



*Eastern Cheshire  
Clinical Commissioning Group*

# **Annual Complaints Report**

**2015/2016**

## CCG Information Reader Box

<b>Document Purpose</b>	For information
<b>CCG Website Link</b>	<a href="http://www.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk">www.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk</a>
<b>Title</b>	NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group: Annual Complaints Report 2015-2016
<b>Author</b>	NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group
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<b>Target Audience</b>	The public, NHS Clinical Commissioning Group Executives & Governing Body, Patient & Public Representative Groups, Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector representatives, Healthwatch Cheshire East
<b>Description</b>	The Annual Complaints Report 2015-16 provides a review and summary of the complaints received and managed by NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG
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**Contents**

1. Introduction ..... 4

2. Role and Responsibilities of NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG ..... 4

3. Complaints Received ..... 5

4. Upheld Complaints ..... 6

5. You said, we did ..... 7

6. PHSO ..... 8

7. 2016/17 Priorities ..... 9

## 1. Introduction

The [Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints \(England\) Regulations 2009](#) (hereon 'the regulations') requires all NHS organisations to make arrangements for the handling and consideration of complaints. In accordance with the regulations, NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG is required to prepare an annual report that must:

- Specify the number of complaints received
- Specify how many of the complaints that were received were well founded (or upheld)
- Specify the number of complaints that have been referred to the Health Service Ombudsman
- Summarise the subject of the complaints and any matters of general importance that arose from the complaint or the way in which they were handled
- Outline the action that has been taken to improve services as a result of these complaints.

This report details the information above from the complaints received by NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

## 2. Role and Responsibilities of NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG

NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG believes that the effective management of complaints plays an important role in ensuring that the quality of care and services provided to our patients continues to improve. This means that NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG endeavours to go above and beyond our statutory function of simply managing complaints by holding the patient at the centre of everything we do while seeking out and listening to what they are telling us and what they need.

NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG's ability to capture feedback from patients and clinicians was enhanced in 2015 to 2016 with the forming of the in-house Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Team.

The Complaints, Concerns and Compliments team strives to ensure that the complaints it receives about NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG and the services we commission are investigated thoroughly and supported by changes to prevent issues from recurring.

The Complaints, Concerns and Compliments team recognise that making a complaint can sometimes be a difficult experience for patients and their families or carers. The Complaints, Concerns and Compliments team therefore endeavours to ensure that the CCG complaints process is 'patient friendly'. This means working with patients and individuals in a compassionate, sensitive and timely manner to resolve their concerns.

To help achieve these aims, the Complaints, Concerns and Compliments team works towards meeting the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's [Principles of Good Complaint Handling](#):

1. *Getting It Right*: All complaints receive a personalised response from the Chief Officer or a nominated Senior Deputy at the CCG

2. *Being Customer Focused:* All complaints are managed in partnership with the complainant who is kept up to date and encouraged to remain in contact with the Complaints, Concerns and Compliments team throughout the investigation.

3. *Being Open and Accountable:* Patients are encouraged to complain to the CCG and all complaints are responded to in full, explaining why issues occurred and what is being done to prevent matters from recurring.

4. *Acting Fairly and Proportionately:* Complaints are subject to thorough investigations that involve input from multiple departments within the CCG and all relevant providers.

5. *Putting Things Right:* Where failings are identified, the CCG acknowledges mistakes and apologises, setting out the actions it will take to rectify the issue.

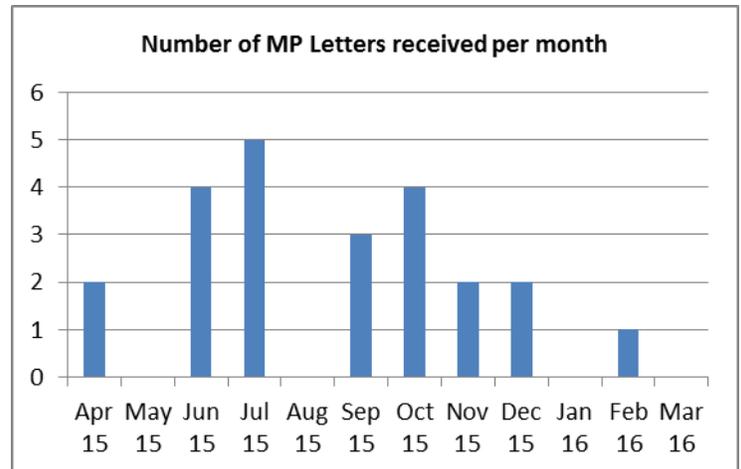
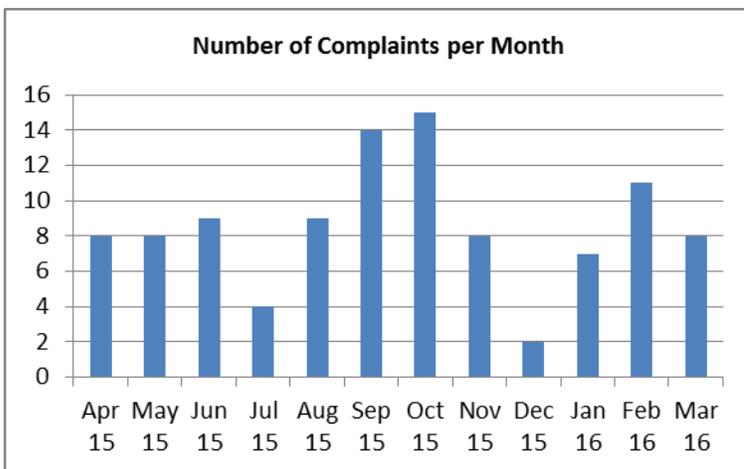
6. *Seeking Continuous Improvement:* The intelligence gathered from complaints is regularly drawn upon to improve the design and delivery of our services.

The Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Team is overseen by the Complaints and Concerns Sub-Committee of the CCG Clinical, Quality and Performance Committee that meets monthly.

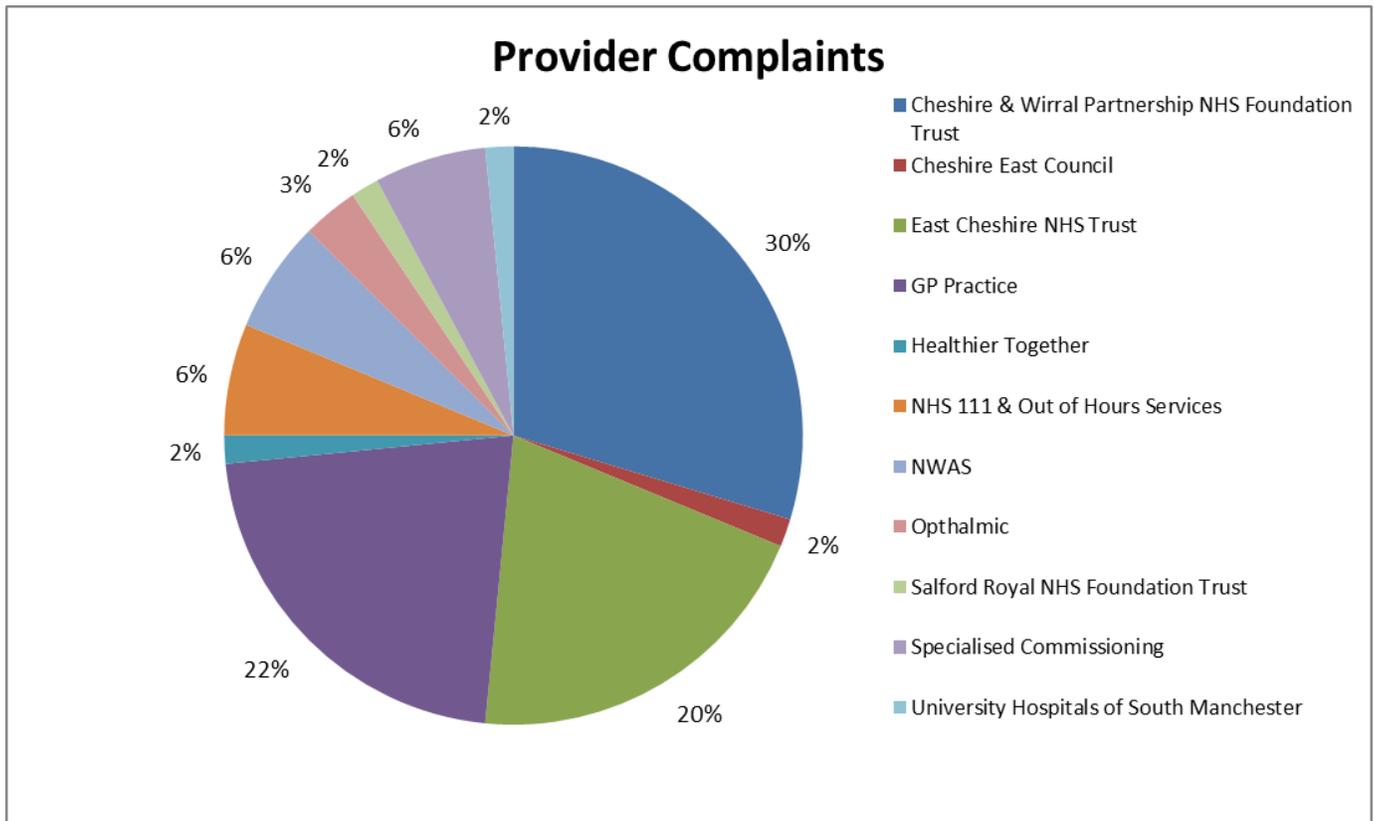
A representative of the Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Team also attends each HealthVoice meeting to allow members to raise any concerns direct with the team on a regular basis.

### 3. Complaints Received

In 2015/2016, NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG managed 126 complaints. 103 of these complaints came from members of the public while 23 were raised by Members of Parliament acting on behalf of constituents.



Of the complaints that related to providers, the majority of these related to Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust with East Cheshire NHS Trust and GP Practices the next highest number. This is reflective of the most used providers by our patient population.



The top five themes of the complaints received were as follows:

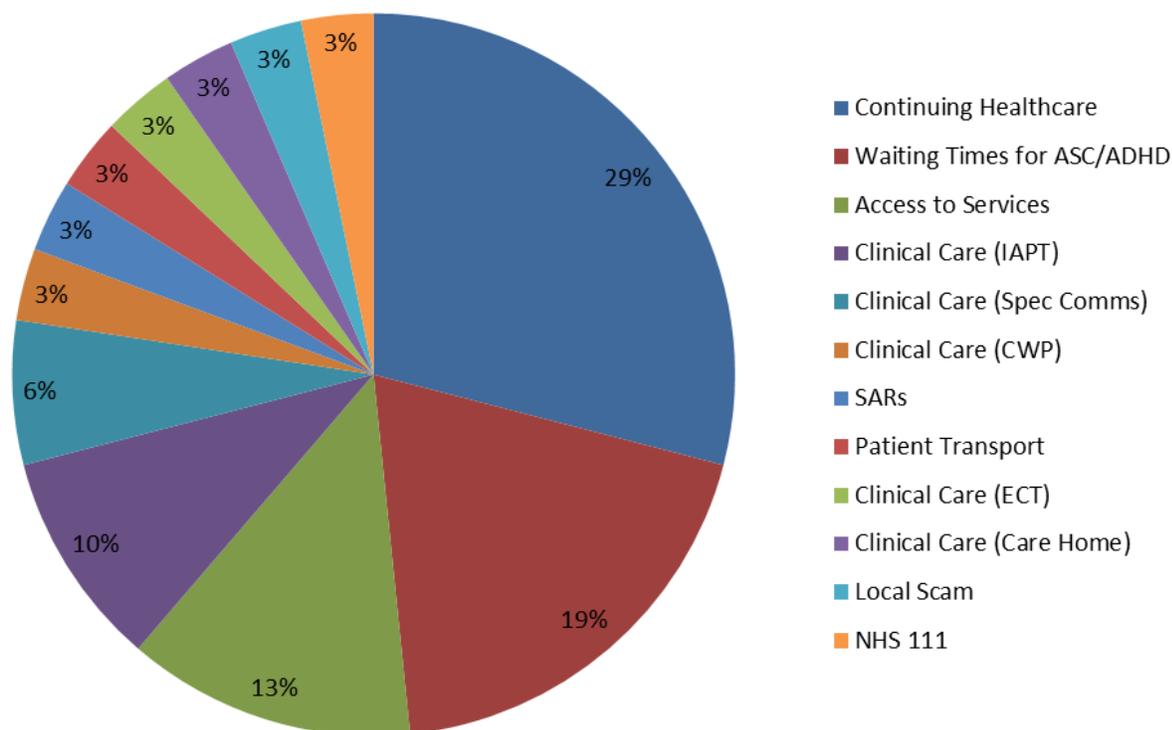
Theme	Number
Continuing Healthcare	31
CCG Commissioning Decisions	19
Clinical Care	19
Access to Services	13
Waiting Times for ASC/ADHD	7

#### 4. Upheld Complaints

23 of the 103 complaints from members of the public were upheld and 10 of the 23 MP letters were upheld.

The subjects of the upheld complaints are outlined in the below chart.

## Subject of Upheld Complaints



## 5. You said, we did

NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG is committed to ensuring that themes and issues identified in complaints are addressed and accompanied by changes that will prevent recurrence. The following examples demonstrate key changes and learning that have been implemented as a result of upheld complaints in 2015-2016.

- Continuing Healthcare Complaints:** The key themes from the upheld Continuing Healthcare (CHC) complaints related to the limited capacity of care homes/care agencies in the region to provide care to CHC clients, administrative errors in documentation and communication with patients' families. In order to explore increasing the care capacity within the region, the issue has been discussed at CCG executive level and supported with work to increase capacity, which has included implementing a block contract with East Cheshire Hospice for palliative patients. With regard to administrative errors in documentation, the themes in complaints have been reflected upon by the CHC administrative team who now thoroughly quality assure letters before they are sent to avoid the key errors that were being cited in complaints. Finally, the CHC service has a new Head of Service and Locality Lead who are focusing on the importance of communication with patients and their families, including the introduction of staff inductions, personal development plans and regular reflection on complaints to identify how issues can be avoided in future.

- *Waiting times for ASC/ADHD*: The high number of complaints received from patients and their families about the long waiting times for children to receive assessments for Autism Spectrum Conditions and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder were highlighted in a business case which informed the Governing Body's decision to release a substantial investment to transform the service to reduce waiting times and improve the overall standards of care. The transformation of the service is currently in progress and waiting lists have already begun to reduce.
- *Access to Services*: Complaints regarding access to services highlighted an issue for children with Special Educational Needs who attend a school outside of our locality even though they were registered with an NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG GP. It was noted that this appeared to be a knock-on effect of the NHS England 'Who Pays?' guidance although the guidance itself did not directly address this matter. The issue was therefore escalated to the Clinical, Performance & Quality Committee who have written direct to NHS England for advice as to how this matter can be resolved.
- *IAPT and CWP*: The intelligence raised in the upheld complaints regarding IAPT has been regularly shared with our Mental Health Commissioner. This led the Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Team being asked to draft questions that the bidders for the transformed procurement of the Primary Mental Health Services will need to answer to help ensure that the issues that have led to the challenges in the current service will not be repeated.
- *Subject Access Request (SARS)*: The upheld complaints concerning the delays and lack of communication from the North West Commissioning Support while managing the Subject Access Request process on our behalf have been incorporated in the design of the service when it transferred to the Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Team in March 2016. Since this date, the service has been 100% compliant with the statutory timescales and regularly sends responses within the 21 day best practice for health records.

## 6. PHSO

If a complainant is dissatisfied with NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG's management of their complaint or feels that the issue is not resolved, they have the right to refer their complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).

The PHSO contacted NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG about five complaints in the 2015 to 2016 reporting period. Three of these are still under investigation so the outcome is unknown.

For the remaining two complaints, one was not upheld and the second was passed back to NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG to undertake further work by explaining to the complainant how the investment that the CCG had subsequently agreed to undertake in the ASC/ADHD services would improve the services.

## 7. 2016/17 Priorities

The Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Team intend to build on the work undertaken in 2015 to 2016 over the course of the next year to focus on the following areas:

- Continue to use complaints to improve services, working closely with contracting and clinical teams to respond to issues when they are raised and identify how complaints' intelligence can be used when redesigning services
- Focus on making it as easy as possible for patients to raise their concerns by building relations with our peers such as Healthwatch and identifying new ways that we can gather patient feedback
- Ensure 100% compliance with the NHS Constitution right for patients to have their complaint acknowledged within three working days and work wherever possible to limit delays that may prevent the team from meeting its target of responding to complaints within thirty five working days.