

**The Christie NHS Foundation Trust - Complaints 2018/19**

The NHS Complaints Regulations sets out a complaints process with two stages: local resolution (carried out by the NHS body) and, if the complainant remains dissatisfied, referral to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

The complaints process is patient focused and driven, with a great emphasis on personal contact with the complainant to aid resolution and to agree a response timeframe. National timescales for responses were removed in the 2009 review of the Complaints Regulations and replaced with the ability to agree individual response deadlines on a case by case basis with the complainant. Internal timescales have remained in place at The Christie as detailed below to ensure responses are issued promptly and it is on rare occasions only when a different response deadline is agreed with the complainant. This would only happen where key people are unavailable, for reasons such as annual leave, to input into the response.

**Responding to a complainant**

The Christie process for managing complaints, which involves grading the complaints on a scale of 1 to 5, is set out in the table below:

1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Query / suggestion</li> <li>▶ Verbal concerns resolved by the end of the next working day</li> <li>▶ Anonymous comment forms raising concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Allegation that service received substandard</li> <li>▶ Simple complaints which can be resolved quickly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Single issue complaints with allegation of lack of appropriate care</li> <li>▶ Serious complaints containing one issue</li> <li>▶ Simple complaint where more than one complaint has been received regarding the same subject from different complainants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Multiple issue complaints with allegations of lack of care</li> <li>▶ Serious complaints containing more than one issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Multiple issue, complex complaints</li> <li>▶ Serious complaint where more than one complaint has been received regarding the same subject from different complainants</li> <li>▶ Risk to organisational reputation</li> </ul>

We contact each complainant in order to fully understand their issues and to agree the type of response with the complainant. This may be a written response, resolution meeting or conference call where all the issues are addressed.

We also agree the timescales for that response with each individual complainant. Where a written response is requested, we now have a 25 day response time for all grades.



**Complaints received:**

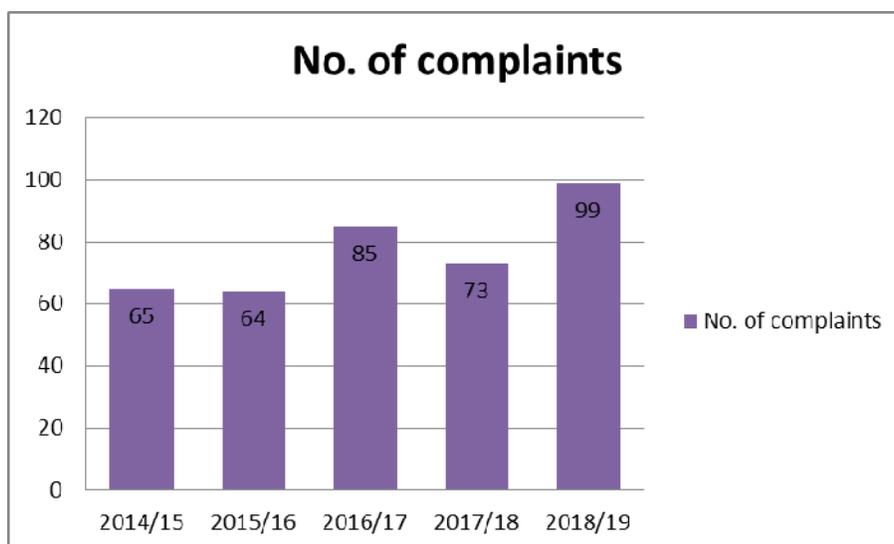
In 2018/19, The Christie received 99 complaints. This remains at 0.02% of total activity, as it was in financial year 2017/18.

The graphs and tables below show the number of complaints received by each division. Where complaints involve a number of divisions, only the lead division is recorded.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Total
Network Services	0	16	28	19	0	63
Cancer Centre Services	0	10	14	9	0	33
Estates and Facilities	0	2	0	0	0	2
Research and Development	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>99</b>

The above table depicts the grading of complaints at the time they are received into the Trust. The grades are reviewed as part of the investigation process and some are downgraded at the end of the investigation according to the outcome of the investigation.

The chart below shows a comparison of complaints received over the last five financial years:



We continue to resolve complaints at source; our clinicians, matrons, ward sisters and charge nurses have a high profile on wards and in clinical departments where they focus on the patient experience and ensure continual improvement in care and service delivery on a day by day basis.

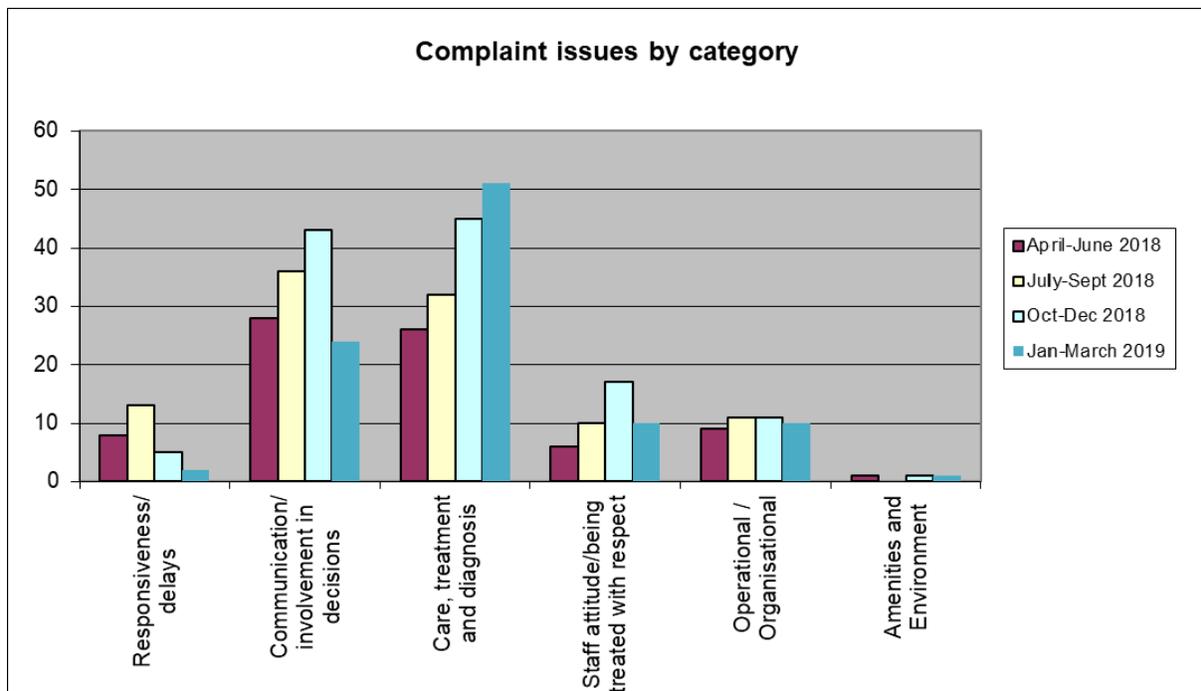
All complaints are reviewed weekly by the executive directors and all new complaints are triaged through an executive review process so that there is a triangulation between incidents, claims and complaints.

All issues within a complaint are logged separately so if a complainant raises a number of issues all relating to care and treatment, all of these issues can easily be depicted for lessons learning purposes.

400 issues were raised within the 99 complaints received during this year. Although several were single issues mentioned once or twice, several themes are noticeable:

- 131 issues related to communication alone.
- 154 issues related to care, treatment and diagnosis.
- 43 issues related to staff attitude and values and behaviour.
- 28 issues related to waiting times and delays.
- 41 issues were operational and/or organisational.

The receipt of these issues relating to communication and care is not indicative of a widespread problem in these areas and all of the concerns were thoroughly reviewed.



## Complaints Resolution

The table below outlines how each of our 99 complaints were resolved over the course of 2018/19. Where resolution has not been finalised, these are marked as pending resolution:

	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Pending resolution	Total
<b>Written response</b>	19	33	25	6	<b>83</b>
<b>Resolution meeting</b>	3	5	6	2	<b>16</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>99</b>

Three complaints were referred to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO):

- One was rejected as it was outside of their timescales.
- One was a request for comment on concerns raised by a complainant. Actions were finalised and the case was concluded.
- One was not upheld.

## Complaints survey

The Christie has routinely sent complainants a questionnaire since August 2013 asking their views on how their complaint was handled and their opinion of the complaint response. The questionnaire was redesigned in August 2015 in line with The CQC report 'Complaints Matter' and Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman 'My Expectations' 2015.

The respondents all felt confident to speak up when initially considering raising a complaint and felt that the person to whom they initially raised the complaint to was overwhelmingly supportive and helpful.

The majority of responses indicated that making the complaint was simple. The behaviour of the Complaints Team was on the whole found to be helpful and supportive and respondents said that they found that in general that their case was treated with respect and understanding.

In regards to their complaint making a difference, it was split between those who maybe thought it made a difference and those who felt it hadn't, however, the majority would feel comfortable in making a complaint in the future or encouraging someone else to so.

Focus group attendees were asked to review a number of complaint response letters and complete a questionnaire relating to the quality & content of those letters. The following was determined:

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Sympathetic	57%	14%	10%	14%	5%
Compassionate	55%	10%	25%	5%	5%
Read well	67%	19%	14%	0	0
Grammar	60%	20%	20%	0	0

## Learning from Complaints 2018/19



- Review of the pharmacy service in relation to patient waiting times resulting in recruitment of more reception staff, increased retention of staff, new staff training, and new waiting time system
- Screening of chemotherapy prescriptions by outreach team
- Alterations made to appointment times process for patients to prevent requirement for bloods
- Patient Experience Focus Group convened to discuss complaints process and the response letters content with a view to improving their quality and detail from the patients perspective
- Training of reception staff to deal more empathically with patients with attendance on the Positive Patient Experience course
- Education and update for medical staff on timely signing of death certificates and coroners referrals
- Provision and promotion of advanced communication skills training for healthcare professionals
- Review of process for second opinions to ensure it is meeting the need of patients and referrers
- Amendment of clinic templates to better reflect the work streams within clinics
- New process ensuring updated patient lists get to outreach clinics
- Process reviewed for communicating required medication changes with patients
- Review of the process for providing ward visiting times to visitors, including per-op assessment

