

Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service

Impact & Performance Report

April - June 2023 (Q1)

We are pleased to share details of our work which reflects the support our team have delivered to patients, their families, carers, friends and community partners.

We have also shared learning to our Integrated Care System stakeholders, from experience of supporting people to raise concerns.

We have refreshed and reviewed our reporting methodology and the design of our report, so you may notice some changes in this document. If you have any comments, feedback or would like further information about any aspects of our work, please get in touch.

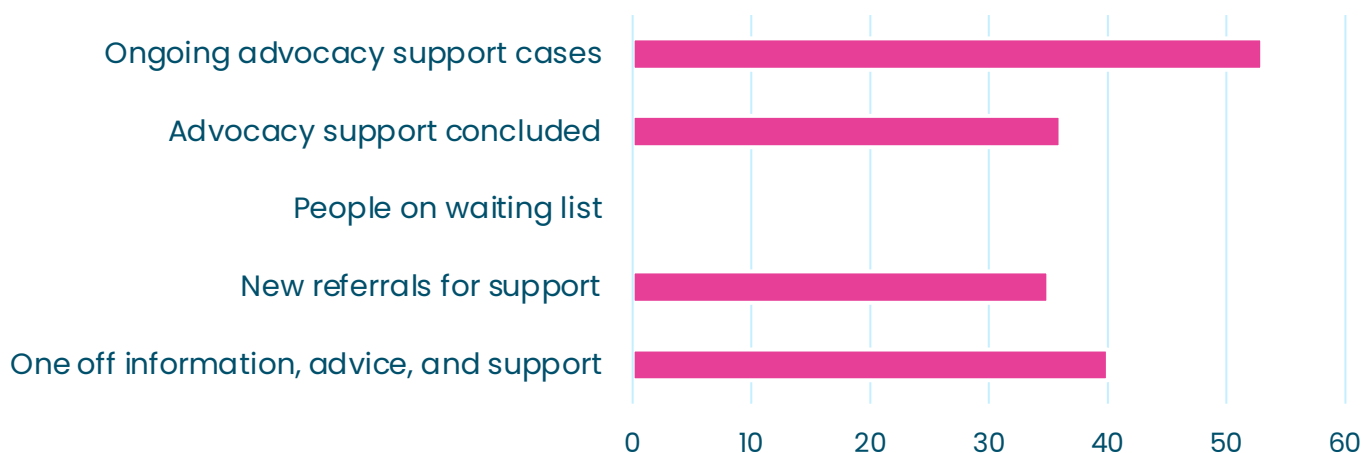


Performance

Our Helpdesk team are able to triage enquiries where local people are seeking support with making NHS complaints and/or sharing their feedback with services.

This means that the first contact people have with us can often satisfy their need via one off information, advice, and support – as reflected in the figures below. If the team feel that further support would be beneficial then they are able to refer trained advocates in the IHCAS team.

Our team are continuing to find that cases are of an increasingly complex nature and require more resource and time to work through, support and conclude. NHS Trusts are taking longer to respond and to arrange resolution meetings This means that our advocates are spending more time than they would have done in the past.



Last quarter comparison

	Key performance metrics for current and previous quarter	
	Q4	Q1
One off information, advice, and support	46	40
New referrals for support	31	35
People on waiting list	0	0
Advocacy support concluded	23	36
Ongoing advocacy support cases	54	53

Working with stakeholders

With the help of the IHCAS advocates, our Helpdesk team continue to support and triage enquiries, a process which means that complainants get swift access to a range of self-help material and a referral for further support if needed.

Two advocates also attended the Patient Safety Conference NHS Sussex, this was valuable learning listening to James Titcombe speak about the Morecombe Bay Investigation into maternity services following the death of his son in 2008.

One advocate attended Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Compliments & Complaints Committee meeting in April, this is a great way to share experiences with the Trust on the challenges our advocates are facing with complaints with their service.



Feedback from people we have supported

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your grit and determination of justice for patients and their loved ones that have been so appallingly let down. You give people a voice and strength when they need it the most. Thank you."

Advocacy partner passed her thanks to her advocate following the closure of her CAMHS complaint

"A massive thank you for helping to supporting me and XXX through this process. Your role and dedication has helped me process the events and feel heard in my concerns."

Advocacy partner and child

"Really appreciated your attendance and guidance and I could not have spoken in the meeting or achieved a satisfactory outcome without your support."

Advocacy Partner shared after a Local Resolution meeting

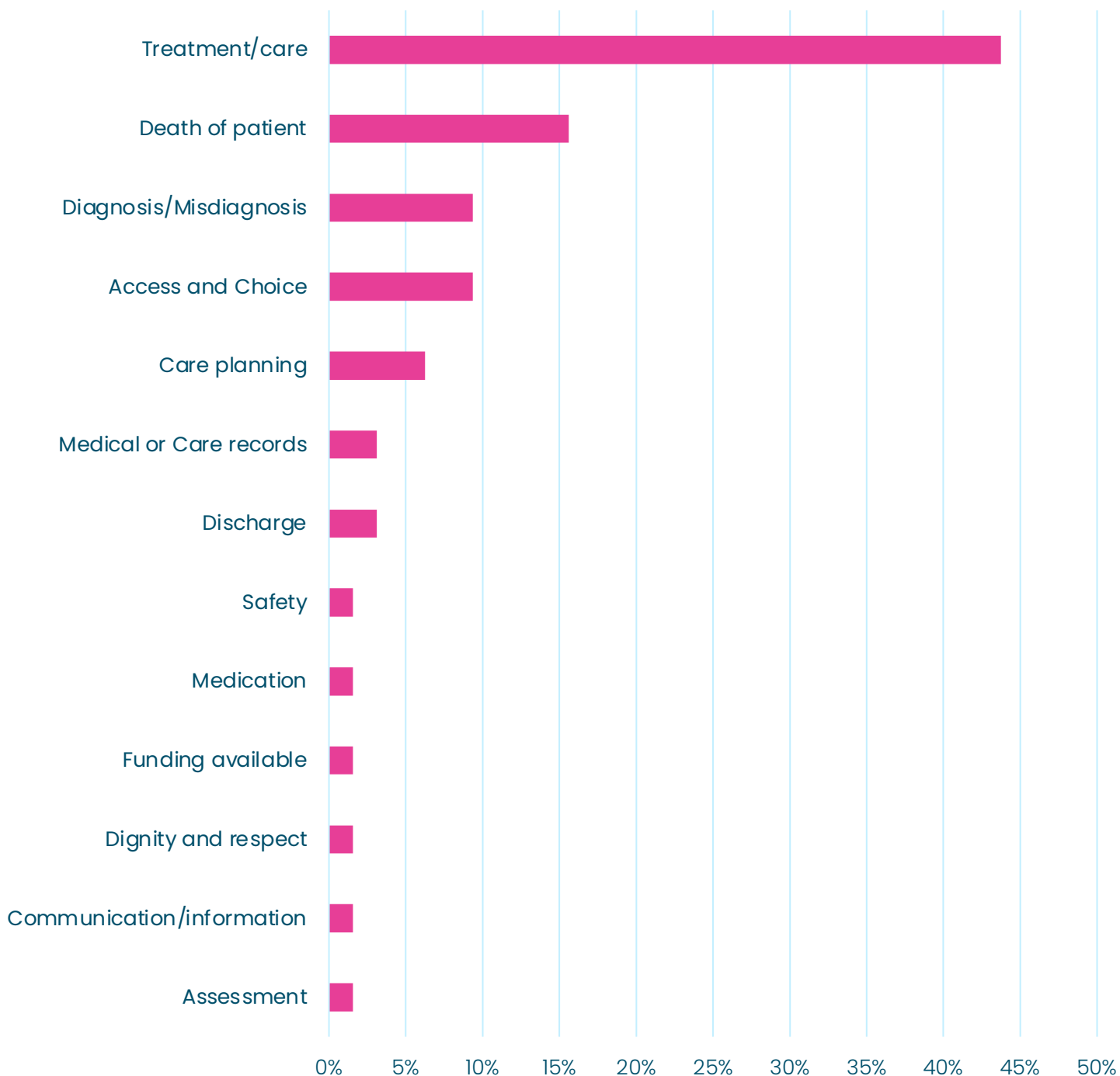
Impact

Between April and June, our advocates have supported West Sussex residents, to make various complaints including:

- A complex complaint involving 6 different providers. Cases such as these really highlight the difference having an advocate can make, as the public are often unaware that there is no one NHS as such, but rather 100's of different providers and that providers can be reluctant to co-ordinate complaints with other organisations, meaning the complainant, without the help of an advocate, may end up unnecessarily complaining to multiple providers.
- Assisting an Autistic complainant regarding hospital care and lack of adequate communication. The complaint highlighted a number of ways in which patients with communication needs can disproportionately suffer whilst being a patient and hopefully the response will include learning that can improve patient experience in the future.
- A difficult case that involved a home visit to a care home where the complainant had stayed for a number of years. Our advocate is looking at the level of support the client received and is actively helping the client to obtain treatment and help moving forward.
- Support of a young person with their complaint with Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT) following an incident when they were an inpatient. Following the complaint response letter, a local resolution meeting (LRM) was arranged, and this resulted in the young person being able to move forward “thank you for all your help and support I really appreciate everything you have done for me I can now move on”
- An advocacy partner who is receiving palliative care, logged a complaint about poor care and treatment at an acute hospital in West Sussex, being unable to attend a local resolution meeting, consent was obtained for her son to attend the meeting to ensure her voice was heard about the concerns she had raised.
- Following a complex complaint with UH Sussex and Marie Stopes International (MSI), the family have achieved resolution, read the [Case Study](#).
- Our advocate has attended 2 LRM's and lots of system learning has resulted from these complaints, including enhanced supervision of all locum practitioners, a new system to record calls from parents to ensure requests are responded to, a new questionnaire has been created in the emergency department “Psychosocial Questionnaire for 12-17 year olds” this will be used when young people present in A&E when they are at risk due to mental health issues.

Understanding the Complaint Themes

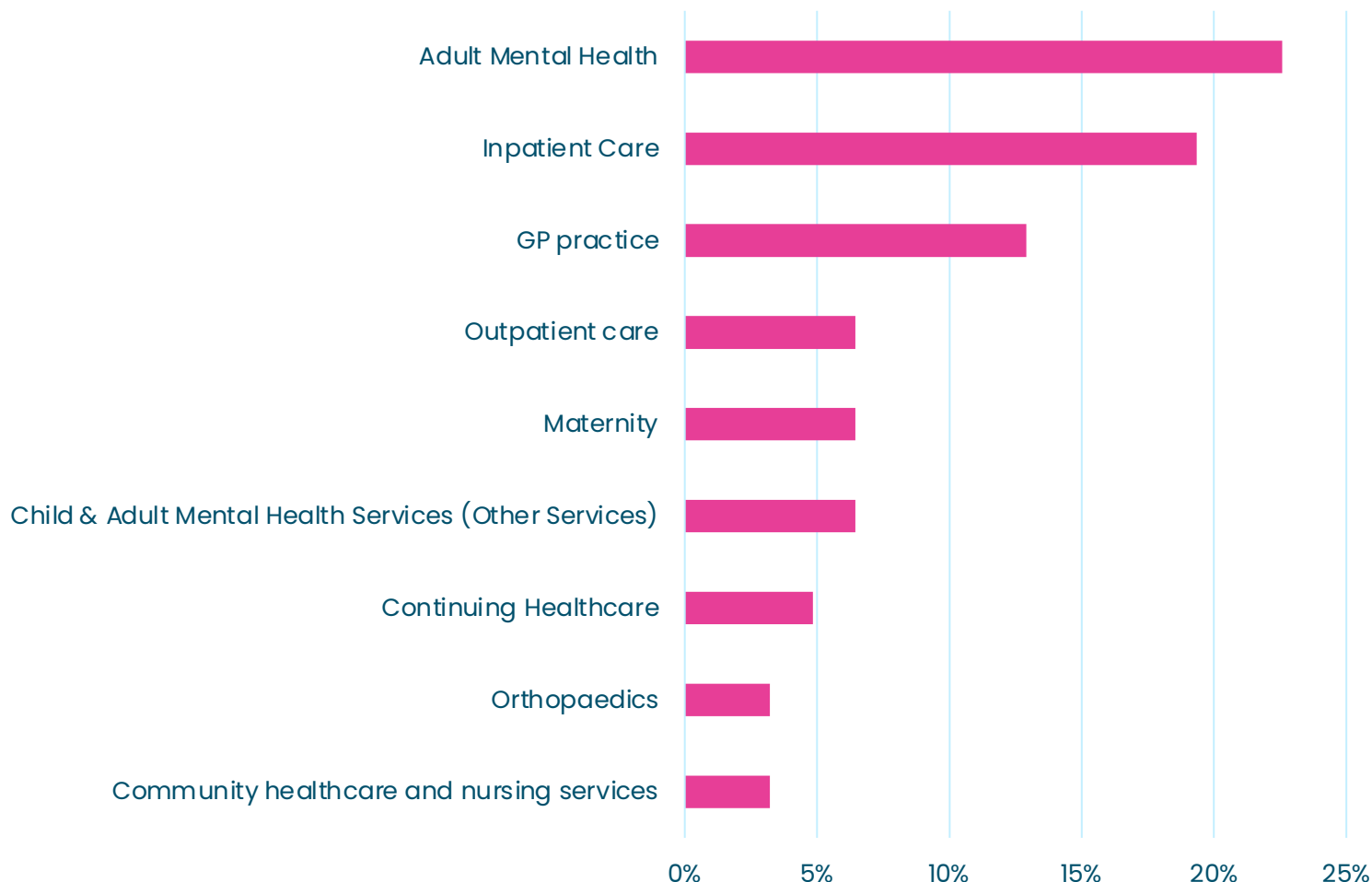
Complaint Themes - Open IHCAS Advocacy Support



The top theme for this quarter as per previous quarters is treatment and care. We continue to see advocacy partners access IHCAS because they want to make complaints about the poor service they have received from the NHS.

Unfortunately, we are still seeing residents of West Sussex access IHCAS following the death of a partner/family member. They require advocacy support when they are at their most vulnerable, and with the knowledge our advocates hold we can support families through the NHS complaints procedure, always being empathetic and compassionate when required.

Top Care Areas



The top area of complaints is again Adult Mental Health, advocacy partners access IHCAS for support as they are having to deal with their mental health needs alongside navigating their way through the NHS complaints process. The whole process at times can be complicated and our advocates are there to provide support.

Inpatient care is again the second area of concern, the same as last quarter, advocacy partners are concerned about the poor treatment and care they have received from the NHS which interlinks with the top theme from page 5.

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