



## Patient Advice & Support Service

Use your rights  
Know your responsibilities  
Share your experience  
Make a difference



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# National Annual Report 2023-24

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# 1. Introduction

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The Patient Advice & Support Service (PASS) supports clients to give feedback and comments as well as to raise concerns and complaints to NHS Scotland. PASS informs clients on Patient Rights and Responsibilities and provides information and advice to enable clients to access NHS services and to make informed decisions.

The number of people seeking the support of the service has increased greatly since 2022-23. Over 10,000 people have accessed our new and upgraded website, which launched in June 2023. It appears to have been an invaluable tool, enabling people to access the information and links they need, as well as sample letters and templates. Meanwhile, the number of clients contacting the service for support from an adviser has remained relatively stable, although the number of times clients contacted PASS has continued to rise, with 15% more contacts in 2023-24 than in the previous year. This supports the observations of the PASS Advisers and is in line with feedback from other advice and helplines, that is, clients now need more time and support. In addition, many PASS clients, with less support needs, seem to find the support they need from the new PASS website, which may be another factor contributing to the higher rate of complex calls, advisers are dealing with.



## 2. Highlights

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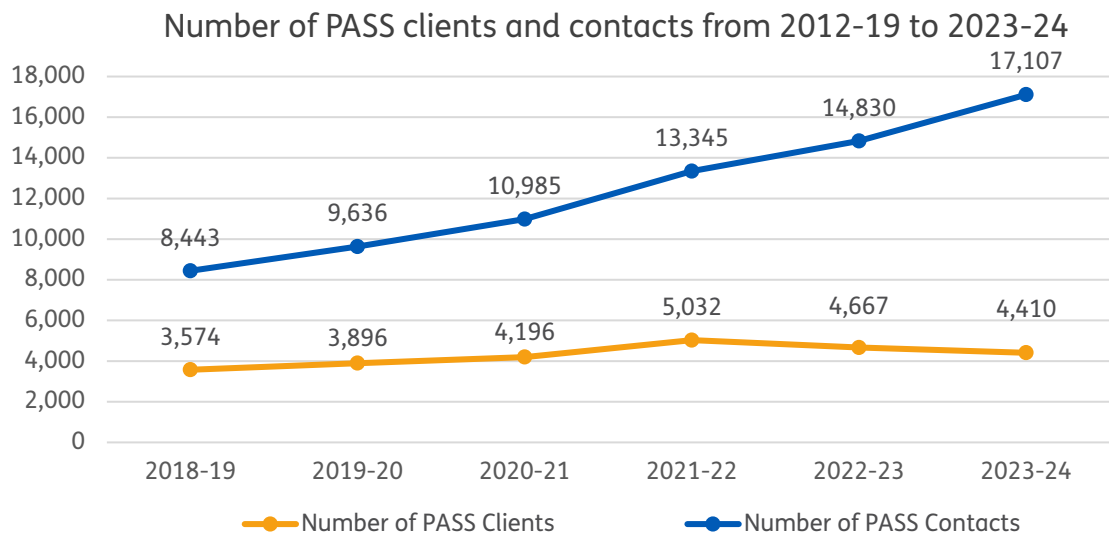
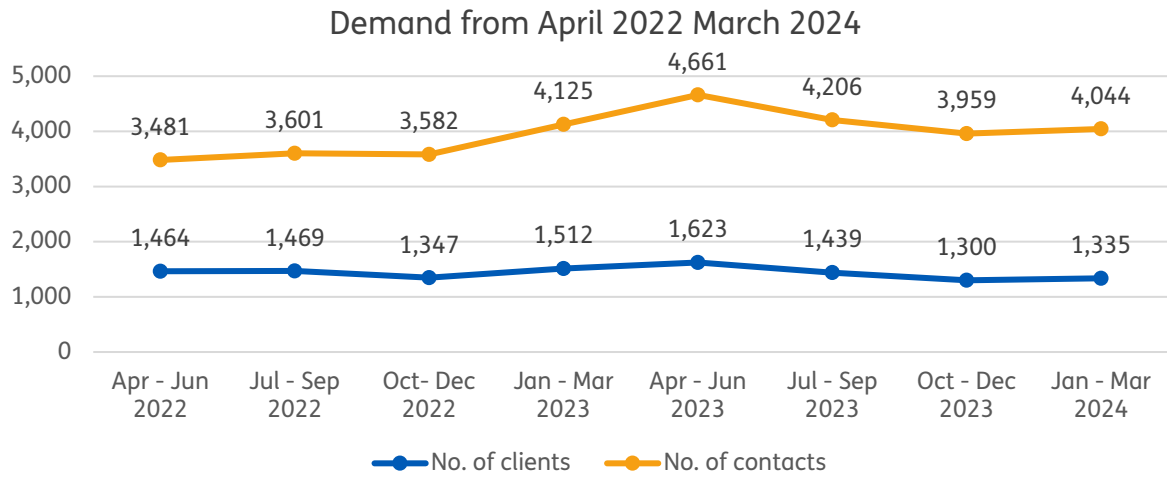
### PASS supported

- > **4,410** clients, down 6% on the previous year.
- > **17,107** client contacts
  - > up **15%** on the previous year, which in turn was
  - > up **11%** on 2021-22
- > An average of **3.90** contacts per client
  - > up **23%** on last year
- > **3,511** advice line calls were answered
  - > down **18%** on last year. This is likely due to the success of the new website and more voicemails being left
- > **1,240** advice line call backs were made
  - > Up **52%** on last year. This is in line with the increased client contact number this year
- > **1,056** advice centre emails and contact forms that were received
  - > down **18%** on last year. This is likely due to more information being available through the new website
- > **50%** of clients were enabled to take their own action
  - > this is the same as last year.

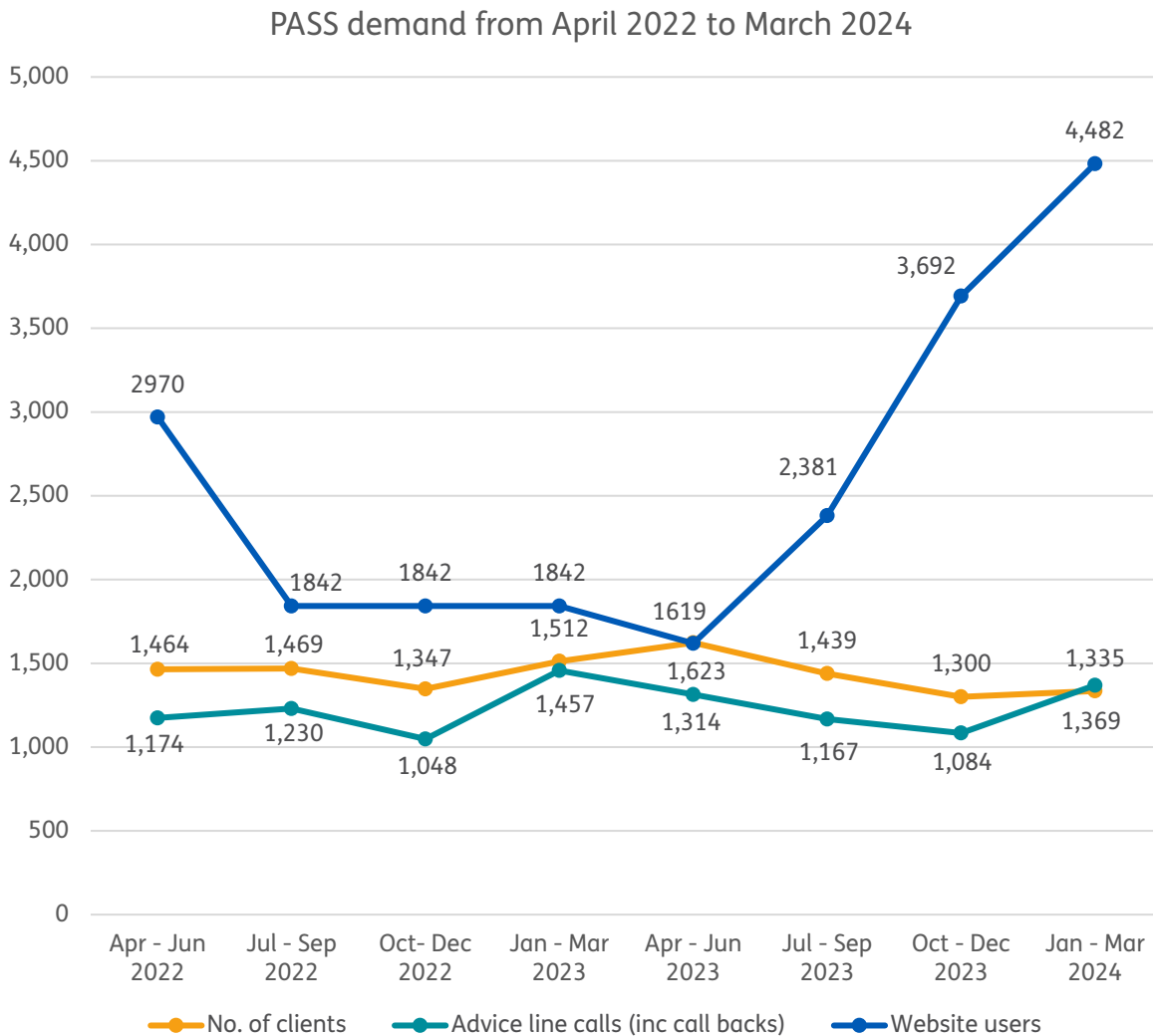
### NHS complaints (Percentage of clients)

- > Clinical Treatment made up **45%** of all Advice Codes
- > **39%** of complaints fell within the Hospital Complaints, with
  - > **24%** falling within Hospital Acute Services
  - > **26%** of complaints concerned Hospital Consultants / Doctors
- > **29%** of complaints concerned HSCPs, with
  - > **26%** falling within the Family Health Services
  - > **23%** of complaints concerned the GPs Staff Group.

# 3. Demand



### 3. Demand



The number of contacts continues to rise significantly, year on year, with the number of contacts in 2023-24 more than double the number five years ago. Advisers also report that clients need an increasing amount of time and support, and the average number of contacts per client has also increased significantly in this period. Despite this, PASS Advisers continue to support clients in a professional and compassionate manner.

“I found the PASS adviser very kind and compassionate who listened to everything I told her and wrote it all down. I found her easy to talk to as I had been so stressed wondering who I could talk to about my situation. She put the complaint in on my behalf which I really appreciated as I was unsure how to go about it. Getting in touch PASS helped my stress level. Thank you so much.”

“A huge weight off of my mind to know I have help and support on hand and am not alone.”

# 4. Hospital complaints

Client complaints may relate to one or more than one Health Board, National Health Board and/or Health and Social Care Partnership. The data in this section relate to complaints made about hospitals.

## a. Health Boards where complaints were made

- > **1,716** clients made a complaint about hospital care.
- > **8,236** contacts related to hospital complaints, concerns, comments and/or compliments.

Local Health Board	Clients	Percentage
Ayrshire & Arran	54	3%
Borders	31	2%
Dumfries & Galloway	64	4%
Fife	132	8%
Forth Valley	126	7%
Grampian	137	8%
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	490	28%
Highland	139	8%
Lanarkshire	126	7%
Lothian	220	13%
Orkney	17	1%
Shetland	16	1%
Tayside	156	9%
Western Isles	12	1%
Unknown	19	1%

## 4. Hospital complaints

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### b. Reason for contact

PASS provides support for clients through all stages of the complaints process and provides information and advice in other areas, such as access to NHS Services and Patient Rights and Responsibilities. The main reason for each contact between the PASS Advisers and their clients is listed below.

Hospital Contact Reason	Clients	Percentage
Unknown	3,834	47%
NHS Complaint - Stage 2 (formal)	2,218	27%
NHS Complaint - Stage 1 (informal)	762	9%
NHS Complaint - Stage 3 (SPSO)	588	7%
NHS - Not related to NHS Complaints Process	474	6%
NHS SAER (Significant Adverse Event Review)	121	1%
NHS Concerns - Feedback/Comments	76	1%
NHS Complaint Process exhausted	71	1%
NHS Concerns - Unable to make complaint	42	1%
NHS Complaint - Significant delays/extensions	38	<1%
NHS Compliments	12	<1%

### c. Service Area

Each client may report one or more Service Areas. The top six Service Areas are listed below.

Hospital Service Area	Clients	Percentage
Psychiatric / Learning Disability Services	127	7%
Accident & Emergency	98	6%
Other	79	5%
Community Health Services – not elsewhere specified	76	4%
Administration	75	4%
Administration	75	4%



## 4. Hospital complaints

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### d. Staff Groups

Each client may report one or more Staff Group. The top five Staff Groups are listed below.

Hospital Staff Group 1	Clients	Percentage
Hospital Consultants / Doctors	1156	65%
Nurses	316	18%
NHS Board/hospital administrative staff/members - excluding FHS admin	154	9%
Other	102	6%
Allied Health Professionals	29	2%

As the most reported Staff Group 1, Hospitals Consultants/Doctors is further broken down. The top four are listed below.

Hospital Consultants/Doctors	Clients	Percentage
Consultant - medical	436	38%
Consultant - surgical	328	28%
Doctor	186	18%
Consultant - psychiatrist	202	13%

### e. NHS Advice Code

Each client may report one or more Advice Code. The top six Advice Codes are listed below.

Hospital NHS Advice Code	Clients	Percentage
Clinical treatment (all aspects)	972	26%
Staff - complaint handling	482	13%
Staff - attitude / behaviour	327	9%
Rights and responsibilities	227	6%
Staff - communication (oral)	224	6%
Personal records (medical, complaints files)	203	5%

## 4. Hospital complaints

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### Case study 1

#### Fully upheld complaint results in Service Improvement review

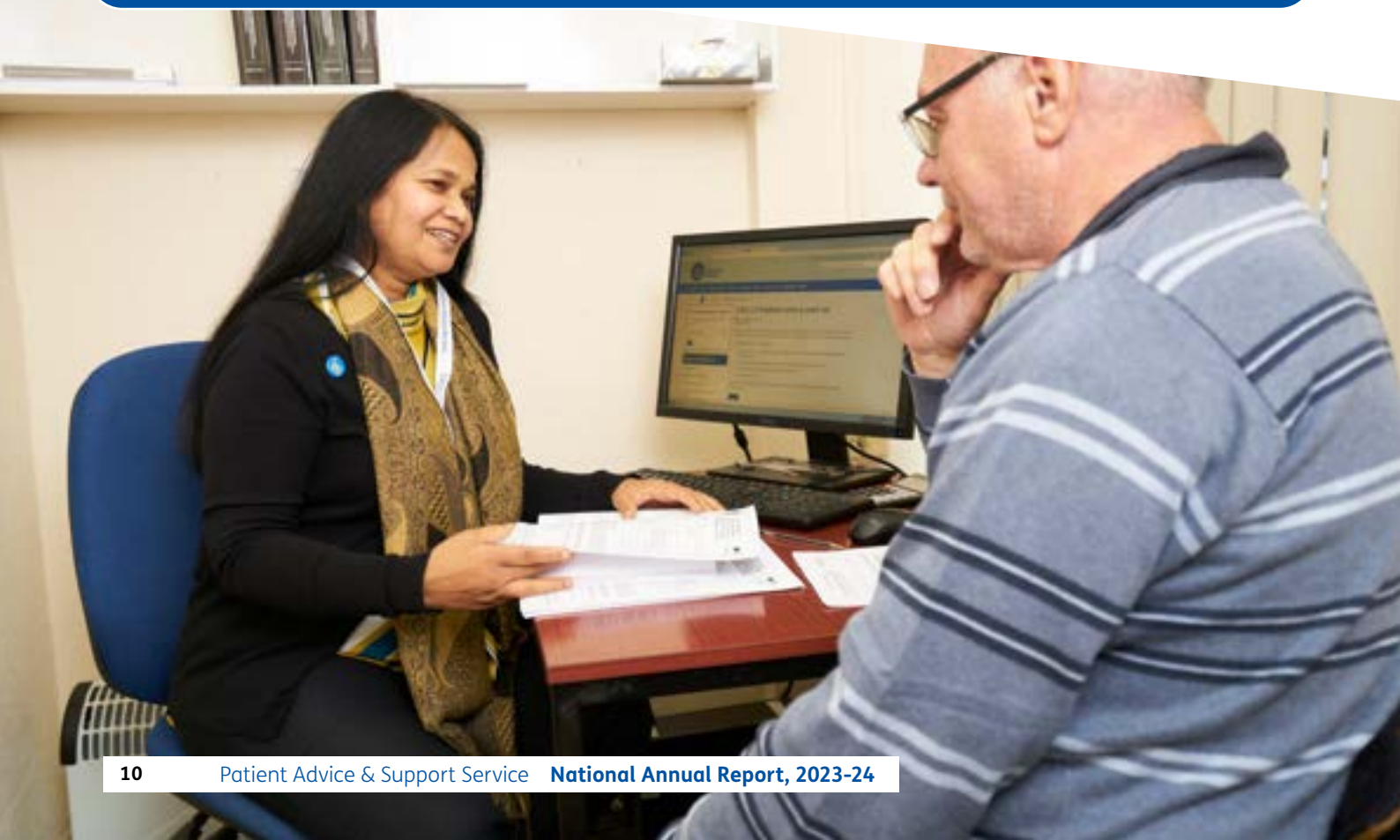
The client saw an Orthopaedic Consultant due to a knee problem and a referral was made to a physiotherapist.

Six months later the client started treatment with a physiotherapist and was led to believe that a referral had been made for them to see a further specialist, five months later. However, after nine months, the client learned that the referral had not been made. The client asked for a referral to the other specialist to be made, and for a second time, they found out later that, their referral had not been made.

After almost two years from the initial consultation, an urgent referral was made. The client was in severe pain throughout this time and was unable to stand for more than a brief period of time and they were unable to work.

The PASS Adviser assisted the client by supporting them to write a letter to local Health Board requesting an explanation and an apology.

The complaint was fully upheld. The client received an apology for the lack of a timely referral and an explanation that the delays were a result of human error. Furthermore, they were assured that changes to the referral process were made to ensure this would not happen again and the physiotherapist would receive additional supervision and training.



# 5. Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) complaints

Client complaints may relate to one or more than one Health Board, National Health Board and/or Health and Social Care Partnership. The data in this section relate to complaints made about HSCPs.

## a. Health Boards

- > **1,293** clients made complaints about HSCPs.
- > **5,850** contacts related to HSCP complaints, concerns, comments and/or compliments

Local HSCPs	Clients	Percentage
Ayrshire & Arran	54	4%
Borders	30	2%
Dumfries & Galloway	48	4%
Fife	125	10%
Forth Valley	47	4%
Grampian	127	10%
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	346	27%
Highland	128	10%
Lanarkshire	128	10%
Lothian	182	14%
Orkney	16	1%
Shetland	1	<1%
Tayside	63	5%
Western Isles	2	<1%

## 5. Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) complaints

### b. Reason for contact

PASS provides support for clients through all stages of the complaints process and provides information and advice in other areas, such as access to NHS Services and Patient Rights and Responsibilities. The main reason for each contact between the PASS Advisers and their clients is listed below.

HSCP Contact Reason	Clients	Percentage
Unknown	4568	78%
NHS Complaint - Stage 1 (informal)	431	7%
NHS Complaint - Stage 2 (formal)	389	7%
NHS - Not related to NHS Complaints Process	287	5%
NHS Complaint - Stage 3 (SPSO)	69	1%
NHS Concerns - Feedback/Comments	47	1%
NHS Concerns - Unable to make complaint	19	<1%
NHS Complaint Process exhausted	17	<1%
NHS Complaint - Significant delays/extensions	15	<1%
NHS SAER (Significant Adverse Event Review)	4	<1%
NHS Compliments	4	<1%

### c. Service Area

Each client may report one or more Service Areas. The top six Service Areas are listed below.

HSCPs Service Area	Clients	Percentage
Family Health Services	1136	80%
Psychiatric / Learning Disability Services	101	7%
Community Health Services – not elsewhere specified	81	6%
Other	27	2%
Community Hospital Services	18	1%
Administration	18	1%

## 5. Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) complaints

### d. Staff Groups

Each client may report one or more Staff Group. The top six Staff Groups are listed below.

HSCP Staff Group 1	Clients	Percentage
GP	921	70%
Dental	132	10%
Nurses	79	6%
Other	52	4%
NHS Board/hospital administrative staff/members (excluding FHS admin)	44	3%
Pharmacists	33	3%

As the most reported Staff Group 1, GP is further broken down, below.

HSCP Staff Group 2	Clients	Percentage
General Practitioner	672	73%
Practice manager	88	10%
Practice receptionist	79	9%
GP - Other	64	7%
Practice nurse	18	2%
Pharmacists	33	3%

### e. NHS Advice Code

Each client may report one or more Advice Code. The top eight advice codes are listed below

HSCP NHS Advice Code	Clients	Percentage
Clinical treatment (all aspects)	608	21%
Access to GP	422	15%
Staff - attitude / behaviour	308	11%
Staff - complaint handling	277	10%
Rights and responsibilities	171	6%
Personal records (medical, complaints files)	155	5%
Staff - communication (oral)	137	5%
Mental health	130	5%

## 5. Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) complaints

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### Case study 2

#### **PASS support with a special health board complaint**

Whilst living with a cancer diagnosis, the client injured their finger. Following this injury, inflammation spread up their right arm. They were aware that, as a result of their cancer treatment, they were immunosuppressed, and therefore at a higher risk of cellulitis. The client saw this as a potential emergency and called NHS 24.

The client felt that the operative was unempathetic and did not respond in a manner appropriate to an emergency. The client was told that they would receive a call back in 4 hours.

The client was very concerned and so attended their local pharmacy. On seeing the injury and inflammation tracking up the client's arm the pharmacist instructed the client to attend accident and emergency, immediately.

At accident and emergency, the client was attended to by a Senior Clinician, who diagnosed right arm cellulitis and lymphangitis. The client was admitted to hospital for 3 days where they received treatment.

When the client contacted PASS, for support to complain about their experience with NHS 24, the adviser was able to help by:

- > Discussing the NHS complaints procedure and how PASS could support them
- > Clarifying how the client wanted to proceed
- > Submitting feedback to NHS 24 on the client's behalf.

The response from the NHS 24 Deputy Director of Nursing and Care concluded that the patient's health status and concerns had been recognised during the call, and that the questions asked were appropriate. However, they also concluded that a further exploration of the patient's symptoms should have been undertaken, and that the call handler should have shared all relevant details with the Clinical Supervisor when transferring the call to them.

NHS 24 apologised to the client and acknowledged that an urgent face-to-face assessment should have been arranged. They confirmed that learning opportunities would be identified and progressed. The client was satisfied with both the apology and these assurances.

## 6. Special Health Boards complaints

Special Health Board	This year	2023-24	2022-23
	Clients	Contacts	Clients
Scottish Ambulance Service	27	122	11
NHS 24	11	49	12
Golden Jubilee (National Waiting Times Hospital)	8	29	2
SNBTS	1	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>15</b>

## 7. Prisoner complaints

The demand from prisoners remains relatively low, see table below.

Prison	This year 2023-24		Last year 2022-23	
	Clients	Contacts	Clients	Contacts
HMP Barlinnie	18	48	14	20
HMP Shotts	3	41	0	0
HMP Dumfries	2	9	1	2
HMP Unknown	2	2	0	0
HMP Addiewell	1	8	0	0
HMP Edinburgh	1	1	4	17
HMP Perth	0	0	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>41</b>

## 8. Support for clients

### a. Activities we did to support our clients

PASS Advisers perform multiple tasks to support each client with their specific needs. The top ten activities for each client are listed below.

Activities	Clients	Percentage
Client given information and/or advice	3326	35%
Signposting	1053	11%
Allocated client to local PASS Adviser	1011	11%
Review case	856	9%
Information to client on rights and responsibilities	692	7%
Request information / action	550	6%
Write letter	355	4%
Write complex complaint letter	251	3%
Complex support given	233	2%
Redraft letter	191	2%

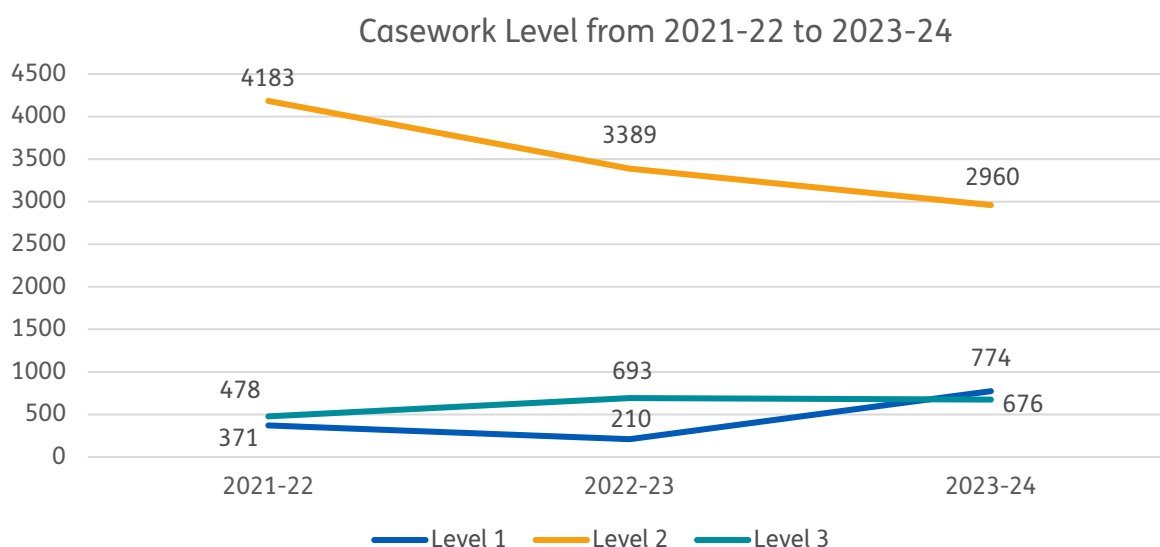
### b. Level of casework we carried out for our clients

Client casework levels	Clients	Percentage
<b>Level 1</b> – Signposting: Give access to information, such as leaflets, help-line numbers and website addresses.	3326	35%
<b>Level 2</b> - Information & Advice: Give advice, explore options and initiate action, such as preparing letters and 3rd party contact such as advocacy services.	2,960	67%
<b>Level 3</b> - Complex casework: Provide increased support and assistance as required to support complex casework, including accompanying clients to meetings and working jointly with partner organisations.	676	15%



## 8. Support for clients

Although casework levels for clients have not changed very much over the last few years, PASS advisers have reported an increase in the number of complex conversations and work they need to perform to support their clients.



### c. How we engaged with our clients

Whenever possible, PASS Advisers will provide all the advice, information and support their client needs in just one contact, whether in person, on the phone or by email. Clients with complex needs and with complex complaints will need more contacts. The average number of contacts per client has risen over the last five years, particularly so over the last two years.

	Contacts per client
2018-19	2.36
2019-20	2.47
2020-21	2.62
2021-22	2.65
2022-23	3.18
2023-24	3.90

	This year	2023-24
Single contacts	1,998	45%
Multiple contacts	2,412	55%

The proportion of single to multiple contacts was approximately 60% to 40% over the last four years; however, this year the percentage of clients with single contacts dropped markedly and for the first year there were more clients needing multiple contacts to support their enquiry than those we could help fully on their first contact with the service.

## 8. Support for clients

### Case study 3

#### PASS support achieves resolution without a formal complaint

The client had been prescribed diazepam by a Dental Hospital Consultant, to manage severe pain; however, the GP refused to provide the prescribed medicine as it was addictive. The client tried, unsuccessfully, to contact the Dental Hospital Consultant. They were directed to their dentist who was unable to offer any resolution. The client was in severe pain and contacted PASS for support.

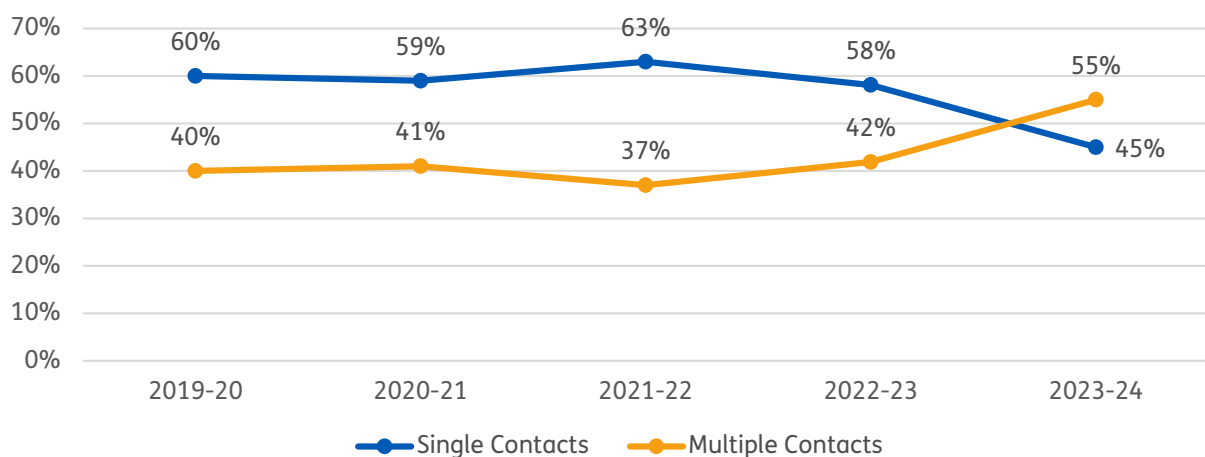
After listening to the client, the PASS Adviser:

- > Advised the client to contact the Dental Hospital to obtain a copy of the note, which provided a reason for the prescription
- > Liaised between the Dental Hospital and the GP Practice on behalf of the client
- > Provided a web link to NICE guidelines on treatment types for information and to aid discussions with the GP
- > Supplied information from NHS Inform on self-help pain management strategies relating to their condition

The client's GP accepted the Dental Hospital Consultant's justification for the prescription and provided the medication for a limited period. The client was happy with this resolution, which was achieved without the need for a formal NHS complaint.

“[PASS Adviser] was the most amazing support to the family during this enquiry, over an extended period of three years. We could not have progressed to the outcome without her. She remained professional and person centred to me, she kept me informed on a regular basis and showed a passion and empathy that has made this process so much easier. She is amazing and a great ambassador of the service.”

Single and Multiple contacts Over the last five years



## 8. Support for clients

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### d. Organisations we liaised with to best support our clients

PASS Advisers liaise with external organisations and CAB to support clients. The nine organisations PASS liaise with most for their clients are listed, below.

Organisation	Clients	Percentage
NHS – complaints staff	510	37%
NHS – non complaints staff	195	14%
General Practitioner	95	7%
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman	95	7%
Action Against Medical Accidents	56	4%
Solicitor/Law Centre	53	4%
Other	50	4%
NHS Inform	46	3%
CAB	45	3%



# 9. Outputs and Outcomes achieved for our clients

## 9. Outputs and Outcomes achieved for our clients

PASS Advisers work hard to ensure they provide the support each client needs. Where possible we empower the client to pursue their own complaint, so the outcome of the complaint is not known.

- > 2,532 (50%) of clients were enabled to take their own action.
- > 158 clients received an apology from the NHS.
- > 20 clients' complaints resulted in a Service Improvement review.

The top fifteen client outputs and outcomes are listed below.

Client cases	Clients	Percentage
Case closed - client enabled to take own action	2,532	50%
Case closed - no further contact from client	851	17%
Case closed - complaint withdrawn	211	4%

Results	Clients	Percentage
Outcome not known	732	15%
Local resolution resolved	81	2%
NHS - irresolvable - time barred	46	1%
NHS - irresolvable - other	26	1%
Case closed - alternative dispute resolution - resolved	25	<1%

Responses	Clients	Percentage	% apology
NHS - apology received	158	3%	n/a
NHS - response / explanation received	134	3%	85%
NHS - not upheld	81	2%	51%
NHS - issue partially upheld	28	1%	18%
NHS - issue fully upheld	20	<1%	13%
NHS - Service Improvement review	20	<1%	13%
SPSO - not upheld	18	<1%	n/a

## 9. Outputs and Outcomes achieved for our clients

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### Case study 4

#### **PASS Adviser work and Client outcomes**

The client received mental health support for eight years, then moved from their home city. They waited eighteen months for a referral to specialist services. The client was unable to work and their family and young child remained in the city. They had limited contact with them due to the cost of travel. The client asked their local mental health nurse to countersign an application for a bus pass to entitle them to free bus travel and enable them to see their child and family, more frequently. This was refused on the basis that they had not been a patient with the local mental health team for a long enough period to justify this.

The PASS adviser had meetings with the client and sent a complaint letter on behalf of the client, which requested the mental health team's assistance. In response, the head of the mental health team called the PASS Adviser, and after discussion, agreed to counter sign the application form. It was stated that there appeared to have been a misunderstanding, and that NHS were eager to co-operate in enhancing client's mental health through contact with their family.

The client now has their bus pass and expressed their gratitude to PASS in assisting with this.

### Case study 5

The client was diagnosed with cancer. The oncology department arranged treatment, which included Radiotherapy. This treatment caused extreme damage to the client's body, to the extent they were referred to the Plastic Surgery Department. The client had no clear information as to which department was responsible for their care. They were given appointments to attend clinics but when they attended the clinics they were closed. The client felt the Consultants were uncaring and they were left for months without appointments or updates about their care plan.

The PASS Adviser spoke with the client, over several weeks, and wrote a letter of complaint, on their behalf, to the local health board feedback team. The adviser acted as a point of contact between client and the feedback team and liaised with client once response was received from NHS.

A written response was received from the feedback team with an apology and an appointment was arranged for the client to meet with their consultant for their treatment plan to be fully explained. The client was very happy with the outcomes achieved with the help of PASS.

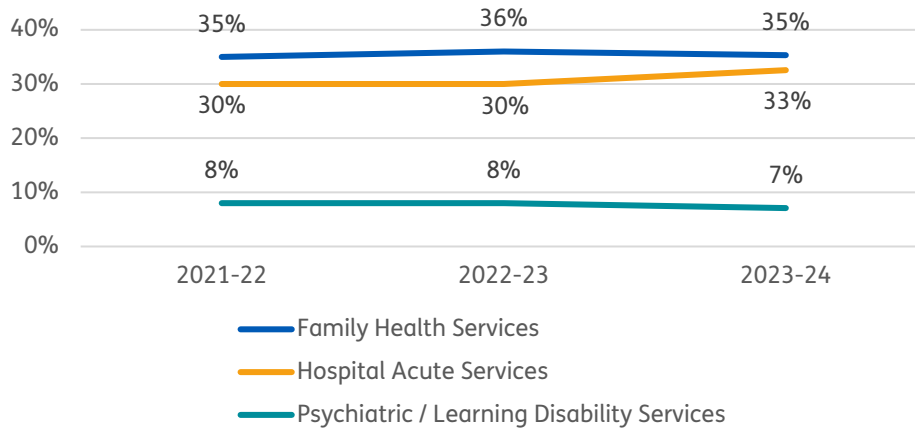
# 10. Trends and comparisons

This section shows the trends relating to the nature of complaints, relating to the NHS Service Area, Staff Groups and Advice Codes over the last three years.

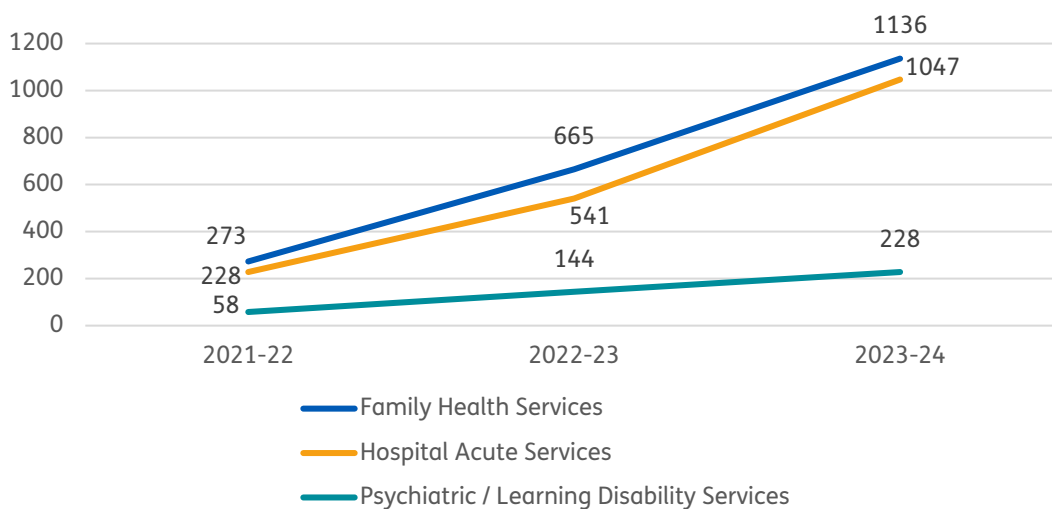
## a. The Service Areas

The percentage variation of Services Areas that we support most of our clients with has remained relatively constant over the last three years, although the number of clients contacting us about these areas has increased. This can be seen in the following figures.

Rise in complaints within specific service area



Rise in complaints within specific service area

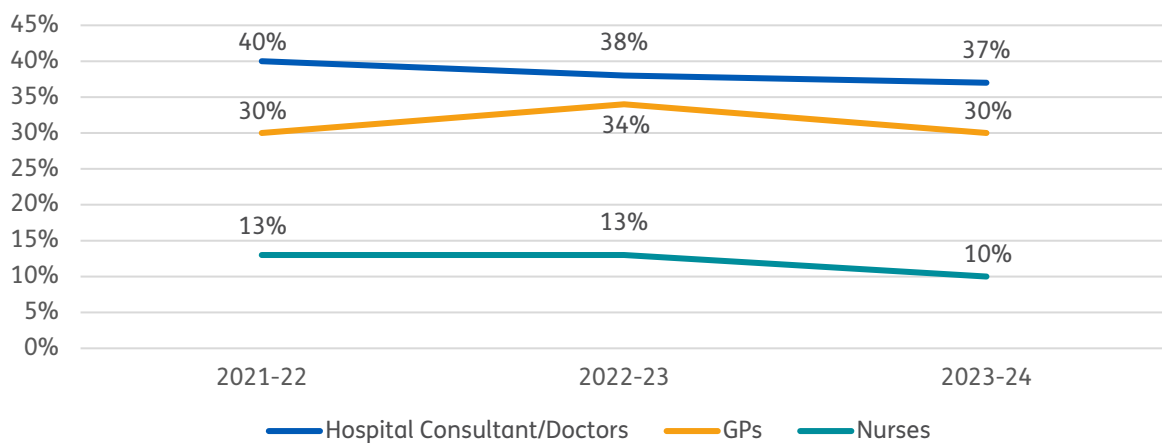


## 10. Trends and comparisons

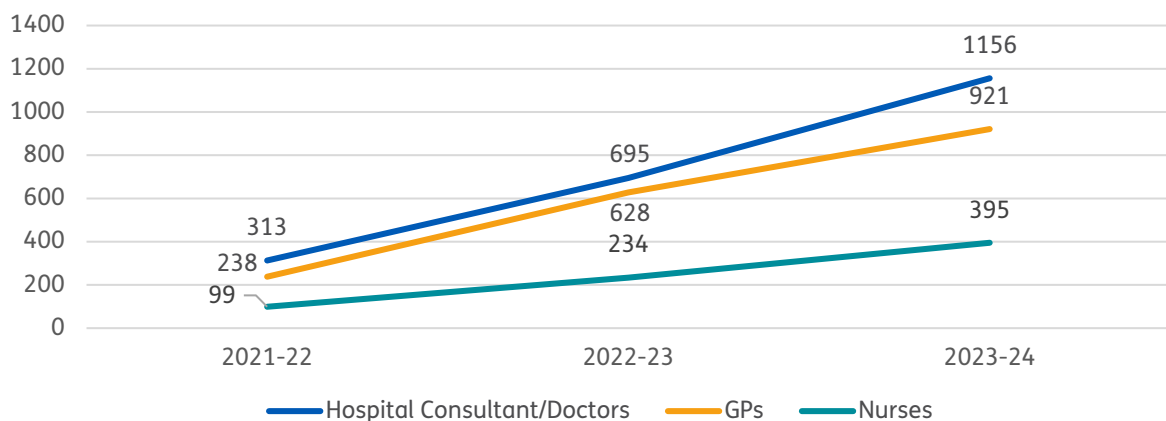
### b. Staff Groups

Hospital Consultants / Doctors, GPs and Nurses are still the Staff Groups with the most complaints and concerns. The number of clients making complaints about each of these Staff Groups continues to rise, although again the distribution of these Staff Groups has remained relatively unchanged over the last three years. This can be seen in the figures, below.

Complaints over the last three years relating to specific Staff Groups



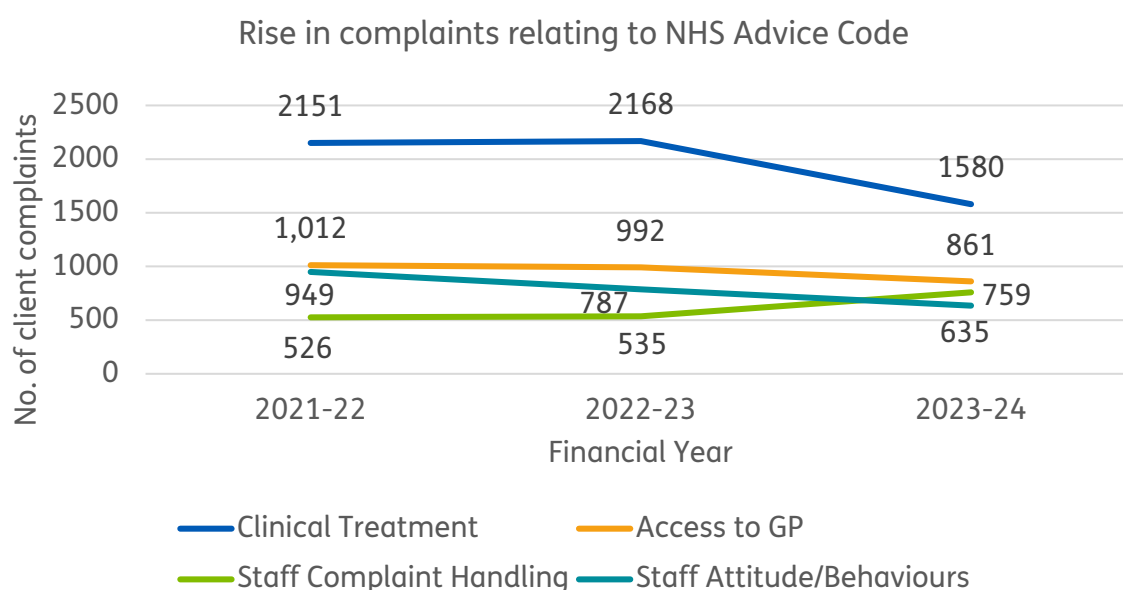
Rise in complaint numbers relating to specific Staff Groups



## 10. Trends and comparisons

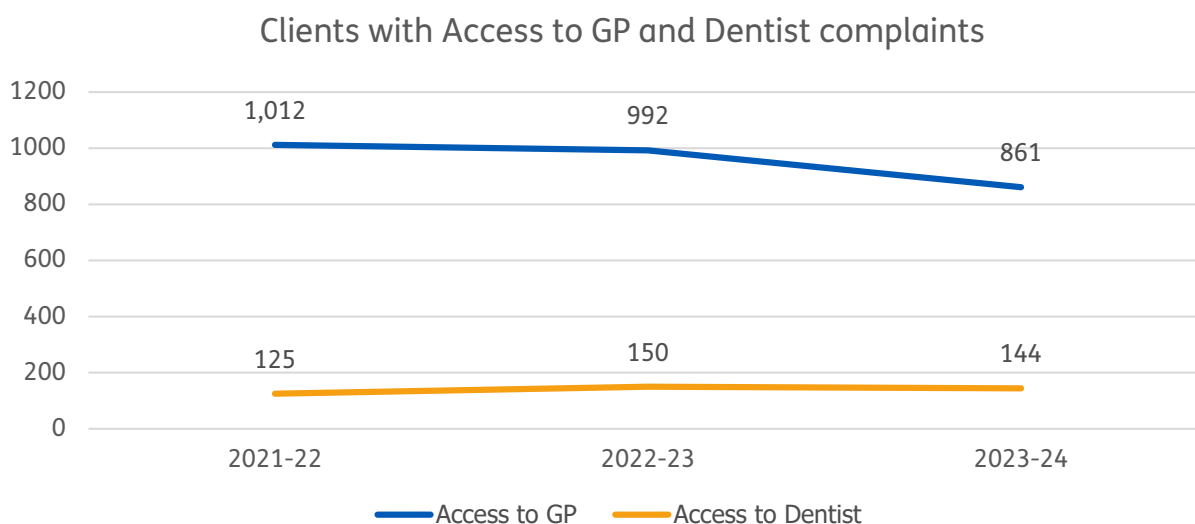
### c. Advice Codes

The top two most recorded NHS Advice Codes continue to be Clinical Treatment and Access to GP. In 2023-24, the third most recorded NHS Advice Code was Staff Complaint Handling for the first time since 2019-20. There has been a rise in complaints relating to staff complaint handling, with a 44% increase from 2021-22 to 2023-24. The PASS Advisers report that this is mainly due to delays in the complaints handling process. There was a 49% decrease in complaints relating to staff attitude/behaviour from 2021-22 to 2023-24. It was the fourth most recorded NHS Advice Code.



### d. Access to GPs and Dentists

The number of clients contacting PASS about Access to their GP has dropped slightly this year after it rose, considerably, in 2021-22 and remained at a similar level last year.





# 11. Evaluation: Client feedback

## a. Advice Line Survey

Advice Line Automated Client Satisfaction Surveys Completed	Clients	Percentage
Those surveyed, rated the extent to which they were satisfied with the overall service as fairly or very good	66	94%
Those surveyed would be fairly likely or very likely to recommend the Service	58	97%
<b>Follow up action:</b> PASS will look into ways to help to get more clients to give feedback.		

## b. Client Satisfaction Survey

PASS Advisers send out client feedback questionnaires to PASS clients on an ongoing basis. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 56 PASS clients completed the questionnaire.

The clients' response to the service was very positive

- > 96% felt it was very easy or easy to contact PASS, 4% were unsure.
- > 98% were satisfied with the time taken for a response.
- > 92% were very satisfied or satisfied with the support they received.
- > 94% stated that they would use the service again, 4% were unsure.

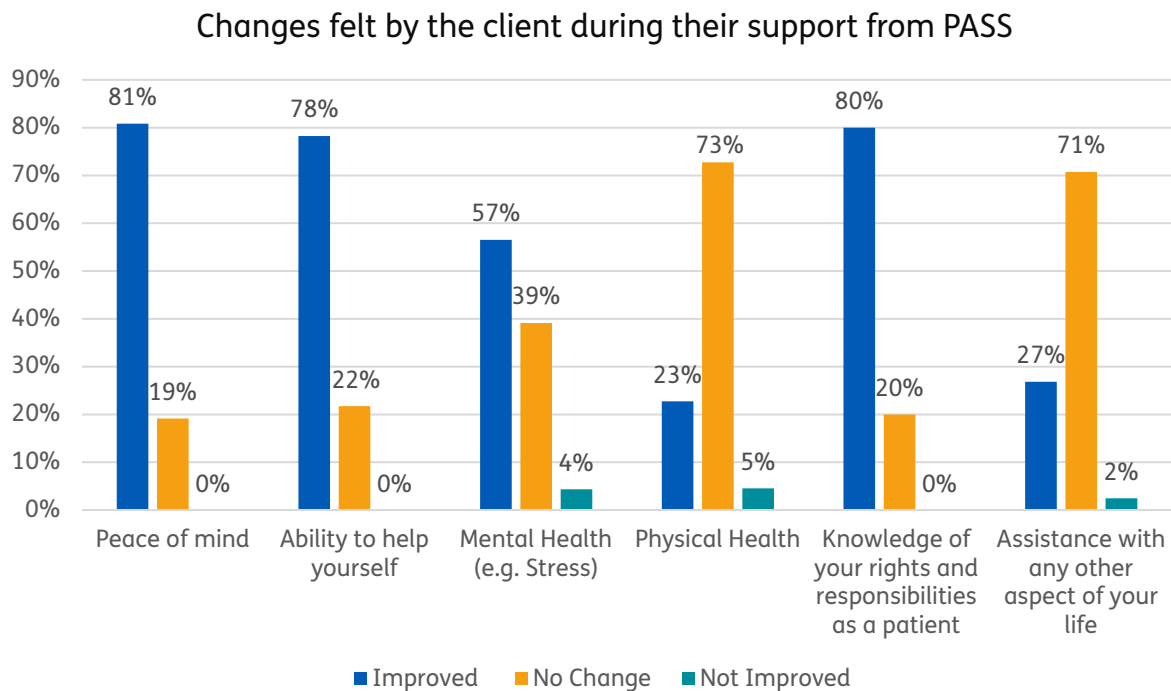
Feedback obtained from clients using the PASS service, to raise issues with NHS Scotland, was very positive. This feedback is summarised below:

	Raise issue	Resolve issue*
Fully	78%	46%
Partially	16%	26%
Not at all	3%	9%
Doesn't apply to situation	19%	26%
Other	2%	15%

\* Clients can choose more than one response, so totals may be greater than 100%.

## 11. Evaluation: Client feedback

Clients also reported additional positive outcomes as a result of the support PASS provided:



The following quotes are taken from recent Client Surveys:

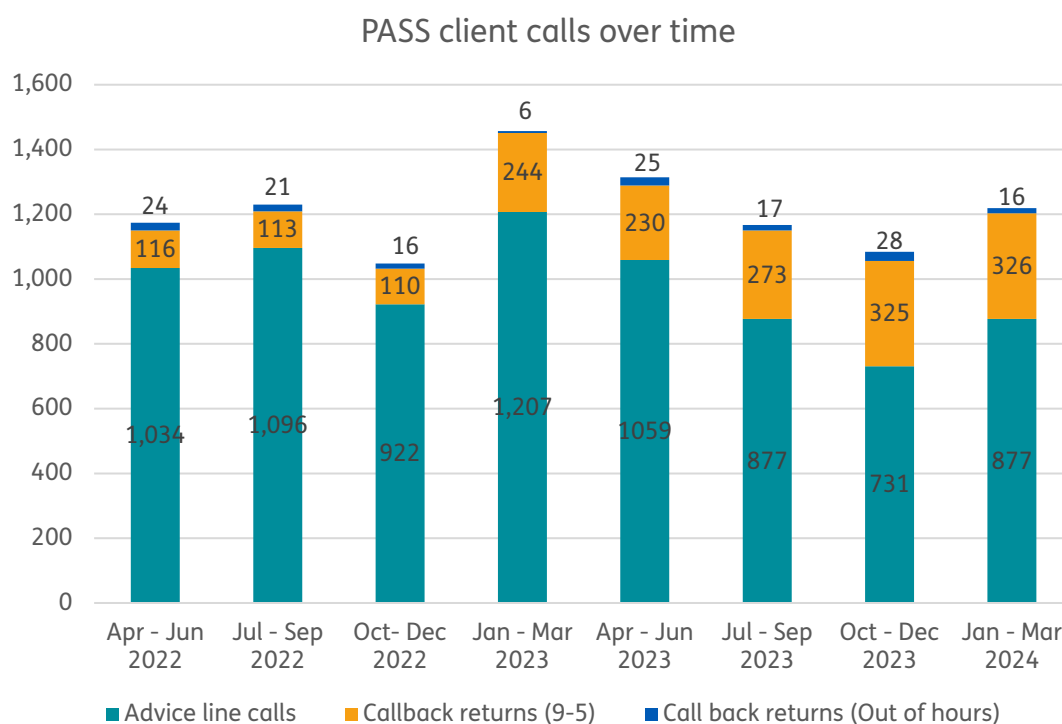
- “I feel I was well represented, and using the CAB service helped me stay on track and remain calm. Everything was done very professionally.”
- “Replicate [PASS Adviser] so everyone gets the support that I did.”
- “The staff are absolutely amazing - I am disabled with physical impairments & suffer from extreme anxiety & depression; they are always so understanding, empathetic & kind. I would not have been able to deal with the issues I've faced without their help.”
- “Very informative and realistic in their advice. Practical support for letter writing was fantastic.”

# 12. Service activities

## a. Advice Line call performance

The Advice Line continues to be well-used by clients.

Incoming calls	3,545
Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds	99%
Number of voicemails	1,240
Responses to voicemails within 1 working day	97%



## b. Website activity

The new PASS website launched on 1st June 2023. The figures below show how clients engaged with it between June 2023 and March 2024.

**Please note that the website figures are from**

- > 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 only
- > only represent the clients who accepted the website cookies

**Therefore, the real numbers are likely to be much higher than those quoted in this report, even for the period of June to April.**

## 12. Service activities

Website uptime 2023-24	99.98%	Increase on 2022-23
Total number of users	10,314	+53%
Total number of page views	74, 239	+713%
Queries comments from website	1,056	n/a
Responses to query/comment forms within 1 working day	97%	n/a
Self-help content downloads	2,313	n/a
Chatbot enquiries	3,246	n/a

The new PASS website became live on 1 June 2023, with no downtime during this reporting period.

People downloaded self-help content including the PASS Client Information Pack and complaint process templates **2,313** times. The chatbot was used **3,246** times to navigate the website.

The figures below offer a further breakdown of how clients engaged with the website between June 2023 – March 2024.

Page Views	74,239
Users	10,314
Average Page Views Per User	7.2
Average Engagement Time	2m 31s
Bounce Rate Average	41.78%
2023-24	3.90

Most users access the website from their desktop, but numbers accessing it by their mobile aren't much lower.

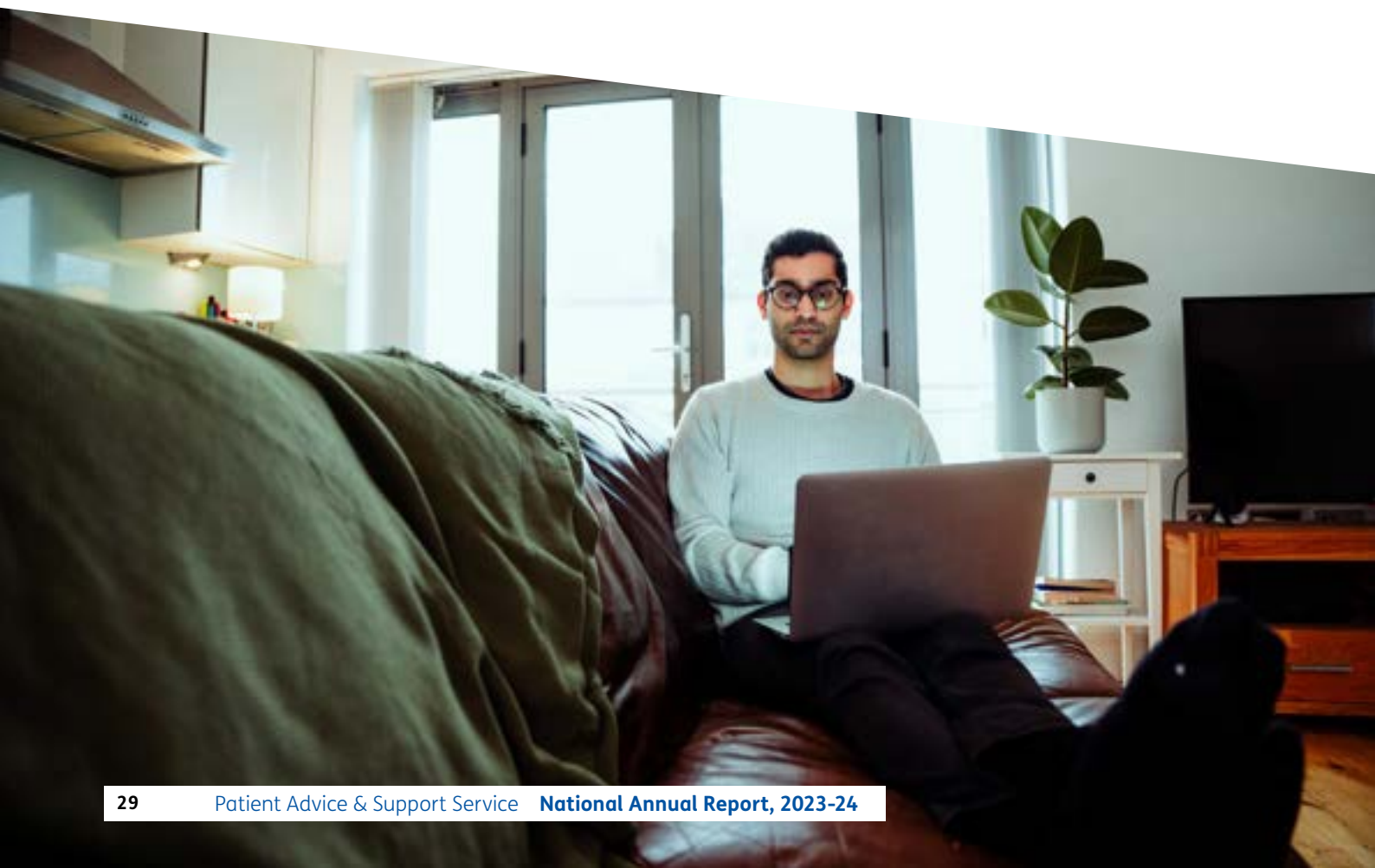
	Users	Percentage
Mobile Users	4,621	45.0%
Desktop Users	5,373	52.3%
Tablet Users	285	2.8%

## 12. Service activities

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The table below shows the top ten most visited pages. The figures indicate that most users are looking for information and support to make complaints and only 14% of users go on to look how to contact a PASS Adviser.

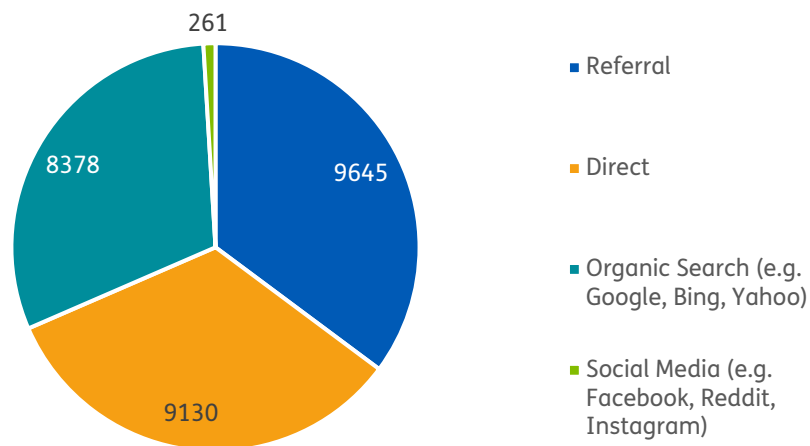
Page Title	Views	Bounce Rate	Users	Views Per User
<b>Total</b>	<b>74,239</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>10,314</b>	<b>7.2</b>
1. PASS	43,822	35%	8,842	5.0
2. How we can help you	4,763	25%	3,354	1.4
3. Making a complaint	4,200	41%	2,778	1.5
4. How to make a complaint	2,745	34%	1,728	1.6
5. Contact - PASS	2,276	38%	1,480	1.5
6. NHS complaints procedure	2,042	26%	1,558	1.3
7. FAQs	1,821	30%	1,439	1.3
8. What you can and can't complain about	1,797	21%	1,531	1.2
9. Documents - PASS	1,000	36%	511	2.0
10. PASS Client Information Pack	954	33%	595	1.6



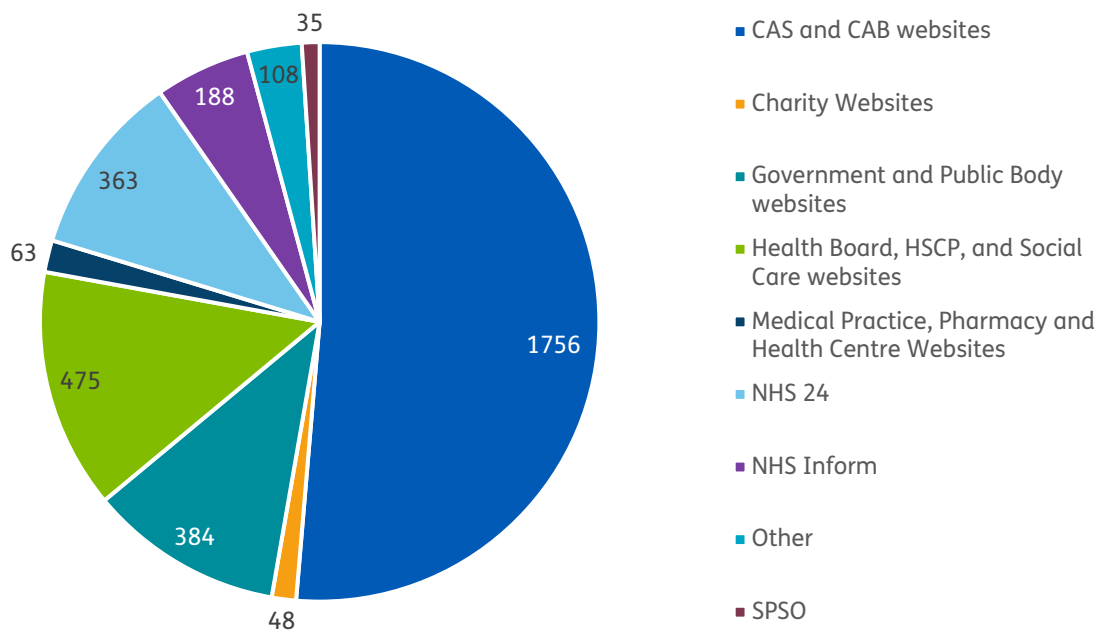
## 12. Service activities

The following figures show how users found the PASS website. Most people were directed to the website from a wide range of external websites (referrals).

User Source



User Referral Sources Recorded



## 12. Service activities

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### c. Promotional activity

A variety of activities have been carried out by PASS Advisers and their CAB to promote PASS, these include:

- > Articles in local press and newsletters
- > Broadcasts on local radio
- > Distributing new posters and flyers to local medical centres and hospitals
- > Liaising with Local Authorities and other local organisations
- > Presentations with local groups, e.g. medical students
- > Social Media posts and campaigns

### d. Training activity

Regular short training sessions have been provided for PASS Advisers in 2023-24. Most of these took place online in short morning only sessions. They included

- > Advice Line management
- > Call handling: Difficult conversations
- > Call handling: Initial contact
- > Case recording review and update on new service requirements
- > Caseload management
- > PASS Client journey
- > Data protection
- > GDPR
- > Mediation
- > PASS Complaint Handling
- > Recording and Reporting
- > Rota system
- > Safeguarding
- > Telephony system
- > Well-being

## 12. Service activities

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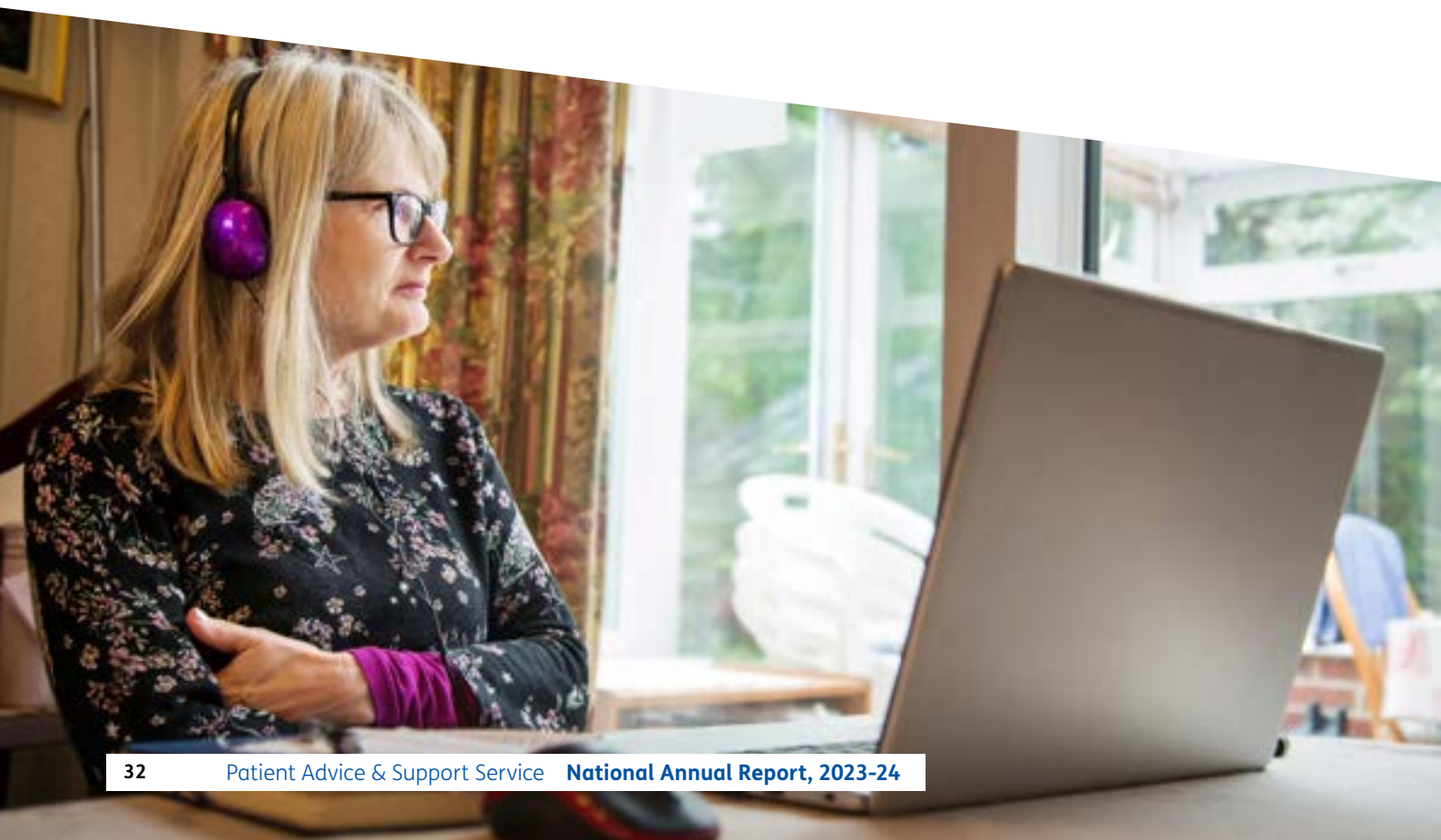
Other training events included

- > ADHD awareness and understanding
- > Case recording 1:1 sessions
- > Customer Excellence
- > In House Adviser Inductions and PASS Adviser Inductions
- > Peer shadowing
- > Quality of Advice

PASS Advisers enjoy the benefit of CAB training programmes, the support of other CAB Advisers and that of their PASS Adviser peers. Training and support continue to be priorities of the service as Advisers, in general, as well as PASS Advisers, report the increase in the need from clients for compassion and understanding for clients with complex needs.

The full training programme for 2024-25 has not yet been finalised, but will include

- > Call handling: difficult conversations
- > Diversity training
- > GDPR
- > Recording and Reporting
- > Safeguarding
- > Well-being





# 13. Quality audit outcomes

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As part of ongoing quality assessment, 48 cases for 26 PASS Advisers were selected at random for evaluation.

- > 85% met Case compliance
- > 73% met Case recording and continuity
- > 85% met Recording sources

Feedback was provided to all PASS Advisers. Where full compliance was not met, instruction and/or training was provided and follow-up checks organised. In addition, 1:1 training on PASS specific recording requirements was provided for all PASS Advisers and their managers.

# 14. Complaints

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Quarter	Complaints		Level	Complaints
Quarter 1	2		Level 1	7
Quarter 2	6		Level 2	2
Quarter 3	0		Level 3	0
Quarter 4	1		Level 4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

## 15. Equality Act and General Equality Duty

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CAS and CAB follow Equal Opportunities Policy both for employees and clients. All PASS Advisers complete training on Diversity, as part of their induction training, and this is reviewed regularly. The CAB service equality policy poster is displayed prominently in all bureau premises and online equality information is available for public viewing.

## 16. Areas for improvement

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We continue to monitor GP and Dentist Access figures, which dropped in 2023-24, but are still much higher than pre-COVID levels.



# 17. Service Development Plan

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- > PASS will continue to work on the information, links, templates and tools provided on the website to empower as many clients as possible to self-help and to better inform clients on how PASS Advisers can support them, when needed.
- > The number of voicemails rose significantly in 2023-24, PASS will look at ways to ensure the Advice Line is managed efficiently and provides the best support for clients. We have already implemented change to the way we manage the Central Advice Line and Email contacts. We will continue to review this and make further changes, if and when required.
- > We will continue to provide training and support for PASS Advisers, in general and specifically around maintaining well-being while supporting clients with complex needs.
- > We will monitor case recording to ensure we capture the required information, consistently.
- > We will continue to work with CAB and local organisations to ensure the role of PASS is well understood and how to access the service.
- > We will continue to work to improve training information and guidelines for PASS Advisers and throughout the CAB network.
- > PASS will continue to promote the service at local and national levels.
- > PASS Advisers will continue to meet with local Patient Experience and Complaints Team, raising potential local issues with them, as appropriate. They will also liaise with the PASS National Coordinator on these matters to identify any wider trends or issues.
- > PASS will continue to engage with NCPAS to benefit patient experience and with the goal of restarting the joint NCPAS annual workshop events.
- > A growing number of PASS clients would benefit from Advocacy assistance. PASS will look to develop relationships with local and national organisations to benefit clients.
- > No options for reducing costs have been identified, at present, but this will be reviewed in June and at regular intervals, thereafter.

# Appendix - Service Data

## 1. Highlights

Information	This Year 2023-24	Last year 2022-23	Variation on last year
Clients	<b>4,410</b>	4,667	-6%
Contacts	<b>17,107</b>	14,830	+15%
Advice line calls answered	<b>3,511</b>	4,260	-18%
Advice line voicemail call backs	<b>1,240</b>	650	+56%
Advice line emails and contact forms	<b>1,056</b>	1,118	-6%
Website hits	<b>74,239</b>	19,741	+256%
Chatbot hits	<b>3,246</b>	n/a	n/a

## 2. Client Information

### a. How advice was provided to our clients

Contact Method	Contacts	Percentage
Telephone	6449	38%
Email	5576	33%
Advice Line	2906	17%
Letter	934	5%
Face to Face	689	4%
Webform	518	3%
Video Conferencing (Near Me)	17 (9)	<1%
SMS	10	<1%
Social media	8	<1%

## Appendix - Service Data

### b. Organisations we liaised with to best support our clients

We may liaise with none, one or more than one organisation for each client. Top ten most contacted organisations below:

Organisation	Clients	Percentage
NHS – complaints staff	510	12%
NHS – non complaints staff	195	5%
General Practitioner	95	2%
SPSO	95	2%
AvMA	56	1%
Solicitor/Law Centre	53	1%
NHS Inform	46	1%
CAB	45	1%
Advocacy Organisation	29	1%
Care Opinion	25	1%

### c. Activities we did to support our clients

Top 10 listed, below

Activity	Clients	Percentage	Clients	Contacts
	This year	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Client given information and/or advice	3326	87%	88%	6651
Signposting	1053	28%	37%	1177
Allocated client to local PASS Adviser	1011	27%	23%	1122
Review case	856	22%	20%	2452
Information Rights and Responsibilities	692	18%	18%	867
Request information / action	550	14%	11%	1325
Write letter	355	9%	10%	492
Write complex complaint letter	251	7%	5%	327
Complex support given	233	6%	6%	322
Redraft letter	191	5%	4%	284

## APPENDIX- Service Data

### d. Casework Level we carried out for our clients

Clients	Clients	Percentage	Last year
	This year 2023-24		2022-23
Level 1: Give access to information, such as leaflets, help-line numbers and website addresses.	774	18%	13%
Level 2: Give advice, explore options and initiate action, such as preparing letters and 3rd party contact such as advocacy services.	2960	67%	73%
Level 3: Provide increased support and assistance to support complex casework, including accompanying clients to meetings and working jointly with partner organisations.	676	15%	15%

## 3. NHS enquiries handled by the CAB service

CAB generalist advisers and volunteers also provide some information and advice on NHS concerns and complaints. When needed these advisers will refer the client to the Patient Advice & Support Service. The advice detailed here is not funded by the service and is for information only.

Non-PASS Adviser CAB work	All
Clients	943
Contacts	1255
Organisations contacted to support the client	103
Tasks	218

## APPENDIX- Service Data

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The top **five** tasks carried out by non-PASS Advisers are listed below.

Non-PASS Adviser Tasks	Clients	Percentage
Review case	76	23%
Client given information and/or advice	51	15%
Write complex complaint letter	32	10%
Complex support given	26	8%
Write letter	23	7%

The top **five** NHS Advice Codes recorded by non-PASS Advisers are listed below.

Non-PASS Adviser Advice Codes	Clients	Percentage
Clinical treatment (all aspects)	92	36%
Personal records (medical, complaints files)	26	10%
Access to GP	15	6%
Staff - attitude / behaviour	14	5%
Rights and responsibilities	10	4%



## Appendix - Service Data

### 4. Client profile

We collect client data on an ongoing basis, this data is for clients seen in the reporting period and focused push in November each year.

Age range	Clients	Percentage
Prefer not to answer	369	30%
15 and under	0	0%
16-17	1	<1%
18-24	31	3%
25-34	117	10%
35-44	137	11%
45-59	271	22%
60-64	96	8%
65-79	163	13%
80+	30	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>100%</b>

Gender	Clients	Percentage
Prefer not to answer	279	23%
Female	609	50%
Male	321	26%
Transgender	6	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnic Group 1	Clients	Percentage
Prefer not to answer	684	56%
African	6	<1%
Arab	1	<1%
Asian	6	<1%
Caribbean or Black	0	<0%
White	518	43%
Mixed	5	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Appendix - Service Data

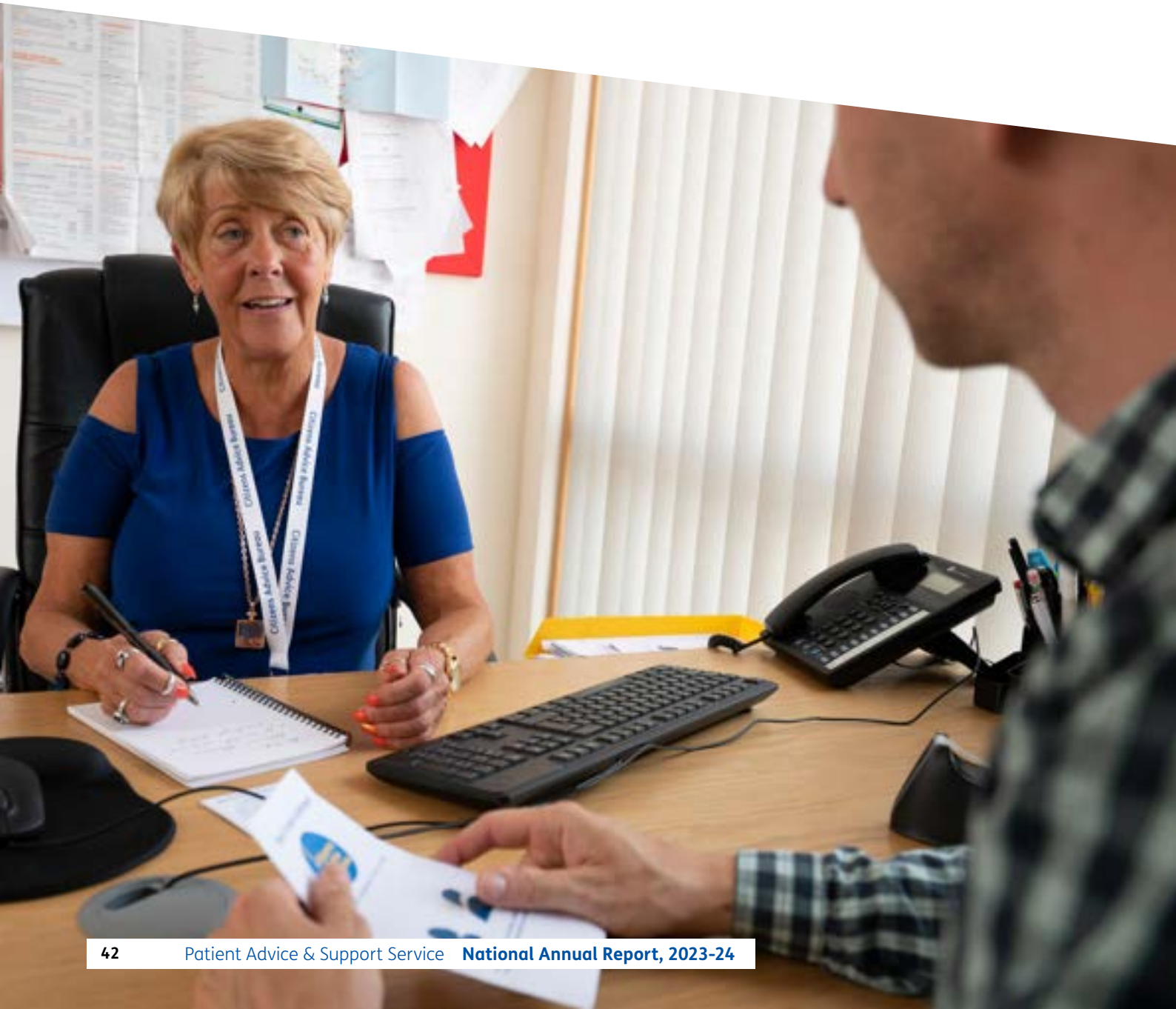
Ethnic Group 2	Clients	Percentage
Prefer not to answer	742	61%
African, African Scottish or African British	3	<1%
Arab, Arab Scottish, Arab British	1	<1%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	1	<1%
Black, Black Scottish, Black British	0	0%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish, Caribbean British	0	0%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	0	0%
Gypsy/Traveller	0	0%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	1	<1%
Irish	0	0%
Other British	62	5%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	1	<1%
Polish	7	1%
Scottish	380	31%
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	2	<1%
Other	15	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>100%</b>

Health Problem or Disability affecting day-to-day activities	Clients	Percentage
Prefer not to answer	531	44%
No	187	15%
Yes, limited a little	218	18%
Yes, limited a lot	279	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>100%</b>

Communication and Support Needs	Clients	Percentage
Prefer not to answer	641	53%
No	470	39%
Yes	104	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Appendix - Service Data

Type of Extra Need	Clients	Percentage
Prefer not to answer	22	21%
British Sign Language interpreting	0	0%
Language interpretation	3	3%
Low literacy	8	8%
Other	71	68%
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Key Performance Indicators and Service Summary

KPI No.	Key Performance Indicator	Description	Target	Actual	RAG
1	Telephone call response	Incoming telephone calls answered within 30 seconds.	90%	99%	3511 of 3545 calls within 30 secs
2	Call Back (for voicemails received at close of day)	Initial call back to client attempted within the next working day (unless otherwise requested).	100%	98%	236 voicemails, 86 for “by return” response
3	Website availability (24/7)	Site accessibility per quarter, excluding maintenance downtime	99.5%	99.98%	100%
4	KPI & management information: Quarterly Reports	Draft National Quarterly Reports provided within 30 days of the end of each quarter to SG and NSS and distributed within one working day of National Report approval.	100%	100%	100%
5	Management Information: National Annual Report	National Annual report provided within 60 days of the end of each year to SG and NSS and distributed within one working day of National Report approval.	100%	100%	100%
6	Client Satisfaction	Client is satisfied or very satisfied	90%	94%	62 of 66 responses

No.	Other indicators	Specification	Percentage	Information
1	Call Back (for voicemails received 9am-5pm)	Initial call back to client attempted by the end of the next working day (unless otherwise requested)	97%	1865 voicemails, 1154 for “by return” response
2	Emails	Initial call back/email to client attempted by the end of the next working day (unless otherwise requested)	97%	1056 emails, 975 for “by return” response

# Who we are

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Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS), our 59 member Citizen Advice Bureaux (CAB) and the Extra Help Unit, form Scotland's largest independent advice network. Scotland's Citizens Advice Network is an essential community service that empowers people through our local bureaux and national services by providing free, confidential and independent advice. We use people's real-life experiences to influence policy and drive positive change. We are on the side of people in Scotland who need help and we change lives for the better.

During 2022-23, the entire Citizens Advice network provided advice and assistance to over 187,000 individuals; this equates to one in every 26 adults living in Scotland. The network put almost £142 million back into people's pockets during this time, with every £1 invested in core advice funding returning £14 in gains for people. Our extensive footprint is important in helping us understand how issues impact locally and nationally across the country and the different impacts that policies can have in different areas.



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[www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)

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