issues Raised

- A single complaint may raise more than one issue. Of the 8,117 complaints received during 2011/12, 11,472 issues were raised. There was a 15% rise in the number of complaints received between 2010/11 and 2011/12, and this was mirrored with a 15% increase in the number of issues of which there were 9,980 previously in 2010/11.
- The majority of issues raised in 2011/12 concerned treatment (36%) followed by staff (33%), environment/domestic (11%) and waiting times (10%).
- Within the 'Treatment' issue group, almost all (99%) complaints related to 'clinical treatment', with the remainder related to 'consent to treatment'. Within the broader 'Staff' issue group, 'attitude and behaviour' and 'oral communication' were the issues most commonly raised (82%).
- Nurses, midwives and health visitors remain the most prevalent group of all Staff Issues (41%) followed by medical and dental staff (37%).

Figure 3: Summary of all issues raised for Hospital and Community Health Services^{1,2}, Scotland: 2011/12



1. Community Health Services only- excludes Special NHS Boards, National and Support Organisations and the Scottish Health Council.

2. All issues: some complaints fall into more than one category.

[!\[\]\(b8a72a3753dcf585f9661ac843b3f6db_img.jpg\) Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Issue Raised, Scotland: 02/03-11/12](#)

[!\[\]\(e462f608b89f421f9d905728e26f6429_img.jpg\) Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Staff Group & Issue Raised, Scotland: 02/03-11/12](#)

Outcome

- In 2011/12, 27% of complaints were fully upheld, 33% were partially upheld and 38% were not upheld. A further 2% of complaints resulted in 'other' outcomes including conciliation pending, irresolvable and outcome not known.
- There has been a 15% increase in the number of complaints received between 2010/11 and 2011/12, however the number of complaints upheld or partially upheld has increased by only 12%.

[!\[\]\(9ea682cef02bbbdc0191f78cdae1d433_img.jpg\) Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

[!\[\]\(30072721fe92392a2d7c953be68f714a_img.jpg\) Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome and Staff Group, Scotland: 02/03-11/12](#)

[!\[\]\(3b71157eab31889e641f7620692f0b92_img.jpg\) Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome and Service Area, Scotland: 02/03-11/12](#)

Family Health Services

Three broad service types are included within the Family Health Services complaints procedure - medical services, dental services and complaints regarding Family Health administration. Although information is collected on complaints made about Family Health Services, it was nationally agreed that, as Family Health Services practitioners are independent contractors, it would be less detailed than that collected on hospital and community health service complaints. Complaints relating to pharmaceutical and ophthalmic services are only reported where these lead to requests for independent review (prior to April 2005).

- The total number of complaints about Family Health Services in 2011/12 was 3,538. NHS Highland successfully submitted data for the year; however, non-submission of returns from NHS Highland in previous years means that the year-by-year comparisons in Table 2 exclude this Health Board. The comparisons show that, overall, complaints relating to Family Health Services have increased by 8% between 2010/11 and 2011/12. The majority of the increase relates to medical complaints, rising by 9% in comparison to a 1% increase in dental complaints over the same period.
- In 2011/12 84% of Family Health Service complaints related to the medical service area.

Table 2: Number of Complaints received for Family Health Services, Scotland: 2009/10 to 2011/12¹

Total Number of Complaints Received	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Medical	2,672	2,700	2,944
Dental ²	673	533	539
Family Health administration	1	0	0
Family Health Services total ²	3,346	3,233	3,483

1. Excludes figures for NHS Highland.

2. NHS Ayrshire and Arran complaints relating to dental services are incomplete.

 [Family Health Services: Number of complaints received by Service Area and Health Board, Scotland: 96/97-11/12](#)

 [Family Health Services: Number of complaints received and requests for Independent Review, Scotland: 96/97-11/12](#)

Special Boards and National & Support Organisations

- Complaints relating to all Special Health Boards and National & Support organisations have been collected since 2006/07. There were 693 complaints received by these organisations during 2011/12, a 15% reduction on the number received during 2010/11 and the lowest number received since data collection started.

Table 3: Number of Complaints received (Special Boards, National & Support organisations and the Scottish Health Council), Scotland 2007/08 to 2011/12

Total Number of Complaints Received	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Scottish Ambulance Service	307	356	477	374	214
Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS)	197	281	253	256	231
NHS 24	149	109	112	71	88
The National Waiting Times Centre	25	46	55	47	38
The State Hospital Board for Scotland	58	53	66	42	79
NHS Education for Scotland (NES)	14	7	0	2	8
NHS Health Scotland	1	5	8	2	2
NHS Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) (Including Scottish Health Council)	1	0	4	6	7
NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) (Excluding SNBTS)	29	31	31	12	26
Total	781	888	1,006	812	693

Scottish Ambulance Service

- The number of complaints to the Scottish Ambulance Service has fallen from 374 in 2010/11 to 214. This represents a 43% decrease. NB Currently in Scotland there are over 2 million ambulance transportations per year.
- In 2011/12, 98% of complaints received by Scottish Ambulance Service were acknowledged within three working days, this was their highest percentage since 2004/05.
- Of the complaints received during 2011/12, 64% were responded to within 20 working days. This percentage is very close to the Scottish average of all NHS Boards.
- In 2011/12, 94% of the issues raised in complaints to the Scottish Ambulance Service relate to 'Staff' or 'Transport'. This compares to 89% of all issues raised in 2010/11.

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received and response times, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Issue Raised, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

The Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) - Donor complaints

- Around 300,000 donors attend blood donation sessions in a single year. Although the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service is a division of NHS National Services Scotland, donor complaints are collected and reported separately. In recent years, the number of complaints has peaked at 281 in 2008/09, before falling back over the past three years to 231 complaints in 2011/12.
- Complaints about 'opportunity to donate' fell by 56% between 2010/11 and 2011/12 and complaints about 'bruising or other discomfort' fell by 37%.
- Complaints relating to 'donor communications' increased by 28% between 2010/11 and 2011/12.

 [SNBTS: Number of complaints received by Type: 96/97-11/12](#)

NHS 24

- The number of complaints to NHS 24 has reduced considerably over time. During 2004/05, when the service was expanded to all NHS Boards, 378 complaints were received. The number of complaints has since fallen to 88 complaints during 2011/12.
- For the third year in a row, 100% of complaints received by NHS 24 were both acknowledged within three working days and responded to within 20 working days.
- Half of all issues raised by complainants to NHS 24 during 2011/12 related to two main areas; 'inappropriate outcome/referral/advice' (30%) and 'Expectations of service' (20%).

 [NHS24: Number of complaints received by Issue: 03/04-11/12](#)

The National Waiting Times Centre

- The number of complaints to the National Waiting Times Centre decreased for the second consecutive year; 38 complaints were received during 2011/12 compared with 47 complaints during 2010/11. This represents a 19% decrease.
- There was a small reduction in the percentage of complaints acknowledged within 3 days; 97% during 2011/12 compared to 100% during 2010/11. However, there was a small increase in the percentage of complaints responded to within 20 days; 84% in 2011/12 compared to 81% during 2010/11.
- In 2011/12 58% of complaints were either upheld or were upheld in part, this compares to 50% of the 2010/11 complaints.

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received and response times, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Issue Raised, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

The State Hospital Board for Scotland

- In 2011/12 the number of complaints to the State Hospital Board for Scotland has risen to 79, compared to 42 complaints in 2010/11. This represents their highest number of complaints since 2006/07.
- For the third year in a row, all complaints received were acknowledged within three working days. There was a small rise in the percentage of complaints responded to within 20 working days between 2010/11 and 2011/12 (94% compared to 91%).
- Almost all issues raised in complaints to the State Hospital Board for Scotland during 2010/11 and 2011/12 related to 'Environment/domestic', 'Staff' and 'Treatment'. Overall there was a 65% increase in the number of issues raised between 2010/11 and 2011/12. The increase however almost entirely relates to 'Environment/domestic' issues which have more than doubled from 25 in 2010/11 to 56 in 2011/12.

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received and response times, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Issue Raised, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

 [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome, by Health Board: 96/97-11/12](#)

Glossary

Complaint

In the NHS complaints procedure a complaint is defined:

"A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction requiring a response."

Citizen's Charter Complaints Task Force

The data submitted to ISD includes all formal written complaints. Note however, that there is a variation in recording practice across Scotland and some NHS Boards / organisations include telephone and other formal oral complaints. Complaints which were initially made orally and subsequently made in writing are also included.

List of Tables

Name	Time period	File & size
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received and response times, by Health Board</u>	1996/97 to 2011/12	Excel [389kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received, by Health Board: 02/03-11/12</u>	2002/03 to 2011/12	Excel [28kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Service Area, by Health Board</u>	1996/97 to 2011/12	Excel [361kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Service Area, Scotland</u>	2003/04 to 2011/12	Excel [77kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Issue Raised, by Health Board</u>	1996/97 to 2011/12	Excel [565kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Issue Raised, Scotland</u>	2002/03 to 2011/12	Excel [242kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Staff Group & Issue Raised, Scotland</u>	2002/03 to 2011/12	Excel [158kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome, by Health Board</u>	1996/97 to 2011/12	Excel [309kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome & Staff Group, Scotland</u>	2002/03 to 2011/12	Excel [245kb]
 <u>Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of complaints received by Outcome & Service Area, Scotland</u>	2002/03 to 2011/12	Excel [234kb]
 <u>Family Health Services: Number of complaints received by Service Area and Health Board, Scotland</u>	1996/97 to 2011/12	Excel [145kb]
 <u>Family Health Services: Number of complaints received and requests for Independent Review, Scotland</u>	1996/97 to 2011/12	Excel [17kb]
 <u>SNBTS: Number of complaints received by Type</u>	1996/97 to 2011/12	Excel [21kb]
 <u>NHS24: Number of complaints received by Issue</u>	2003/04 to 2011/12	Excel [21kb]

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Further Information

Further information can be found on the [ISD website](#)

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Appendix

A1 – Complaints Procedure and National Data Collection

Current Complaints Procedure

There is a wide variation in the type of contacts that patients have with the NHS (e.g. treatment as an inpatient, outpatient, attendance at A&E, blood donation and transportation by ambulance) and patients (or their representatives) can make a complaint if they feel dissatisfied with any aspect of these interactions.

Each Health Board within NHS Scotland employs staff whose role is to receive complaints from members of the public and to register the decisions made and actions undertaken in relation to them. Revisions to the complaints process in 2005 were intended to remove some of the barriers which may have stopped some people complaining about the NHS in previous years. Key changes were:

- The independent review stage was removed from the procedure in 2005 to enable a faster process and to allow the introduction of independent scrutiny at an earlier point. Data on requests for independent review up to 2004/05 can be found here: [Hospital & Community Health Services: Number of requests for Independent Review, Scotland: 96/97-04/05.](#)
- If a complaint was being made regarding a General Practitioner (GP), then the complainant was advised to contact the NHS Board Complaints Officer, or go to the Independent Advice and Support Service (supported by Citizens Advice Bureaux across Scotland) instead of initially contacting their GP.
- Any individual who could not get a complaint resolved on a local level was advised to access the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman's Office.

Prior to review, an evaluation of the NHS Complaints Procedure was carried out. This was a thorough UK-wide project led by the Department of Health in England with a Scottish Advisory Group of complaints personnel and patients' representatives set up to oversee the Scottish evaluation.

Further details on the Complaints Procedure (in use between 2005 and 2012) can be found at: ["Can I help you? Learning from comments, concerns and complaints"](#)

The NHS Complaints Procedure in operation from April 2012 is available at: http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/CEL2012_08.pdf

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the response from the normal complaint process, there is recourse to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman who provides a 'one-stop-shop' for individuals making complaints about organisations providing public services in Scotland (www.spsso.org.uk).

Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS)

Citizens Advice Bureaux across Scotland were funded by local NHS Boards to deliver the Independent Advice and Support Service (IASS). The aim was to support patients, their carers and relatives in their dealings with the NHS and in other matters affecting their health. The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011 made provision for the establishment of the

Patient Advice and Support Service from 1 April 2012. Further information on PASS (which replaced IASS) can be found at: <http://www.cas.org.uk/patientadvice>

Complaints data and ISD

NHS Boards and other NHS organisations submit summary information about complaints they receive to ISD Scotland. The data covers complaints received by Hospital & Community Services and Family Health Services. The data submitted to ISD includes all formal written complaints.

Until recently, in NHS organisations across Scotland, there was a lack of consistency in the application of codes to record complaints made against an NHS service. Each Complaints Office follows general guidance about complaint recording within the NHS, but may also use their own local set of categories to register the details, or have their own interpretation of how to complete the dataset.

To help address these issues, ISD built an NHS Complaints system containing revised codes and detailed definitions and subsequently rolled out these definitions and codes nationally to ensure consistency in recording practices from Board to Board within NHS Scotland. Implementation of this new dataset for Hospital & Community Services commenced mid-way through 2008. Prior to the 2008/9 report, new codes were mapped to ensure consistency in reporting and, despite some data submission difficulties, data were received and reported against as normal. Further details of this change are available within the [Changes to the NHS Complaints Dataset](#).

A2 – Publication Metadata (including revisions details)

Metadata Indicator	Description
Publication title	NHS Complaints Statistics Scotland 2011/12
Description	Analysis of NHS Complaints reported from NHS Boards in Scotland showing number and percentage of complaints received; time taken to resolve; by issues raised, staff group and service area
Theme	Healthcare information
Topic	Quality Improvement
Format	Web-based publication
Data source(s)	ISD(Scotland) NHSScotland complaints
Date that data are acquired	6 weeks after 30 June, 30 September, 31 December, and 31 March
Release date	25 September 2012
Frequency	Annual
Timeframe of data and timeliness	Quarterly data for the financial year received 6 weeks after finish of each quarter
Continuity of data	Each year since 1996
Revisions statement	No revisions have occurred and there are no revisions planned.
Revisions relevant to this publication	None
Concepts and definitions	See Definitions Document published on Website
Relevance and key uses of the statistics	National performance and benchmarking.
Accuracy	Quality assurance of data by NHS Boards and ISD
Completeness	99.5% as some records remain still open
Comparability	A new dataset was introduced in 2008. The new codes in this dataset could be mapped onto older codes making data comparable.
Accessibility	It is the policy of ISD Scotland to make its web sites and products accessible according to published guidelines .
Coherence and clarity	Measures to enhance coherence and clarity within this report include: explanatory chart/table notes, minimal use of abbreviations/abbreviations explained in text, comprehensive notes on background and methodology.
Value type and unit of measurement	Number and percentage of complaints
Disclosure	The ISD protocol on Statistical Disclosure Protocol is followed.
Official Statistics designation	National Statistics
UK Statistics Authority Assessment	None
Last published	25 October 2011
Next published	To be confirmed
Date of first publication	April 1996
Help email	richard.dobbie@nhs.net
Date form completed	6 September 2012

A3 – Early Access details (including Pre-Release Access)

Pre-Release Access

Under terms of the "Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics (Scotland) Order 2008", ISD are obliged to publish information on those receiving Pre-Release Access ("Pre-Release Access" refers to statistics in their final form prior to publication). The standard maximum Pre-Release Access is five working days. Shown below are details of those receiving standard Pre-Release Access and, separately, those receiving extended Pre-Release Access.

Standard Pre-Release Access:

Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorate
NHS Board Chief Executives
NHS Board Communication leads

Extended Pre-Release Access

Extended Pre-Release Access of 8 working days is given to a small number of named individuals in the Scottish Government Health Department (Analytical Services Division). This Pre-Release Access is for the sole purpose of enabling that department to gain an understanding of the statistics prior to briefing others in Scottish Government (during the period of standard Pre-Release Access).

Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorate (Analytical Services Division)

Early Access for Management Information

These statistics will also have been made available to those who needed access to 'management information', ie as part of the delivery of health and care:

Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorate (Patient Support and Participation)

Early Access for Quality Assurance

These statistics will also have been made available to those who needed access to help quality assure the publication:

Data Providers (Complaints Officers / Lead Contacts for all NHS Boards and National & Support Organisations)

A4 – ISD and Official Statistics

About ISD

Scotland has some of the best health service data in the world combining high quality, consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up.

Information Services Division (ISD) is a business operating unit of NHS National Services Scotland and has been in existence for over 40 years. We are an essential support service to NHSScotland and the Scottish Government and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.

Purpose: To deliver effective national and specialist intelligence services to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Scotland.

Mission: Better Information, Better Decisions, Better Health

Vision: To be a valued partner in improving health and wellbeing in Scotland by providing a world class intelligence service.

Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of 'Official Statistics'. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The Code of Practice is produced and monitored by the UK Statistics Authority which is independent of Government. Under the Code of Practice, the format, content and timing of statistics publications are the responsibility of professional staff working within ISD.

ISD's statistical publications are currently classified as one of the following:

- National Statistics (ie assessed by the UK Statistics Authority as complying with the Code of Practice)
- National Statistics (ie legacy, still to be assessed by the UK Statistics Authority)
- Official Statistics (ie still to be assessed by the UK Statistics Authority)
- other (not Official Statistics)

Further information on ISD's statistics, including compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and on the UK Statistics Authority, is available on the [ISD website](#).