

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee**                      **Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date of Committee**                      **13<sup>th</sup> December 2006**

**Report Title**                                **Annual Report on Adult Social Care Representations & Complaints April 2005 to March 2006**

**Summary**                                      This report comments on the operation and effectiveness of Warwickshire County Council Adult Social Care Complaints and Representations procedures over the last financial year, in compliance with the requirements of the NHS & Community Care Act 1990. It also outlines plans for improvements.

**For further information please contact:**                      Karen Smith  
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**Would the recommendation decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision]**                      No.

**Background papers**                                Annual Report 2004-5

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-**                      Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s)
- Other Elected Members                       Councillor F McCarney, Councillor M Stanley, Councillor Mrs J Compton, Councillor R Dodd, Councillor R Randev
- Cabinet Member                       Councillor C Hayfield
- Chief Executive
- Legal                                       Jane Pollard, Alison Hallworth
- Finance
- Other Chief Officers                       Graeme Betts, Strategic Director of Adult, Health

and Community Services

District Councils

Health Authority

Police

Other Bodies/Individuals

**FINAL DECISION YES**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:**

Details to be specified

Further consideration by  
this Committee

To Council

To Cabinet

To an O & S Committee

To an Area Committee

Further Consultation

**Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee – 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006**

**Annual Report on Adult Social Care Representations &  
Complaints  
April 2005 to March 2006**

**Report of the Strategic Director of Adult, Health and  
Community Services**

**Recommendation**

Committee Members are asked to:

1. Note good performance and areas for improvement
2. Note plans to report in the future on complaints and representations jointly across social care, libraries, museums, adult learning and trading standards services
3. Receive a half yearly progress report shortly

**1. Introduction**

Authorities are required to monitor the operation and effectiveness of their adult social care complaints procedure, and provide Members and senior officers with regular anonymised information about the numbers and types of complaint received, the time taken to deal with them and their outcome. This information should be used as a measure of performance and a means of quality control.

The management of the procedures is the responsibility of the Customer Relations Manager as required under the Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006.

**2. Performance**

Details of this Directorate's performance in handling complaints and representations about adult social care services over the last financial year are attached in the Annual Report 2005-2006. Key points to note are:

- ♦ Warwickshire Adult Social Care Services consistently receive high numbers of compliments (409 this year), and this compares favourably with the reported performance of other local authority's Adult Social Care Services, and with other Directorates within Warwickshire County Council.
- ♦ Our customer satisfaction feedback about the adult social care complaints process shows people feel they are dealt with politely, are kept regularly informed of the progress of the investigation, get a clear response which answers their concerns and are pleased with the outcome.
- ♦ 96% of all complaints are resolved locally at Stage 1 of the procedure. This compares well with other local authorities, and reflects a consistent level of achievement over a number of years.
- ♦ Based on the number of people receiving services from adult social care services, the number of complaints received indicates a dis-satisfaction rate of 1.3%.

### **3. Action Plan 2006 - 2007**

The key areas we will focus on in the coming year include:

- Launch and roll-out of the new adult social care complaints and representations policy and procedures, as approved by Cabinet 12<sup>th</sup> October 2006.
- Development, print and distribution of a range of supporting documents and guidance for customers to support the approach
- Development and enabling of staff to access a range of guidance and support material, including specialist skills training, to develop staff capability
- Putting in place formal processes to support the policy commitment to improved access to advocacy support for customers, and the use of mediation as an alternative dispute resolution option
- Developing the Independent Persons pool with Coventry and Solihull, putting in place mechanisms to firm up the recruitment, retention, payment and competency development process for IPs
- Exploration of alternative role for and involvement of Councillors in social care complaints scrutiny (a working group of Councillors from Children, Young People and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been set up as a pilot to look at this, and we may wish to explore a similar route for Adult Services)
- Contribute to the national consultation programme for Individual Voices for Improvement Project from Dept of Health, working to deliver an integrated social care and health procedure by 2009.

- Developing and strengthening arrangements for collaborating and co-ordinating responses to complaints with partner agencies, and in particular Health and Commission for Social Care Inspection
- Engaging with the development of complaint handling processes within the new Coventry and Warwickshire Mental Health Trust
- Considering adult social care complaints and representations as part of a broader commitment to the development of the Council's customer care agenda, and in particular its place within the Customer Service and Access Strategy, and how it needs to be integrated with work streams within the New Ways of Working Programme.

Karen Smith  
Customer Relations Manager

November 2006

**ANNUAL REPORT  
ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS  
AND REPRESENTATIONS  
2005-6**

**Karen Smith  
Customer Relations Manager  
June 2006**

## ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS & REPRESENTATIONS DATASET 2005/6

Data	2005/6		2004/5		2003/4	
Compliments	409		511		262	
Complaints Received:						
Stage1	217 (96%)		159 (95%)		161 (88%)	
Stage2	7		8		18	
Stage3	1		2		3	
Representations against policy	12		9		21	
Complaints as % of open cases on CareFirst	1.3%		0.6%		0.6%	
Of those received:						
From ethnic minorities	11		7		8	
About externally provided services	19		15		12	
Investigations completed in period:						
Stage 1	205		154		172	
Stage 2	7		5		17	
Stage 3	1		2		3	
Timescale compliance:						
Stage 1: In 14 days	48%		43%		47%	
Within 28 days	71%		67%		69%	
Average time to complete	30 calendar days		26 calendar days		29 calendar days	
Stage 2: In 28 days	13%		0		6%	
Within 3 months	63%		75%		41%	
Average time to complete	82 calendar days		86 calendar days		117 calendar days	
Number of complaints justified:	Upheld	Partly	Upheld	Partly	Upheld	Partly
Stage 1	42%	24%	42%	21%	34%	32%
Stage 2	29%	-	40%	20%	35%	41%
Stage 3	-	-				

### No adverse reports from LGO

6 complaints were considered by the LGO in this period. 3 were considered premature, 2 were considered to have no evidence of maladministration, and 1 was recorded as a local settlement.

## Compliments

Adult Social Care Services continue to receive high numbers of compliments, with the most this year being received by the Warwick and Kenilworth Older Peoples Team, closely followed by Nuneaton Home Care. In general, the older peoples teams, home care teams and HEPs receive high levels of compliments for their services, as is to be expected, given that older people are our highest case load, and there are high levels of daily contact. It is surprising therefore that there are low levels of compliments being recorded for some locations, such as Abbotsbury HEP, Bracebridge Court HEP, Bedworth Home Care, Four Acres HEP, Leamington Home Care. This may reflect poor recording, or may be suggestive that there are significant best practice sharing opportunities between teams regularly being complimented on their services, and teams who appear to be less well thought of by their customers.

### Examples of Compliments Received:

#### Older People Mental Health Team

Card received, It was nice to hear you on the phone a couple of days ago, I may not get to see you today so I will leave this note and a little parcel with Sue at The Oaks for you. Thank you very much for everything you did for mum. (A small glass vase given as a gift)

#### Disabilities North

The majority of people these days are eager to complain, while few take time to praise. My husband who suffers from Multiple Sclerosis has recently been taken into permanent care at Castel Froma, thank you to Social Worker Ian Nicklin. He has been a tower of strength during what has been a difficult and stressful period Ian is very positive and professional in his approach to the well being and care of my husband and myself he has cared for Bill's needs I'm sure over and above his call of duty. He has tackled situations with cheerful optimism.

#### Stratford Homecare

Mr & Mrs C came to Drayton Avenue to thank Rose for the "Standby " arrangements she had made for their mothers care over Christmas. They described Rose as absolutely fantastic They bought Rose a box of chocolates and handed in a thank you card to Rose and all her staff

#### North Warwickshire Homecare

On behalf of Ron, my sister, and myself I would like to thank you all for the kindness and dignity in the care shown to mother. It has been a great help to us and enabled her to stay in her own home a lot longer .

#### Stratford Older People Community Care

Thank you so much for all the help you have given Arthur and me, you have changed our lives completely we did not know we could claim all those things. Thanks to you we are having a holiday. We can't find words enough to thank you, we didn't believe in angels until we met you. We will never forget your patience and kindness



## Bedworth Homecare

We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to Sue Gill and the Exhall Home Care Team, for all their dedication care and attention given to the late P S. The work they did greatly improved her quality of life prior to her bereavement, a well organised and dedicated team of people

## Nuneaton Home care

Mrs G sent in a card with thanks to the Homecare service especially Barbara who was her main carer in her final weeks at home. Over the years P was very fortunate to have the lovely people who cared for her. Through your service some have remained friends long after their "official" duties were ended thank you for all the work you do

## The Lawns HEP

Mrs M was collecting her husband after his first stay with us and said how pleased she was that he had really enjoyed his stay and was looking forward to coming back as he had been very anxious prior to his visit and reluctant to come, but was now happy to return

## Financial assessment visiting team

Mother passed away on Sunday I would like to thank everyone for all of their help

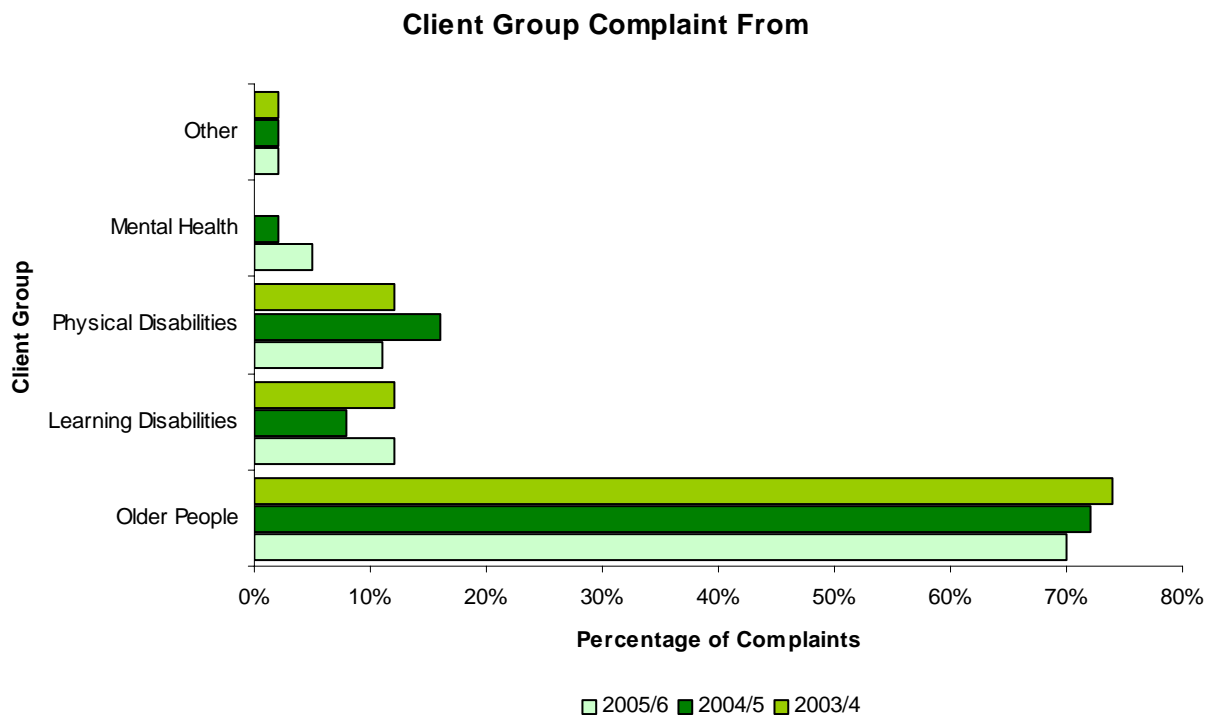
## Nuneaton and Bedworth Disability

I am writing to thank Balbir Franklin Occupational therapist she has been extremely helpful and supportive from the first time we met her attitude has always been if I can help you I will, a huge help and comfort to me whilst facing a number of difficult obstacles

## **Complaints**

Complaints activity has increased by 36% over this period, but adult social care have continued to resolve a high level of these complaints at a local team level. The highest location increase has been for Older Peoples Team, N Warks, Nuneaton and Bedworth, with a total of 34 complaints this period – a significantly higher level than other locations. However, the increase in volume appears to have been spread relatively evenly across the year, and to have affected most locations equally. There is no obvious explanation for the increase in volume, and it might be a reflection of a number of things, such as an increasing willingness to complain by customers, better access and understanding of rights to complain, increased customer expectations of services, overall service delivery issues for Adult social care services.

Complaints are mainly relating to older people services, and a good proportion relate to domiciliary care services – again, this is to be expected, given that our highest case load is older people, and the service with most direct daily interaction with customers is domiciliary care. What is apparent is that the spread of complaints activity has remained relatively consistent over the past 3 years.

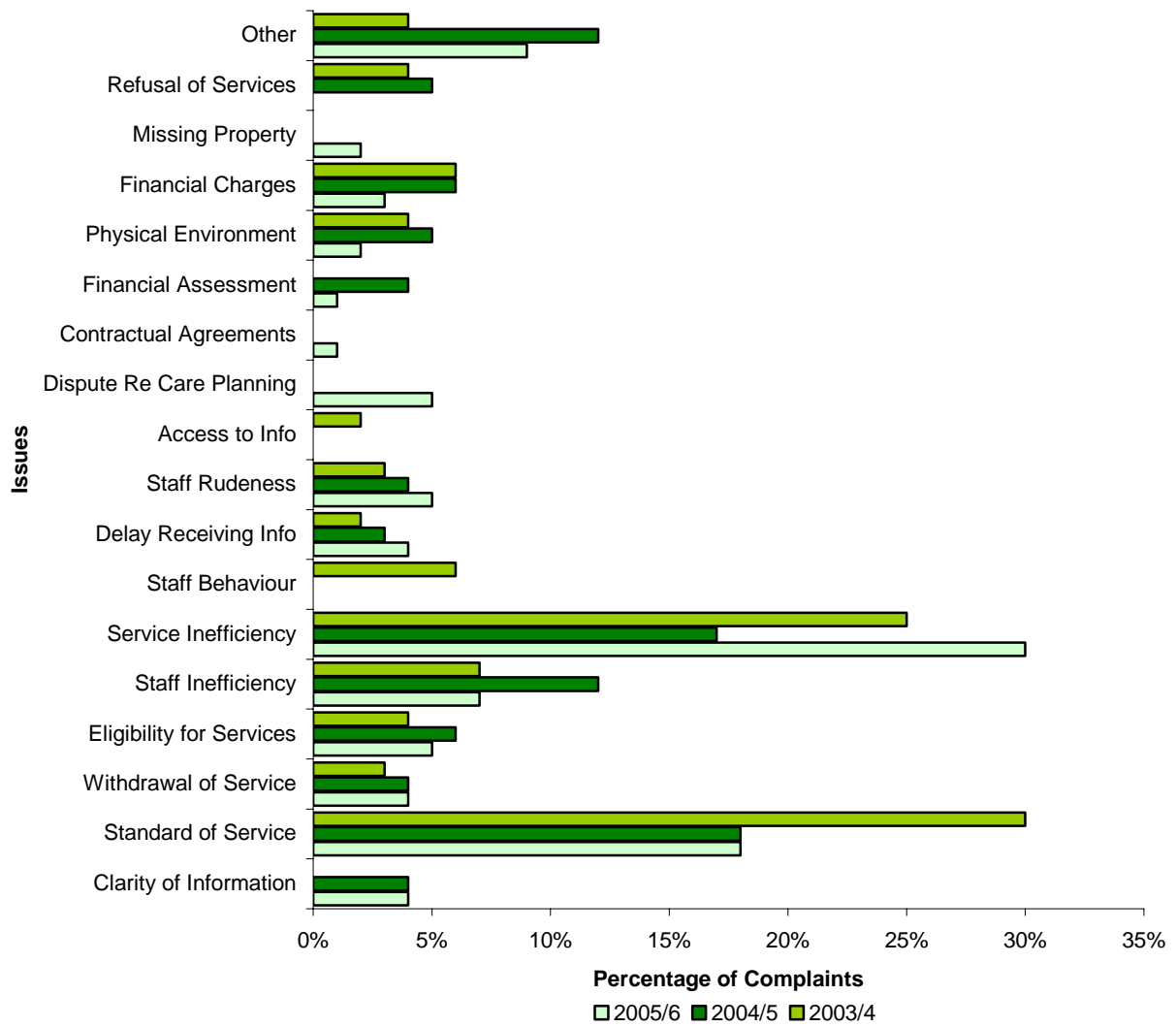


Please note, whilst there are figures relating to complaints about externally provided services, these only relate to the small number that the Customer Relations Team are made aware of, usually because the complainant comes directly to them. It does not include figures about locally resolved complaints from all externally provided services, where the complainant has gone directly to the service provider with their concerns. Similarly, we do not have figures relating to compliments received by externally provided services.

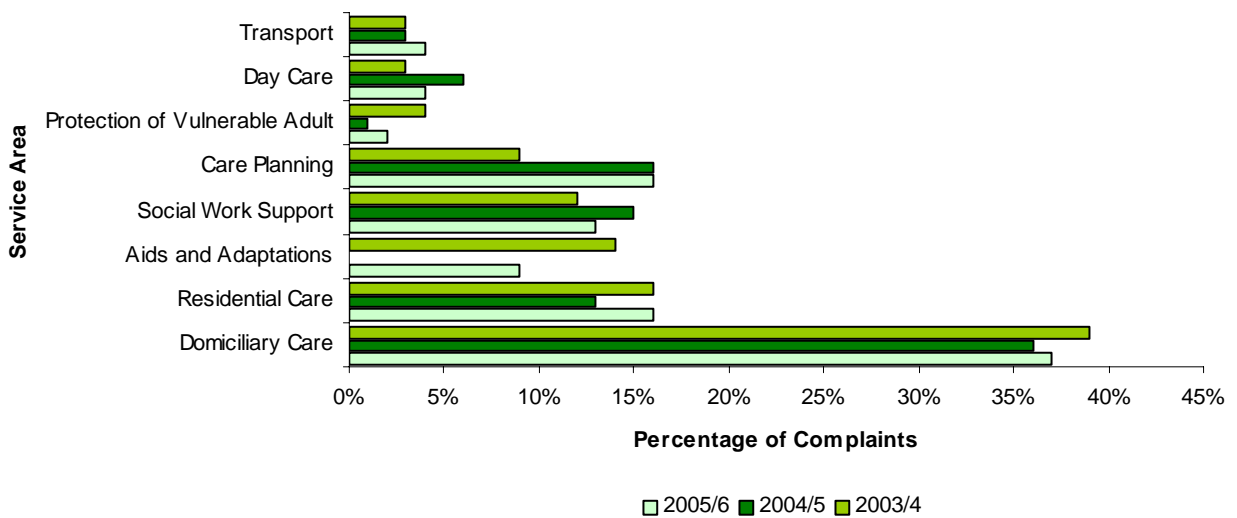
Examination of the reasons for complaint again, in the main, reflect a relatively consistent pattern. Areas where there have been some increase are service inefficiency, disputes about care planning, delay in receiving information and staff rudeness. Areas which have seen reductions are service standards, staff inefficiency, financial charges.

Results show a slight slippage in average timescale compliance at Stage 1, but overall this is a good performance, when compared with most other local authorities, and especially when considered in the context of an overall increase in the number of complaints needing to be handled. Most complaints at Stage 1 are resolved within a month, and most Stage 2s are resolved within the statutory 3 months.

### Complaint Issues



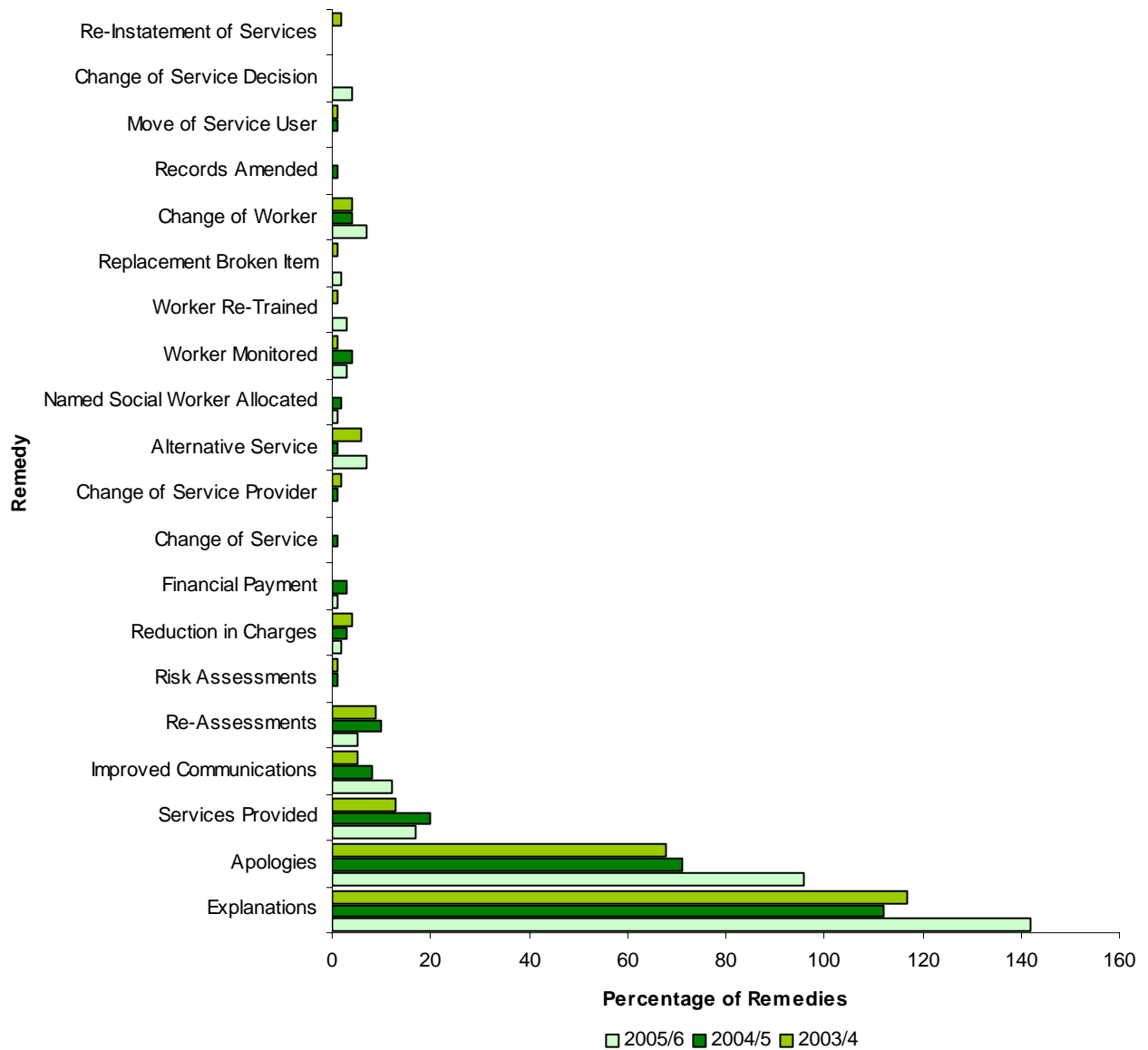
### Complaints by Service Area



It should be noted that, in October 2005, when Care Call ceased trading, it was anticipated that this would cause a number of complaints whilst alternative domiciliary care packages were sorted out. In the event, there was only one complaint about this transition, and this reflects a good deal of effective problem-solving and resolution at a local level.

The majority of complaints are resolved through explanation, and, where appropriate, apology. A significant number also result in a change in the way a service is provided, a reassessment or a change in the communication process. It is worth commenting that financial remedies continue to be rare, and again that the vast majority of complaints continue to be effectively resolved at a local team level.

### Remedies Provided



## Customer Feedback about the Complaints Process:

	Question	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither Satisfied Dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Number of surveys sent 171	Kept regularly informed of progress of investigation	14%	54%	16%	11%	5%
	Staff dealing with complaint were polite	21%	66%	9%	5%	0%
Number of surveys returned 59	Final response answered my questions	14%	46%	22%	10%	8%
	Response was clear	16%	59%	16%	8%	2%
	Pleased with outcome	15%	42%	22%	14%	7%

We have had a 35% return rate on the feedback forms we issue at the close of the Stage 1 process. This shows a generally high satisfaction rate with the way we handle complaints, most people feeling they were dealt with politely, that they were kept regularly informed of the progress of the investigation, that they received a clear response, that this answered their concerns, and they were pleased with the outcome. This reflects well on the effectiveness of our current complaints process.

### Examples of complaints which have resulted in service change and improvement

#### Transport

Complaint regarding the journey from the day centre where the driver drove too fast and went the wrong way and too fast over speed bumps. The response from Rob Leahy stated that this was a new driver and in future they would all be supervised and monitored during their initial journeys to ensure this did not happen.

#### Domiciliary Care

Mr D contacted to say he was unable to contact the supervisors for his Aunts home care when he was planning a holiday. The home care team assured him that all contact numbers for the family were provided to all supervisors to ensure good communication if there were concerns about a client.

#### Domiciliary Care

Mr H complained that his son was inappropriately prepared for day care in relation to his personal care from the home care team. A memo was consequently sent to all the home care team supervisors that his son's care times should not be changed and that the

recording on the daily log should specify a day care day. This was to ensure his personal care was provided appropriately before he went out for the day.

#### Residential care

Mrs M complained that when her husband returned from The Lawns after a respite stay, he had developed sores and she was concerned about the care he had received. Jill Turley visited the family and explained that Mr M had refused to use the hoist available. They agreed that a standing hoist would be made available so he would be in more comfort and reduce the risk of further deterioration during his next respite stay.

#### Data Protection

Mrs J complained that a letter with sensitive information was sent to another address when she knows the department has her address. The Team Manager apologises and said in future they would ensure that the address is checked before letters are sent out and he updated the computer with the correct information.

#### Disability service

Mr C complained that his son's personal care was not being addressed appropriately at the day centre which had compromised his dignity. The Manager ensured that a changing mat was provided to reduce the risk of falls and they worked with the family to ensure his care needs were addressed in the same way as they are at home to ensure continuity of care.

Karen Smith  
Customer Relations Manager