



## Patient Advice & Support Service

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



# National Annual Report 2024-25

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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.

Demand for the Patient Advice and Support Service continued to grow through 2024-25. The website received over **100,000 views**, from over **18,000 users** and our specialist PASS Advisers supported over **4,500 clients** through over **17,000 individual client contacts**.



## 2. Highlights

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### PASS supported

- > **4,543** clients
- > **17,143** client contacts

### Contact data

- > An average of **3.77 contacts** were made **per client**
- > **3,367 calls** were answered from our Advice Hub
- > **2,775 call backs** were made from our Advice Hub
- > **990** emails and contact forms that were received by our Advice Hub
- > **3,389 clients were enabled to take action** on their own behalf

### NHS

- > **36%** of clients complained about **Clinical Treatment**
- > **37%** of clients complained about **Hospital care**
  - > **21%** of clients' complaints related to **Hospital Acute Services**
  - > **26%** of clients' complaints concerned **Hospital Consultants/Doctors**
- > **33%** of clients complained about **HSCP care**
  - > **29%** of clients' complaints related to **Family Health Services**
  - > **25%** of clients' complaints related to the **GPs**.

### Website

- > **18,156 users**
- > **101,644** page **views**
- > **4,167** self-help file **downloads**
- > **6,512 chatbot clicks**



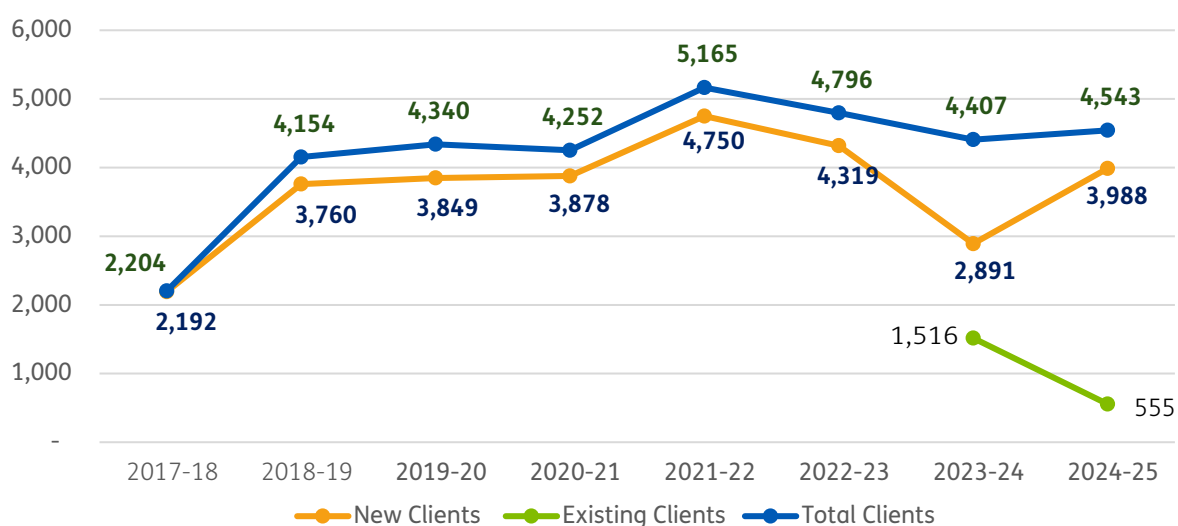
“The Lady who helped me was excellent; she guided me through the whole thing very clearly so helpful. Went above and beyond to help me understand and get me through it. Very professional service. Excellent.”

### 3. Adviser demand

In 2024-25, PASS Advisers supported 4,543 clients. This is an increase on 2023-24, but lower than the peak in 2021-22 and in 2022-23.

2024-25	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
New Clients	1,005	1,063	919	1,072
Existing Clients	1,519	1,583	1,376	1,529
Total Clients	2,524	2,646	2,295	2,601

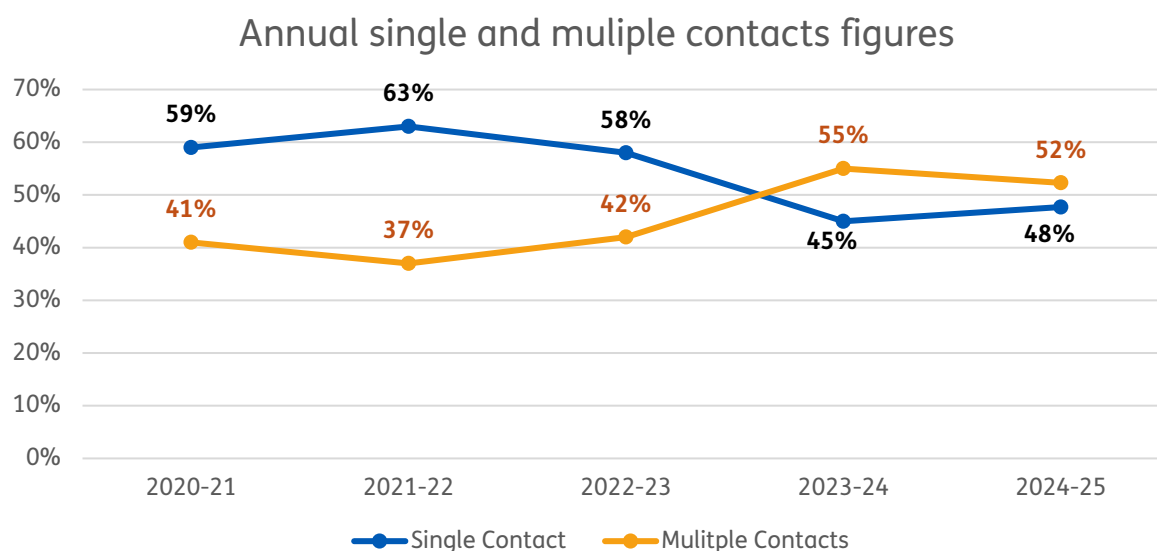
Annual PASS Clients 2017-18 to 2024-25



PASS Advisers endeavour to fulfil client enquiries on the first contact; however, many require more than one contact to resolve their enquiries.

2024-25	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
Clients with Single contacts	676	757	615	761
Clients with Multiple contacts	843	826	761	768
Total Clients	1,519	1,583	1,376	1,529

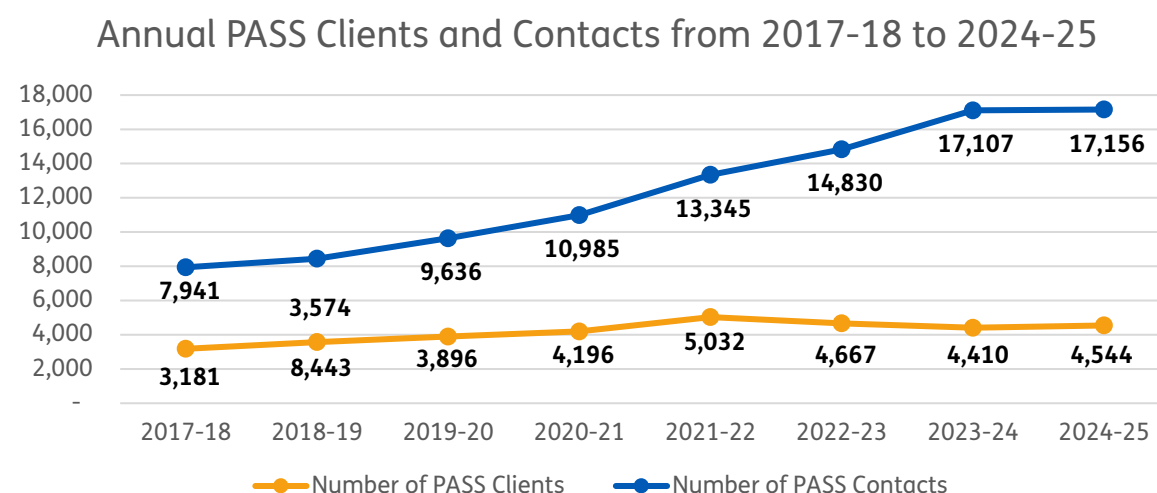
### 3. Adviser demand



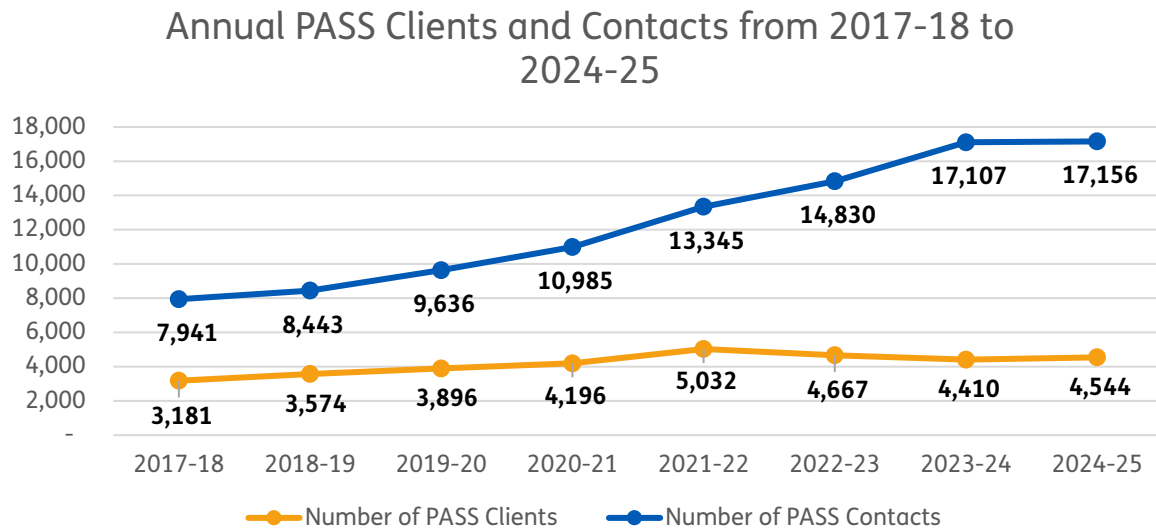
The above table and graph show the number of clients with multiple contacts remains higher than those requiring single contacts. This supports PASS Adviser observations that many clients have complex needs and they are finding that they need to have more contacts with clients to fully support them with their enquiries.

2024-25	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
Client contacts	4,509	4,453	3,810	3,954

PASS Advisers made 17,156 client contacts. This is slightly higher than last year, and the highest number of client contacts recorded in any year.

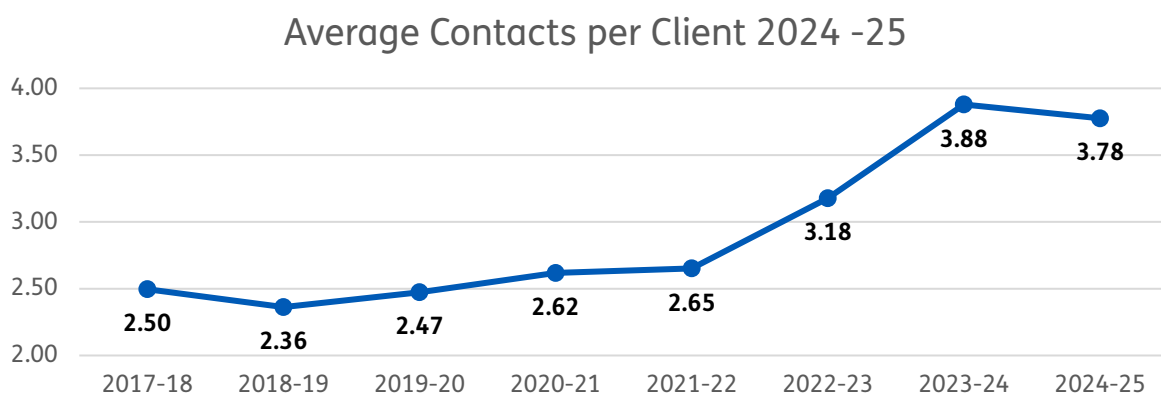


### 3. Adviser demand



The average number of contacts per client also remained high during the year. The table and graph below show that although the peak quarterly figure was 2.90 in Quarter 3, the average number for the year remains high at 3.78. This is only slightly lower than last year. Again, this is reflective of the high amount of support clients require from the PASS Advisers.

2024-25	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
Average Contacts per Clients	2.97	2.81	2.90	2.87



## 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 relates to complaints made about hospitals. Wherever possible PASS Advisers capture the Health Board information and other NHS data.

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

### a. 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 ten highest recorded main reasons for each contact between the PASS Advisers and their clients are listed below.

Hospital Contact Reason	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
NHS Complaint - Stage 2 (formal)	2,218	3,274	44%
Unknown	3,834	1,455	19%
NHS Complaint - Stage 1 (informal)	762	1,135	15%
NHS - Not related to NHS Complaints Process	474	733	10%
NHS Complaint - Stage 3 (SPSO)	588	638	8%
NHS Complaint - Significant delays/extensions	38	79	1%
NHS Concerns - Feedback/Comments	76	67	1%
NHS SAER (Significant Adverse Event Review)	121	52	1%
NHS Complaint Process exhausted	71	52	1%
NHS Concerns - Unable to make complaint	42	41	1%



“I had been unable to voice my distress for a considerable time, until I met with the PASS Adviser. Her manner and empathy allowed me to articulate my concern.”



“(My adviser was a) very professional worker who took time to listen.”



## 4. Hospital complaints

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### b. Health Boards where complaints were made

Local Health Board	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Ayrshire & Arran	54	66	4%
Borders	31	35	2%
Dumfries & Galloway	64	57	3%
Fife	132	132	8%
Forth Valley	126	112	7%
Grampian	137	152	9%
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	490	448	26%
Highland	139	144	8%
Lanarkshire	126	141	8%
Lothian	220	181	11%
Orkney	17	16	1%
Shetland	16	11	1%
Tayside	156	144	8%
Western Isles	12	12	1%
Unknown	19	70	4%

### c. Service Area

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

Hospital Service Area	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Hospital Acute Services	1,047	974	59%
Community Hospital Services	47	129	8%
Other	79	113	7%
Psychiatric / Learning Disability Services	127	99	6%
Accident & Emergency	98	90	5%
Administration	75	85	5%
Community Health Services—not elsewhere specified	76	60	4%
Maternity Services	42	49	3%

## 4. Hospital complaints

### d. Staff Groups

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

Hospital Staff Group 1	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Hospital Consultants / Doctors	1,156	1,166	63%
Nurses	316	258	14%
NHS Board/hospital administrative staff/members - excluding FHS admin	102	187	10%
Other	154	177	10%

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

Hospital Consultants/Doctors	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Consultant - medical	436	396	34%
Consultant - surgical	328	273	23%
Doctor	186	161	14%
Hospital Consultants/Doctors - other	115	144	12%
Consultant - psychiatrist	202	142	12%

### 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	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Clinical treatment (all aspects)	972	941	27%
Staff - complaint handling	482	469	13%
Rights and responsibilities	227	364	10%
Staff - attitude / behaviour	327	315	9%
Staff - communication (oral)	224	217	6%
Personal records (medical, complaints files)	203	199	6%

## 4. Hospital complaints

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### Bryan's experience

#### **This is an example of how submitting a complaint led to an unexpected and positive result for the client**

Bryan\* came to PASS with concerns about his hospital care for the insertion of a stent.

During the procedure, Bryan's main heart artery was pierced, leaving him in a critical condition. The family couldn't find Bryan after the procedure as he had been moved to intensive care. Bryan was left unable to work and his spouse didn't think he would ever be able to return to work and had been left with a poor quality of life

Bryan tried unsuccessfully to get an explanation from the NHS Board.

The PASS Adviser helped Bryan to submit a letter of concern to

- > help gain an understanding to what went wrong and to
- > raise awareness of the impact on the client.

In response, Bryan was offered another stent insertion, which he accepted.

The second procedure was successful. Bryan felt much better, and his quality of life was much improved.

Bryan withdrew the complaint. He was satisfied that his concerns had been listened to and addressed, and he was feeling much better.

\*all names are anonymised to protect confidentiality



## 4. Hospital complaints

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### Elizabeth's experience

**This is an example of how complicated and lengthy the complaints process can be and how much support clients rely on from PASS Advisers**

Elizabeth's spouse passed away from a pulmonary embolism resulting from a thrombosis in their leg. Elizabeth had contacted the GP practice on multiple occasions with concerning symptoms that could be suggestive of a thrombosis. Elizabeth's spouse was also seen by physiotherapy, but it went undiagnosed, their symptoms instead being attributed to a muscular/ligament issue. Elizabeth believed that chances to save their spouse's life were missed.

What the PASS Adviser did

- > Initial phone call with Elizabeth to discuss the complaint and explain the NHS complaint handling procedure
- > Provided advice and assistance on accessing Elizabeth's spouse's GP and health board medical records
- > Drafted a complaint letter and emailed it to Elizabeth for review and comment
- > Advised Elizabeth on where to submit the complaint
- > Kept in touch to provide reassurance when there were delays
- > Provided further advice and reassurance when Elizabeth was informed a Significant Adverse Events Review (SAER) was being carried out and her complaint was being closed while this was undertaken
- > Acted as liaison between Elizabeth and the health board's point of contact for the SAER
- > Maintained contact through the significant delays in the SAER
- > Advised Elizabeth about the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in the complaints process, in particular reference to timelines for consideration
- > Provided information on the process to bring a medical negligence claim for compensation, with particular reference to the three-year time limit
- > Assisted Elizabeth to submit a second complaint about the length of time the SAER was taking, the lack of information the client had been sent and consistently poor communication

**17 months after the complaint was first submitted the client received a copy of the SAER report.**

- > Discussed the SAER report with Elizabeth
- > Assisted Elizabeth to contact the patient experience team to request a stage 2 complaint response letter now that the SAER was concluded

Continues on next page



## 4. Hospital complaints

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Three months later the client received the complaint response letter.

The PASS Adviser then

- > Discussed with Elizabeth thoughts/options to the complaint response

Elizabeth decided not to take the complaint to the SPSO and instead to pursue the option of legal action.

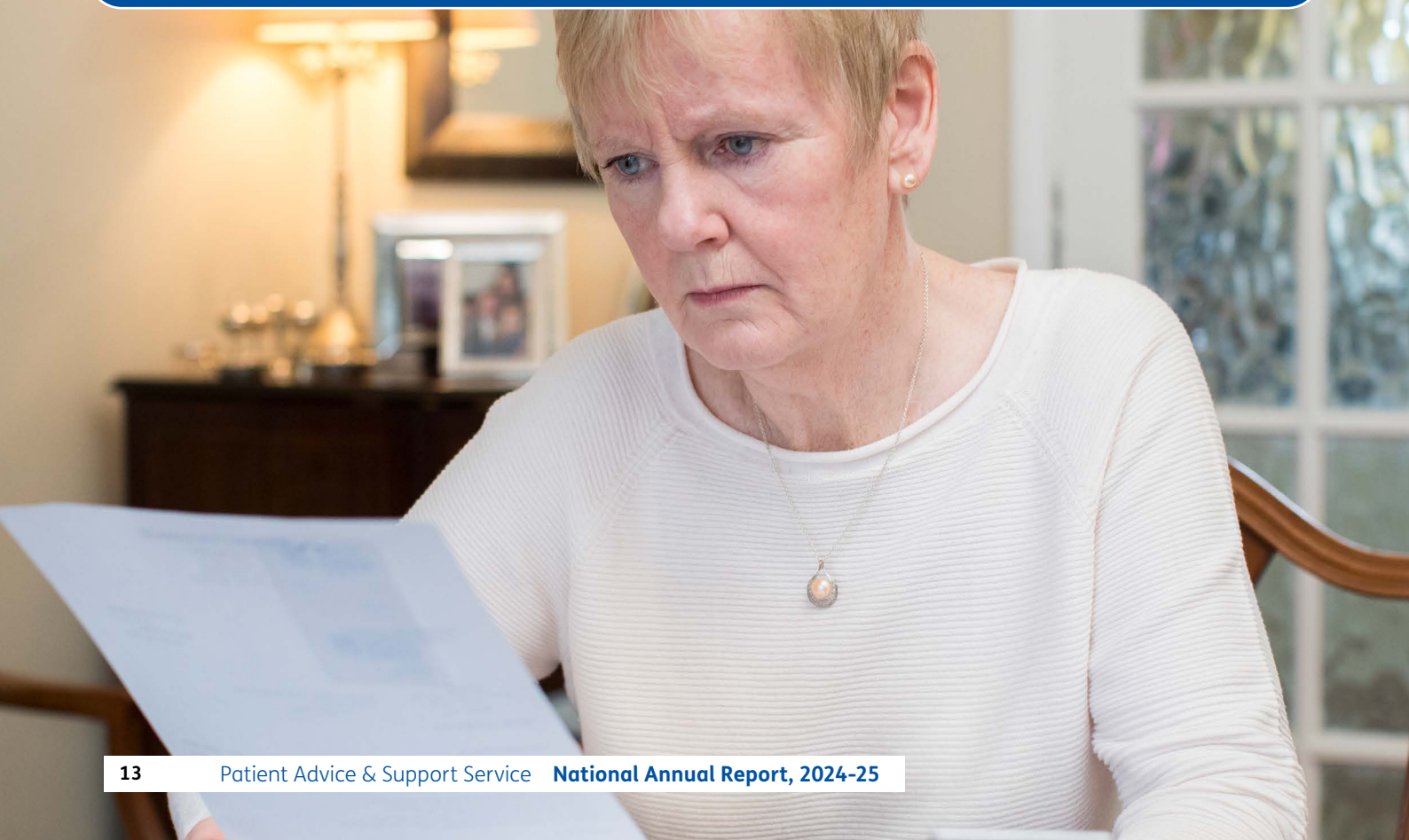
The SAER concluded that

- > There were missed opportunities, likely as a result of confirmation bias that prevented clinical professionals from reassessing the likely diagnosis.
- > It summarised the actions that have been taken or are planned across the GP practice and Musculoskeletal (MSK) physiotherapy service to facilitate improvement and learning.
- > Learning and educational events are being held in the MSK physiotherapy service that will be cascaded throughout all of physiotherapy and across all GP practices in the local Health Board area.

The complaint response

- > apologised for what happened
- > for the poor communication Elizabeth had experienced throughout the process.

Elizabeth required advice on intestacy and estates and was referred to a Generalist Adviser within the CAB for further support.



# 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 relates to complaints made about HSCPs.

- > **1,479** clients made complaints about HSCPs.
- > **6,252** contacts related to HSCP complaints, concerns, comments and/or compliments.

## a. 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 five highest recorded main reason for each contact between the PASS Advisers and their clients is listed below.

HSCP Contact Reason	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
NHS Complaint - Stage 2 (formal)	389	2,425	39%
NHS Complaint - Stage 1 (informal)	431	1,216	19%
Unknown	4,568	1,216	19%
NHS - Not related to NHS Complaints Process	287	849	13%
NHS Complaint - Stage 3 (SPSO)	69	434	7%

## b. Health Boards

Local HSCPs	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Ayrshire & Arran	54	81	5%
Borders	30	45	3%
Dumfries & Galloway	48	44	3%
Fife	125	136	9%
Forth Valley	47	78	5%
Grampian	127	128	9%
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	346	368	25%
Highland	128	119	8%
Lanarkshire	128	211	14%
Lothian	182	190	13%
Orkney	16	7	<1%
Shetland	1	3	<1%
Tayside	63	72	5%
Western Isles	2	3	<1%

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

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### c. Service Area

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

HSCPs Service Area	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Family Health Services	1136	1137	82%
Community Health Services – not elsewhere specified	81	82	5%
Psychiatric / Learning Disability Services	101	76	5%
Community Hospital Services	18	40	3%

### d. Staff Groups

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

HSCP Staff Group 1	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
GP	921	1147	77%
Dental	132	130	9%
Nurses	79	67	5%
Other	52	66	4%

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

HSCP Staff Group 2	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
General Practitioner	672	835	70%
GP - Other	64	124	10%
Practice receptionist	79	115	10%
Practice manager	88	113	9%
Practice nurse	18	12	1%

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

### e. NHS Advice Code

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

HSCP NHS Advice Code	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Clinical treatment (all aspects)	608	697	21%
Access to GP	422	587	17%
Staff - attitude / behaviour	308	372	11%
Staff - complaint handling	277	316	9%
Rights and responsibilities	171	260	8%
Staff - communication (oral)	137	173	5%
Personal records (medical, complaints files)	155	162	5%
Mental health	130	152	4%
Staff competence	83	107	3%
Access to Dentist	55	90	3%

### Sandra's experience

#### **This is an example of the many complaints PASS receives about difficulties in making GP appointments**

Sandra contacted PASS with concerns about her GP practice's appointment booking system. Namely, to book an appointment, a patient needed to call repeatedly, from a given time, until they could get through to a receptionist to book an appointment. Often, by the time the patient got through, there were no appointments left. Also, routine appointments couldn't be booked in advance. The PASS Adviser informed Sandra of the NHS complaints process and supported her to send a letter of concern.

The response from GP practice explained, that to manage high demand, it had recently improved its telephony to one that was a more user-friendly system for patients and staff. Now there is no need to redial, and a call-back system is also in the pipeline. The response also indicated that the practice had recently employed new GPs which would ensure two extra appointment days for patients. Furthermore, the response also provided a rationale for the routine appointment policy.

Sandra was satisfied with the response. It addressed all her concerns, and she was very pleased that the practice had recognised the difficulties associated with the old booking system and so made suitable changes.



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

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### Greg's experience

**This is an example of the many complaints brought to PASS about being removed from a GP surgery list and the knock-on effect this can have on clients, e.g. making it difficult to get prescriptions and referrals.**

Greg became frustrated after experiencing repeated problems getting a regular prescription from his GP practice and was removed from the practice. Greg

- > Felt the circumstances of this removal were unfair.
- > Was unhappy that a GP at the practice, whom he had never met, decided not to prescribe one of the medications that his consultant advised Greg should take.

The PASS Adviser

- > Discussed the case with Greg
- > Provided advice on registering with another GP practice
- > Wrote a complaint letter for Greg to send
- > Assisted Greg in liaising with Practitioner Services to get registered at a practice, as he was struggling with the forms
- > Provided advice on how to get medication through the delays in getting registered
- > Discussed the complaint response, with which Greg was unhappy with
- > Advised on the right to take a complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)
- > Explained the SPSO process
- > Wrote a further letter for Greg to send to the practice to highlight issues that the first response letter failed to address and that it should have contained information on the SPSO
- > Prepared SPSO submission for Greg and then submitted it on his behalf as requested by Greg
- > Helped Greg complete the consent forms the SPSO issued
- > Discussed the SPSO decision with Greg.

The complaint response letters provided explanations/answers to the issues raised but acknowledged no fault and offered no apology.

The SPSO carried out an initial review and then advised it wouldn't be taking the investigation further as it felt the practice's response to the complaint was reasonable. It said it would however provide feedback to the practice that it is important to identify and respond to complaints as per the model complaints handling procedure from the outset.

## 6. Special Health Boards complaints

Special Health Boards	2023-24		2024-25	
	Clients	Contacts	Clients	Contacts
Scottish Ambulance Service	27	122	22	113
Golden Jubilee (National Waiting Times Hospital)	8	29	12	42
NHS 24	11	49	11	31
State Hospital - Carstairs	0	0	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>191</b>



“Very efficient and sensitively dealt with.”



“A heartfelt THANK YOU”

## 7. Prisoner complaints

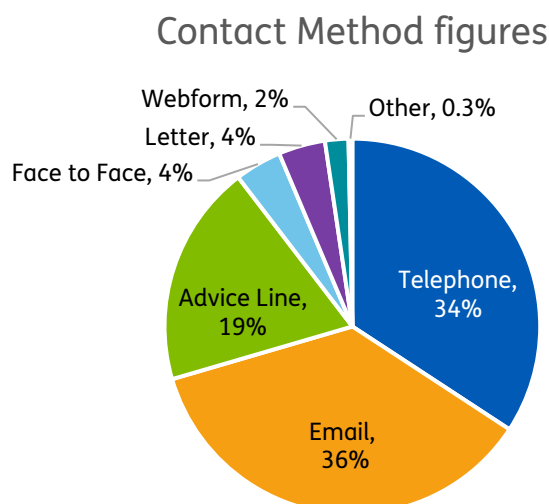
The demand from prisoners remained low in 2024-25. PASS Advisers rarely supported prisoners directly, instead they provided 2nd tier support to CAB Generalist Advisers, who were better placed to support prison clients and had access to the prisons and could provide face to face support.

Prisons	2023-24		2024-25	
	Clients	Contacts	Clients	Contacts
HMP Barlinnie	18	48	1	1
HMP Shotts	3	41	0	0
HMP Dumfries	2	9	0	0
HMP Unknown	2	2	0	0
HMP Addiewell	1	8	0	0
HMP Edinburgh	1	1	0	0
HMP Perth	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

## 8. Support for clients

### a. How PASS Advisers and clients interacted

Since COVID, PASS Advisers continue to provide most support for clients by phone and email.



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

> **4,004** – clients with activities

> **10,403** activities, in total

PASS Advisers perform multiple tasks to support each client with their specific needs. Figures below reflect the different tasks recorded for each client, whereby tasks are only reported once per client. The top twelve activities for each client are listed below.

Activities	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Client given information and/or advice	3,326	3,389	85%
Information to client on rights and responsibilities	692	1,182	30%
Signposting	1,053	1,103	28%
Allocated client to local PASS Adviser	1,011	1,101	27%
Review case	856	698	17%
Request information / action	550	529	13%
Complex support given	233	485	12%
Write letter	355	379	9%
Write complex complaint letter	251	247	6%
Redraft letter	191	218	5%
2nd tier support given	147	166	4%
Contact third party	160	154	4%

## 8. Support for clients

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

Casework levels are set by the activities performed by the advisers for the clients and are presented below.

Client casework levels	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Level 1 Signposting: Give access to information, such as leaflets, help-line numbers and website addresses.	774	860	19%
Level 2 Information & Advice: Give advice, explore options and initiate action, such as preparing letters and 3rd party contact such as advocacy services.	2,960	2822	62%
Level 3 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	861	19%

In line with the increased number of complex activities, the percentage of Level 3 Casework has grown over the last four years. This is another example of the data showing client needs increasing over time.

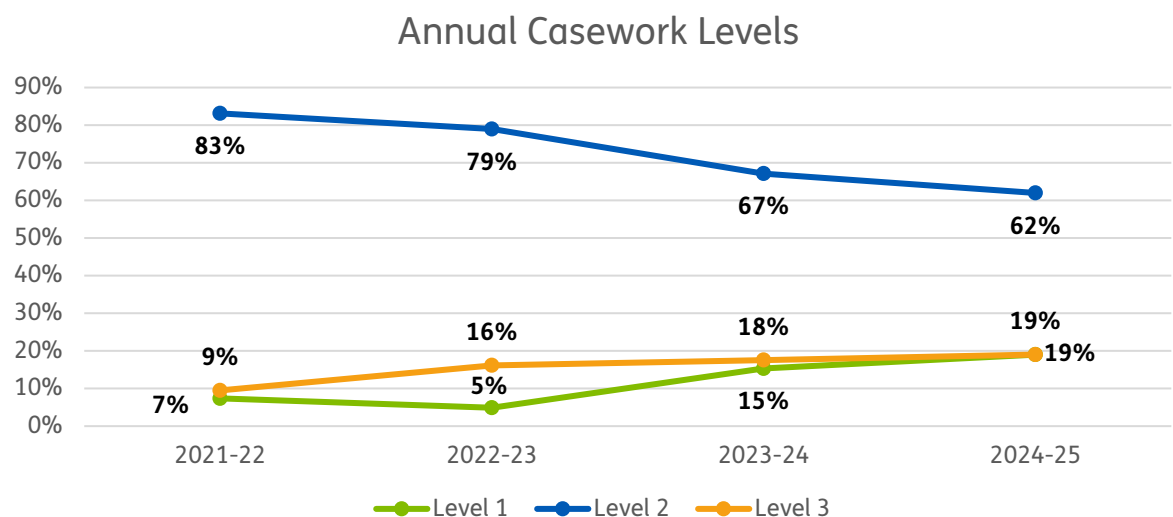
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Level 1 Signposting	371	210	676	860
Level 2 Information & Advice	4,183	3,389	2,960	2,805
Level 3 Complex casework	478	693	774	861



“Found this service so supportive in helping me to understand my rights.  
Did not feel alone.”




## 8. Support for clients




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

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

Organisation	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
NHS – complaints staff	510	378	11%
NHS – non complaints staff	195	129	4%
General Practitioner	95	100	3%
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman	95	93	3%
Solicitor/Law Centre	53	73	3%



“Felt very supported and can’t thank my adviser enough for her support!”



“My adviser was absolutely amazing. So helpful and kind.”

## 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.

- > **4,592** outcomes recorded for
- > **3,743** clients

The top seven client outputs and outcomes are listed below.

Client cases	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Case closed - client enabled to take own action	2,532	2579	56%
Case closed - no further contact from client	851	971	21%
Case closed - complaint withdrawn	211	190	4%

Results	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
Outcome not known	732	272	6%
Local resolution resolved	81	71	2%

Responses	2023-24	Clients	Percentage
NHS - apology received	158	134	3%
NHS - response / explanation received	134	112	2%



“(My Adviser) has been incredibly helpful and supportive during a very difficult time and we would like to thank her for her time and care shown to us.”



## 9. Outputs and Outcomes achieved for our clients

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### Mary's experience

#### **Many clients contact PASS to find out what happened to help with closure.**

Mary's father was visited at home by a district nurse to have a medical procedure carried out. Shortly after the procedure he became very unwell, and an ambulance was summoned. Mary was unhappy at the length of time it took for the ambulance to arrive. Her father was conveyed to the A&E department and treated there. Unfortunately, his condition deteriorated, and he died in the department.

Mary wanted to know

- > If the procedure carried out by the nurse contributed to her father's death
- > Why it took so long for an ambulance to arrive
- > If this delay caused her father further harm.

Mary was also unhappy at treatment within the A&E department including

- > Lack of empathy
- > Lack of food offered
- > No explanation regarding possible treatments
- > Staff being dismissive of Mary's concerns.

The PASS Adviser

- > Wrote complaint letters to Scottish Ambulance Service (SAA), the local Health Centre and local NHS Feedback Team.
- > Liaised with the family regarding the handling of the complaints
- > Liaised with the SAA who promptly dealt with the complaint and explained the delay
- > Liaised with the local NHS Feedback Team and agreed the complaint about the district nurse and the treatment at A&E could be dealt with by a single agency (NHS Feedback Team).
- > Explained the procedure to the client and supported them throughout the lengthy process, including getting a fuller response to the complaint than originally sent.

Responses

- > SAA explained the delay and provided a comprehensive timeline of events which allayed Mary's concerns.
- > The local Health Centre was dealt with by the NHS Complaints Team. Initially the complaint response did not include the actions of the district nurse. Following a request by the PASS Adviser, further enquiries were conducted, and a follow up letter was issued including an apology and an explanation for the action of staff. The response included an invitation to the family to meet staff involved.

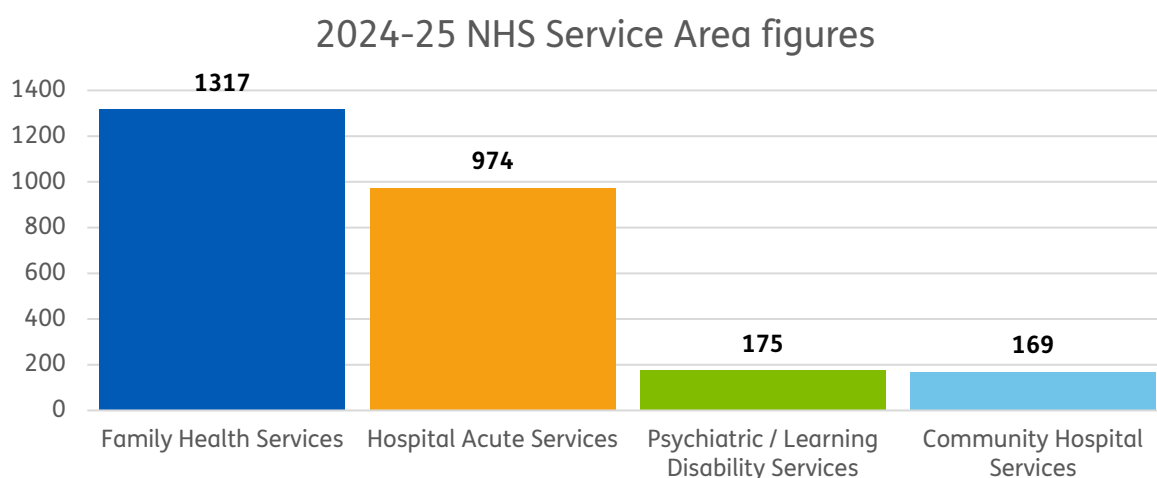
The response gave Mary a better understanding of the circumstances surrounding her father's death.

# 10. Trends and comparisons

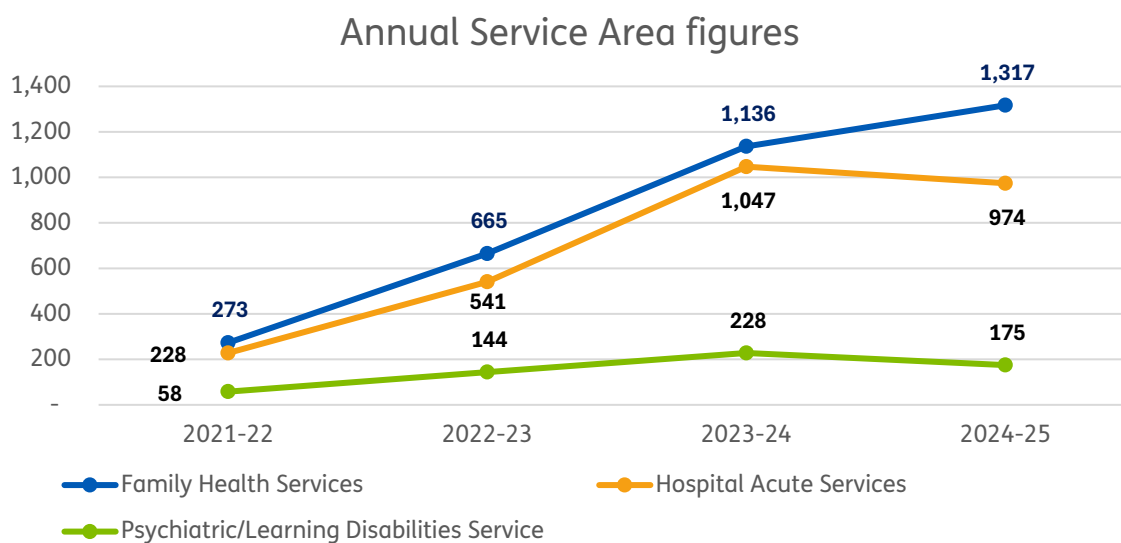
This section shows the trends relating to the nature of the NHS Service Area, Staff Groups and Advice Codes over the last four years.

## a. The Service Areas

The three most recorded Services Areas have been consistent over the last four years.



Hospital Acute Services and Family Health Services complaints have risen considerably and in 2024/25 Family Health Services were significantly higher than Hospital Acute Services for the first time.

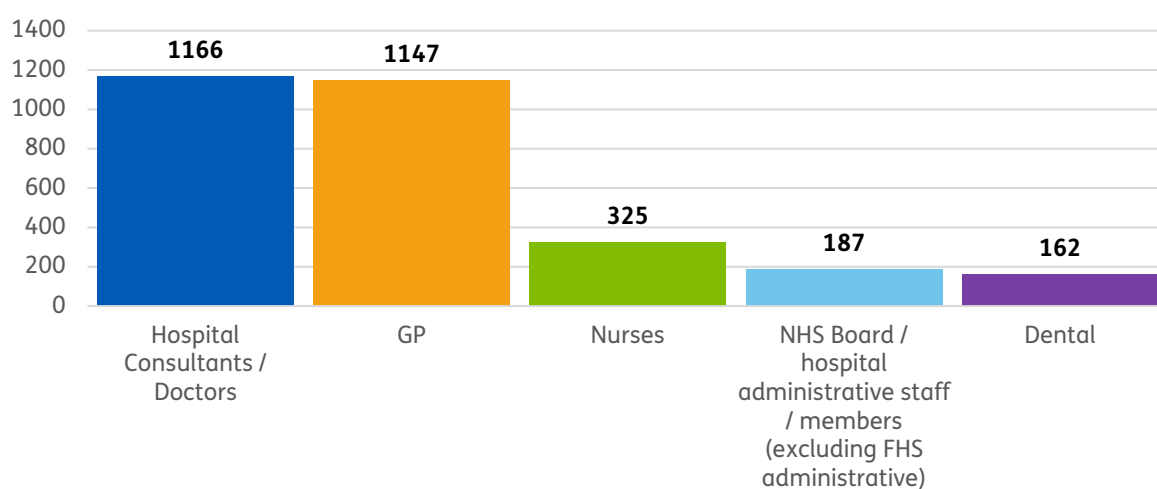


## 10. Trends and comparisons

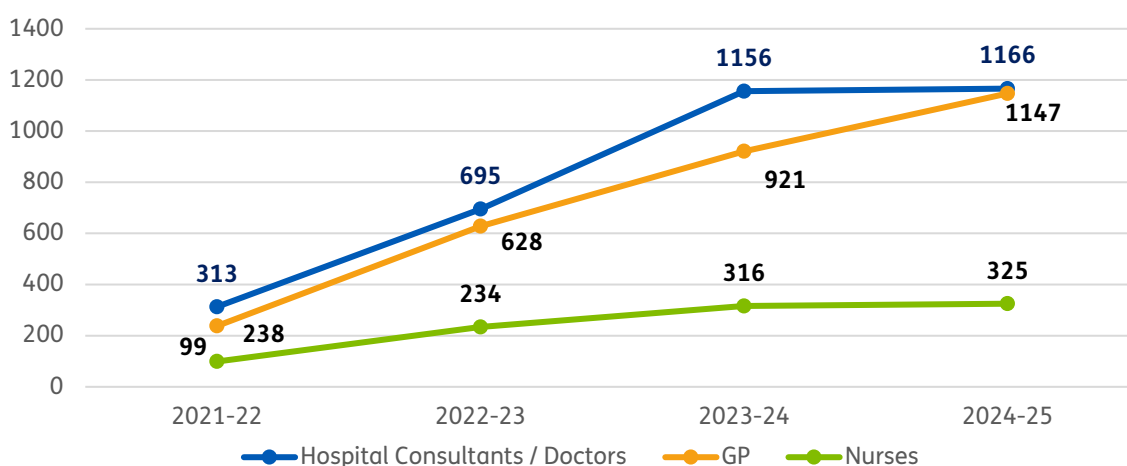
### b. Staff Groups

Hospital Consultants / Doctors, GPs and Nurses continue to be the most recorded Staff Groups. While most Staff Group figures remained relatively similar to the previous year, the number of GP concerns/complaints rose significantly.

2024-25 NHS Staff Group figures



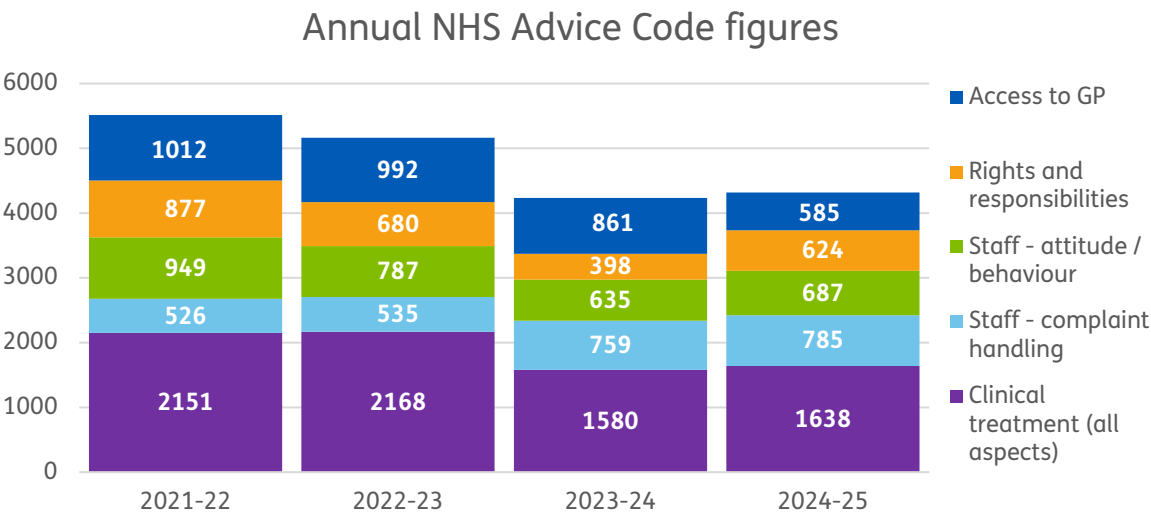
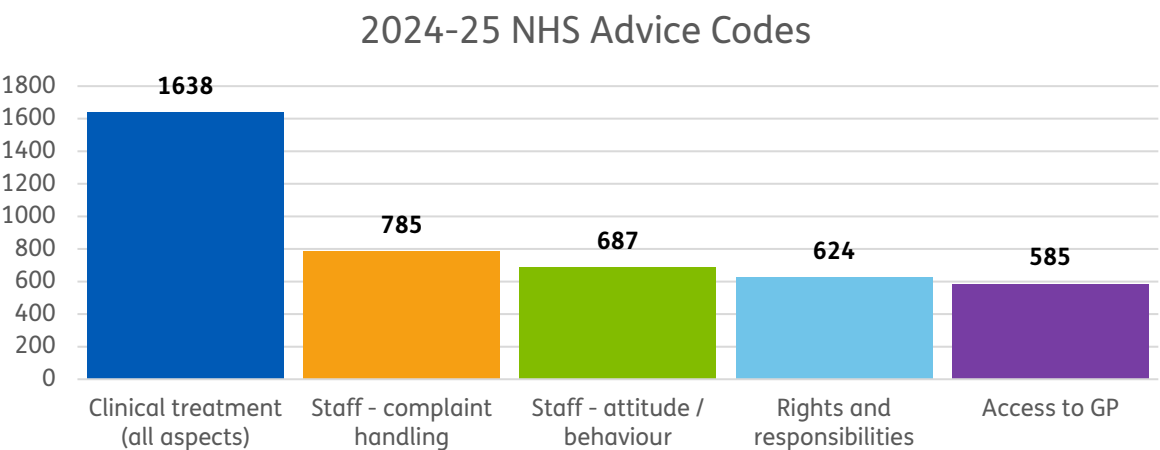
Annual NHS Staff Group figures



# 10. Trends and comparisons

## c. Advice Codes

Despite the number of GP complaints being higher, the Access to GP complaints dropped over the year. In general, other NHS Advice Code numbers rose.



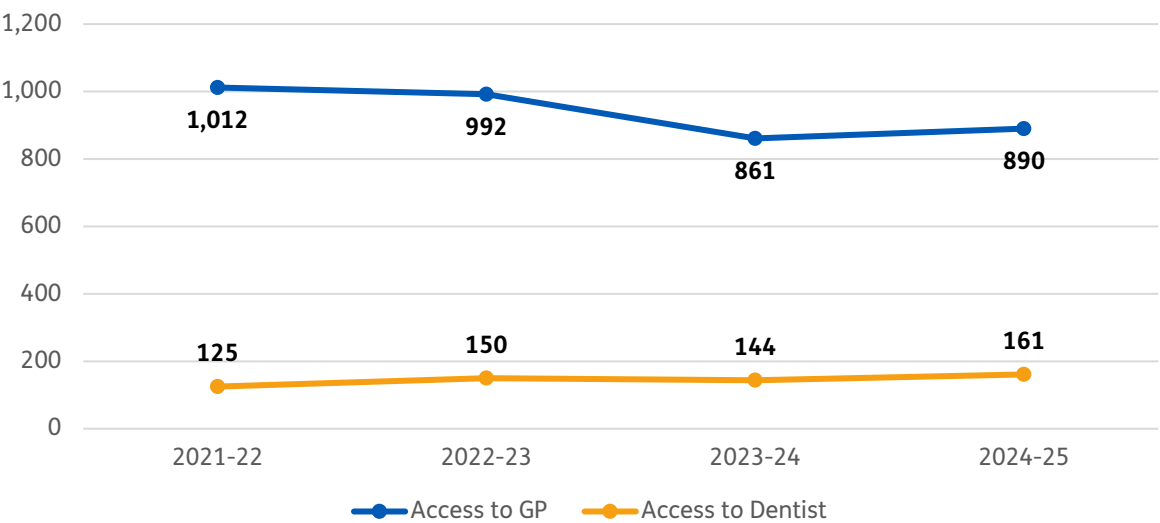


# 10. Trends and comparisons

## d. Access to GPs and Dentists

The number of clients contacting PASS about access to their GP has dropped slightly this year. PASS continues to monitor the Access to GP and Dentist figures every month. The figures below include clients with non-PASS specific cases and those not connected with a specific Health Board. There was no significant change in these figures in 2024-25.

Clients with Access to GP and Dentist complaints



# 11. Evaluation: Client feedback

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## a. Client Satisfaction Survey

PASS Advisers send out client feedback questionnaires to PASS clients on an ongoing basis. There were 28 responses for 2024-25 PASS clients.

The clients' response to the service was generally very positive

- > 83% felt it was very easy or easy to contact PASS
- > 89% were satisfied with the time taken for a response, 5% answered not applicable
- > 95% were very satisfied or satisfied with the support they received
- > 89% stated that they would use the service again, 5% were unsure

Feedback showed

- > 74% contacted PASS for help to make a complaint/concern about an NHS service
- > 47% were given information on their Patient Rights and Responsibilities
- > 42% were helped to write letters or make telephone calls
- > 64% were given information on taking their complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Other positive outcomes from PASS support included

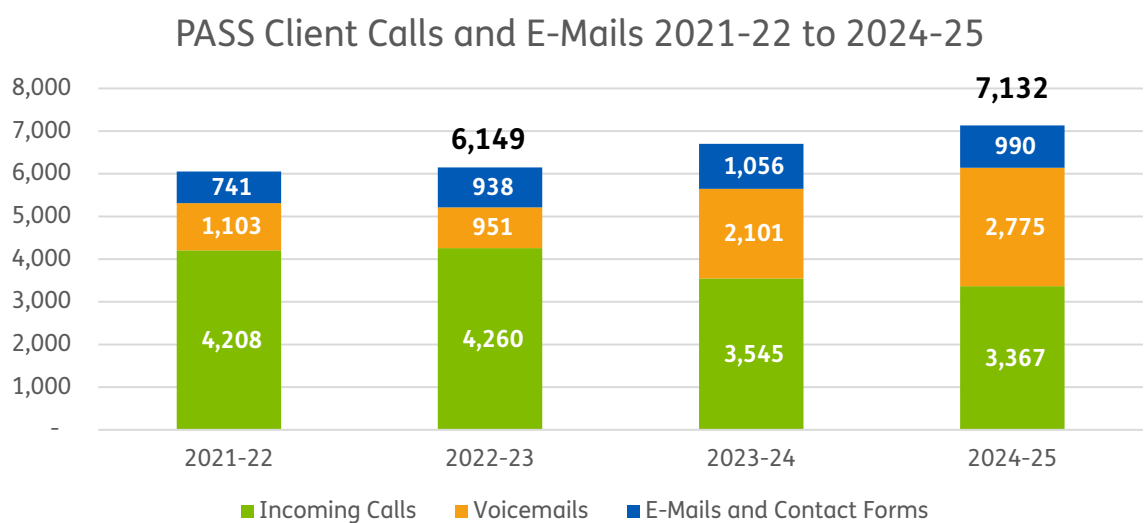
- > 88% reported an improvement in their Peace of mind
- > 75% had improved knowledge of their Patient Rights and Responsibilities
- > 69% reported an improvement in their ability to help themselves
- > 50% had improved mental health (e.g. stress)



# 12. Service activities

## a. Advice Hub performance

The Advice Hub continued to be well-used by clients; PASS Advisers answered 3,367 Advice Line calls and 990 Central emails and Contact forms.



Despite continuing high demand for the service, PASS Advisers continue to deliver the service efficiently and with empathy.

Incoming calls	3,367
Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds	99%
Number of voicemails	2,109
Responses to voicemails within 1 working day	97%

## 12. Service activities

### b. Website activity

The PASS website hosts information and resources to help users navigate the NHS complaints process, find information on Patient Rights and about NHS services. It is very well used by users, see below.

Website figures	2023-24	2024-25	Difference	Change
Total number of users	10,314	18,156	7,842	+76%
Total number of page views	74, 239	101,644	27,405	+37%
Self-help content downloads	2,313	4,167	1,854	+80%
Chatbot enquiries	3,246	6,512	3,266	+101%
Downtime	None	None	None	None

**NB** 2023-24 figures: 1st June 2023 to 31st March 2024

2024-25 figures: 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2024

**only represent the clients who accepted website cookies**

The figures below offer a further information on how clients engaged with the website. The number of page views and users grew again in 2024-25.

	2023-24	2024-25
Page Views	74,239	101,644
Users	10,314	18,156
Average Page Views Per User	7.2	5.6
Average Engagement Time	2m 31s	2m 01s
Bounce Rate Average	41.78%	42.86%

## 12. Service activities

The number of users and page views grew higher, and the page views and engagement time decreased in 2024/25. This is likely to be the result of continued monitoring of the website and updates made to improve customer experience, e.g. by helping them to get to the information that they need, more quickly.

The number of users accessing the PASS website on their mobile grew higher than those using their computer.

	2023-24		2024-25	
<b>Mobile Users</b>	4,621	45%	8,907	49%
<b>Desktop Users</b>	5,373	52%	8,576	47%
<b>Tablet Users</b>	285	2.3%	476	2.6%

The table below shows the top ten most visited pages.

Page Title	Views	Bounce Rate	Users	Views Per User
1. Total	101,644	43%	18,156	5.6
2. PASS	20,368	35%	13,133	1.55
3. How we can help you	7,852	19%	5,470	1.44
4. Making a complaint	6,640	28%	4,523	1.47
5. How to make a complaint	4,094	24%	2,719	1.51
6. Contact	3,901	30%	2,542	1.53
7. NHS complaints procedure	3,469	22%	2,596	1.34
8. What you can and can't complain about	2,959	16%	2,485	1.19
9. FAQs	2,889	22%	2,222	1.3
10. Initial complaints letter	1,889	40%	1,420	1.33
11. PASS Client information pack	1,441	25%	1,018	1.42

## 12. Service activities

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### c. Promotional activity

A variety of activities were carried out by PASS Advisers and their CAB to promote PASS, these included:

- > Networking and providing information at events, e.g. for carers
- > Delivering presentations, e.g. Department of Work and Pensions
- > Making leaflets available at events including third sector roadshows
- > Distributing leaflets at GP practices and hospitals
- > Outreach at GP practices
- > Providing information in bureaux newsletters
- > Promoting PASS on websites and social media
- > Promoting to NHS providers and clients at outreach venues
- > Providing information to local MSPs
- > Producing and delivering newsletters

### d. Training activity

Regular short training sessions were provided for PASS Advisers. Most of these took place online in morning only sessions.

Local training sessions covered

- > Child Friendly Complaints
- > Cyber Security
- > Dignity At Work
- > Health Awareness
- > First Steps to Trans Inclusion
- > GMC: Good Medical Practice and its impact on the standards of patient safety and care
- > Human Rights in Mental Health Services
- > Menopause webinar
- > Mental Health awareness
- > NHS: Ask, Tell, Save a life
- > NHS: Records Retention
- > StayWarm/StayWell

Central training

- > Advice Hub management
- > Call handling: Difficult conversations



## 12. Service activities

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- > Call handling: Initial contact
- > Caseload management
- > Data protection
- > GDPR
- > PASS Case recording
- > PASS Client journey
- > PASS Complaint Handling
- > Safeguarding
- > Well-being

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 20245-26 has not yet been finalised, but will include

- > Advice Hub management
- > Case recording
- > GDPR
- > Handling calls with compassion
- > Safeguarding
- > Solicitor led training for PASS Advisers
- > Well-being

# 13. Quality audit outcomes

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As part of ongoing quality assessment, 54 cases for 27 PASS Advisers were selected at random for evaluation.

- > 91% met Case compliance
- > 61% met Case recording and continuity
- > 81% 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.

# 14. Complaints

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During 2024-25, two complaints were made about PASS.

Quarter	Complaints		Level	Complaints
Quarter 1	0		Level 1	1
Quarter 2	2		Level 2	0
Quarter 3	0		Level 3	1
Quarter 4	0		Level 4	0
Total	2		Total	2

# 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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- > Client feedback response rates: PASS has already changed the mechanism to gather the feedback and training will be organised
- > PASS Adviser workloads: PASS has already provided training to better manage initial calls and has streamlined the Advice Hub call and email management.
- > Adviser well-being
- > Caseload management: Training has already been provided, with more to follow
- > Case recording and consistency: Training is already provided on a regular basis

## 17. Service Development Plan

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- > PASS will explore methods to improve feedback rates and will provide any necessary training.
- > PASS will continue to provide training and support to best manage high demand.
- > PASS will continue to liaise with PASS Advisers and provide appropriate training to support Adviser well-being.
- > PASS will continue to provide training so PASS Advisers can best support clients with complex needs.
- > PASS will continue to improve the website to empower clients to maximise self-help.
- > PASS will continue to work with CAB and local organisations to ensure the PASS role is well understood.
- > PASS will continue to work with CAB and local organisations

# Appendix – Service Data

## 1. Highlights

New Clients	3,988
Existing Clients	555
<b>Total Clients</b>	<b>4,543</b>
Clients with single contacts	2,167
Clients with multiple contacts	2,376
<b>Contacts</b>	<b>17,143</b>

Referrals In	Clients	Percentage
Self Referral	3,306	73%
CAB	640	14%
PASS Website	152	3%
NHS 24	89	2%
NHS – Complaints Team	76	2%
NHS – Non Complaints Team	74	2%
Other	91	2%
<b>Total for 4,543 clients</b>	<b>4,543</b>	<b>100%</b>

Contact Methods	Contacts	Percentage
Telephone	5,773	34%
Email	6,206	36%
Advice Line	3,270	19%
Personal	744	4%
Letter	737	4%
Webform	357	2%
Other	56	<1%
<b>Total for 4,543 clients</b>	<b>17,143</b>	<b>100%</b>

PASS Case Levels	Clients	Percentage
Level 1 - Signposting	860	19%
Level 2 - Information & Advice	2,822	62%
Level 3 - Complex casework	861	19%
<b>Total for 4,543 clients</b>	<b>4,543</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix - Service Data

Tasks	Clients	Percentage
Client given information and/or advice	3,389	33%
Information to client on rights and responsibilities	1,182	11%
Sign-posting	1,103	11%
Allocated client to local PA	1,101	11%
Review case	698	7%
Request information / action	529	5%
Complex support given	485	5%
Write letter	379	4%
Write complex complaint letter	247	2%
Redraft letter	218	2%
2nd Tier support given	166	2%
Other	906	9%
<b>Total for 4,004 clients</b>	<b>10,403</b>	<b>100%</b>

Tasks are reported once per client; 19,426 tasks were recorded in total.

Outcomes	Cases	Percentage
Case closed - client enabled to take own action	2,579	56%
Case closed - no further contact from client	971	21%
Outcome not known	272	6%
Case closed - complaint withdrawn	190	4%
NHS - apology received	134	3%
NHS - response / explanation received	112	2%
Local resolution resolved	71	2%
Other	263	6%
<b>Total for 5,075 clients</b>	<b>4,592</b>	<b>100%</b>

Organisations staff liaised with to support clients	Clients	Percentage
NHS – complaints staff	378	33%
NHS – non complaints staff	129	11%
General Practitioner	100	9%
SPSO	93	8%
PALS	59	5%
Solicitor	52	5%
NHS Inform	50	4%
Other	334	28%
<b>Total for 493 clients</b>	<b>1,145</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix - Service Data

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Prison clients	Clients	Contacts
HMP Barlinnie	1	1

Work by other CAB workers

Non-PASS Adviser CAB work	All
Clients	1,014
Contacts	1,320
Organisations advisers liaised with to support clients	143
Tasks	232
<b>CAB giving support</b>	<b>59</b>

Non-PASS Adviser Tasks	Clients	Percentage
Review case	93	26%
Client given information and/or advice	40	11%
Completed form	30	8%
Complex support given	29	8%
Write complex complaint letter	27	8%
Write letter	25	7%
Redraft letter	21	6%
Sign-posting	14	4%
Allocated client to local PA	14	4%
Information to client on rights and responsibilities	10	3%
Other	50	14%
<b>Recorded for 232 clients</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Appendix - Service Data

### 2. Hospital data

<b>Hospital Contacts</b>	<b>7,526</b>
<b>Hospital Clients</b>	<b>1,687</b>

<b>Hospital Contact Reason</b>	<b>Contacts</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
NHS Complaint - Stage 2 (formal)	3,274	44%
Unknown	1,455	19%
NHS Complaint - Stage 1 (informal)	1,135	15%
NHS - Not related to NHS Complaints Process	733	10%
NHS Complaint - Stage 3 (SPSO)	638	8%
NHS Complaint - Significant delays/extensions	79	1%
NHS Concerns - Feedback/Comments	67	1%
NHS Complaint Process exhausted	52	1%
NHS SAER (Significant Adverse Event Review)	52	1%
NHS Concerns - Unable to make complaint	41	1%
<b>Total contacts</b>	<b>7,526</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Local Health Boards</b>	<b>Clients</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Ayrshire & Arran	66	4%
Borders	35	2%
Dumfries & Galloway	57	3%
Fife	132	8%
Forth Valley	112	7%
Grampian	152	9%
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	448	26%
Highland	144	8%
Lanarkshire	141	8%
Lothian	181	11%
Orkney	16	1%
Shetland	11	1%
Tayside	144	8%
Western Isles	12	1%
Other/Not known	70	4%
<b>Total for 1,687 clients</b>	<b>1,721</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix - Service Data

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Hospital Service Area	Clients	Percentage
Hospital Acute Services	974	59%
Community Hospital Services	129	8%
Other	113	7%
Psychiatric / Learning Disability Services	99	6%
Accident & Emergency	90	5%
Administration	85	5%
Community Health Services – not elsewhere specified	60	4%
Maternity Services	49	3%
Remainder	39	2%
<b>Total Hospital Service Areas</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>100%</b>

Hospital Staff Group 1	Clients	Percentage
Hospital Consultants / Doctors	1,166	63%
Nurses	258	14%
NHS Board / hospital administrative staff / members (excluding FHS administrative)	187	10%
Other	155	8%
Remainder	106	6%
<b>Total Staff Group 1s</b>	<b>1,862</b>	<b>100%</b>

Hospital Staff Group 2	Clients	Percentage
Consultant - medical	396	34%
Consultant - surgical	273	23%
Doctor	161	14%
Hospital Consultants/Doctors - other	144	12%
Consultant - psychiatrist	142	12%
Remainder	57	5%
<b>Total Staff Group 2s</b>	<b>1,173</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix - Service Data

### 3. HSCP data

<b>HSCP Contacts</b>	<b>6,295</b>
<b>HSCP Clients</b>	<b>1,488</b>

<b>HSCP Contact Reason</b>	<b>Contacts</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
NHS Complaint - Stage 2 (formal)	2,425	39%
NHS Complaint - Stage 1 (informal)	1,216	19%
Unknown	1,216	19%
NHS - Not related to NHS Complaints Process	849	13%
NHS Complaint - Stage 3 (SPSO)	434	7%
NHS Complaint - Significant delays/extensions	44	1%
NHS Concerns - Feedback/Comments	35	1%
NHS Complaint Process exhausted	30	0%
NHS SAER (Significant Adverse Event Review)	23	0%
NHS Concerns - Unable to make complaint	20	0%
<b>Total contacts</b>	<b>6,295</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Local HSCPs</b>	<b>Clients</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Ayrshire & Arran	81	5%
Borders	45	3%
Dumfries & Galloway	44	3%
Fife	136	9%
Forth Valley	78	5%
Grampian	128	9%
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	368	25%
Highland	119	8%
Lanarkshire	211	14%
Lothian	190	13%
Orkney	7	<1%
Shetland	3	<1%
Tayside	72	5%
Western Isles	3	<1%
<b>Total for 1,479 clients</b>	<b>1,485</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix - Service Data

HSCPs Service Area	Clients	Percentage
Family Health Services	1,317	82%
Community Health Services – not elsewhere specified	82	5%
Psychiatric / Learning Disability Services	76	5%
Community Hospital Services	40	3%
Remainder	84	5%
<b>Total Service Areas</b>	<b>1,599</b>	<b>100%</b>

HSCP Staff Group 1	Clients	Percentage
GP	1,147	77%
Dental	130	9%
Nurses	67	5%
Other	66	4%
Remainder	74	5%
<b>Total Staff Group 1</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>100%</b>

HSCP Staff Group 2	Clients	Percentage
General Practitioner	798	70%
GP - Other	118	10%
Practice receptionist	110	10%
Practice manager	109	10%
Practice nurse	12	1%
<b>Total Staff Group 2</b>	<b>1,147</b>	<b>100%</b>

HSCP NHS Advice Code	Clients	Percentage
Clinical treatment (all aspects)	697	21%
Access to GP	587	17%
Staff - attitude / behaviour	372	11%
Staff - complaint handling	316	9%
Rights and responsibilities	260	8%
Staff - communication (oral)	173	5%
Other	162	5%
Personal records (medical, complaints files)	152	4%
Mental health	107	3%
Staff - competence	90	3%
Access to Dentist	88	3%
Remainder	383	11%
<b>NHS Advice Codes Total</b>	<b>3,379</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Appendix - Service Data

## 4. Special Health Board data

Special Health Boards	Clients	Contacts
Scottish Ambulance Service	22	113
Golden Jubilee (National Waiting Times Hospital)	12	42
NHS24	11	31
State Hospital - Carstairs	1	5
Total	46	191

## 5. 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
15 and under	0	0%
16-17	6	<1%
18-24	133	3%
25-34	456	10%
35-44	584	13%
45-59	948	21%
60-64	282	6%
65-79	531	12%
80+	86	2%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	1,517	33%
Total	4,543	100%

Gender	Clients	Percentage
Female	1,134	25%
Male	763	17%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	2,646	58%
Total	4,543	100%

## Appendix - Service Data

Trans history	Clients	Percentage
No	663	15%
Yes	4	<1%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	3,876	85%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,543</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnic Group 1	Clients	Percentage
White	960	21%
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	26	1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1%	<1%
African	13	<1%
Caribbean, Caribbean or Black	10	<1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1	<1%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	3,517	77%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,543</b>	<b>100%</b>





## Appendix - Service Data

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Ethnic Groups 1&2	Clients	Percentage
White	960	21%
Scottish	681	15%
Other British	100	2%
Other white ethnic group	39	1%
Polish	12	<1%
Irish	4	<1%
Roma	1	<1%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	123	3%
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	26	1%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	10	<1%
Other	8	<1%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	3	<1%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	2	<1%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	3	<1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	16	<1%
Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups	8	<1%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	8	<1%
Other ethnic group	13	<1%
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	5	<1%
Other	6	<1%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	2	<1%
African	10	<1%
African, African Scottish or African British	8	<1%
Other	1	<1%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	1	<1%
Caribbean, Caribbean or Black	1	<1%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	1	<1%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	3,517	77%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,543</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix - Service Data

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Health Problem or Disability affecting day-to-day activities	Clients	Percentage
Yes	833	18%
Yes - Limited a lot	582	13%
Yes - Limited a little	193	4%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	58	1%
No	252	6%
Blank/Prefer not to answer	3,458	76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,543</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Appendix - Service Data

### 6. 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%	3,325 of 3,367 calls
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%	96%	159 of 166 "by return" responses
3	Website availability (24/7)	Site accessibility per quarter, excluding maintenance downtime	99.5%	100%	No downtime
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%	As required
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%	As required

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%	1,889 of 1,943 "by return" responses
2	Emails	Initial call back/email to client attempted by the end of the next working day (unless otherwise requested)	92%	820 of 893 "by return" responses

# 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 2020-21, the entire Citizens Advice network provided advice and assistance to over 171,000 individuals; this equates to one in every 26 adults living in Scotland. The network put almost £147 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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