

ABM University Health Board	
Date of Meeting: 5th April 2018 Name of Meeting: Quality & Safety Committee Agenda item: 9.2	
Subject	<i>Public Health Service Ombudsman Cases</i>
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1.0 Situation

Monitoring arrangements for Ombudsman cases identified an increase in the number of cases for quarters 1 and 2 of 2017/18 when compared to 2016/17. This increase was reported, by the Director of Nursing, to Welsh Government during the Joint Executive Team meeting in October 2017. The increase in cases was also reported to the Quality & Safety Committee, Executive Team and weekly High Risk Look Back meetings.

The level of activity from the Ombudsman increased during October & November 2017 (which was attributed to the insertion of 12 week referral guidance in our response letters) and Health Boards in Wales confirmed that they had noticed an increase in Ombudsman activity through the Ombudsman sounding board meetings. However, there has been a further increase in activity during the latter part of January and February 2018.

Actions taken following the initial identification in an increase in activity in quarter 1 and 2 included:

- Learning event held in the Assurance & Learning Group in September 2017 with presentations from an Ombudsman Officer and the Health Boards Clinical Lead for Ombudsman cases to all Units. The presentation focused on a recent Ombudsman cases and the learning identified through the Ombudsman published document "Ending Groundhog Day – Lessons from Poor Complaint Handling";
- Concerns & Redress Workshops held for all Units focusing on investigating and responding to complaints, which included a presentation from an Ombudsman Officer;
- Two Units were identified as hot spots Ombudsman areas and the weekly High Risk Look Back members requested a special meeting be held to discuss with the Unit their increase in Ombudsman cases;
- Increase in cases was escalated to Units individual performance meetings with Executive Directors;

- Concerns, Redress & Assurance Group on a rotational basis since September 2017 meets with each of the Service Delivery Units to review the closed complaints for the previous month and identifies learning and good practice and reports to the Assurance & Learning Group.

As at 5th March 2018 there are 37 open Ombudsman cases. Monitoring arrangements for Ombudsman cases identified an increase in the number of cases for quarters 1 and 2 of 2017/18 when compared to 2016/17. This increase was reported, by the Director of Nursing, to Welsh Government during the Joint Executive Team meeting in October 2017. The increase in cases was also reported to the Quality & Safety Committee, Executive Team and weekly High Risk Look Back meetings during 2017/18.

2.0 Background

The Ombudsman appointed Improvement Officers to five Health Boards, including ABMU in July 2015. The Improvement Officer, appointed for ABMU, has regular scheduled meetings with the Executive and Assistant Director of Nursing, together with the Liaison Officer, and is invited to attend the Assurance & Learning meetings.

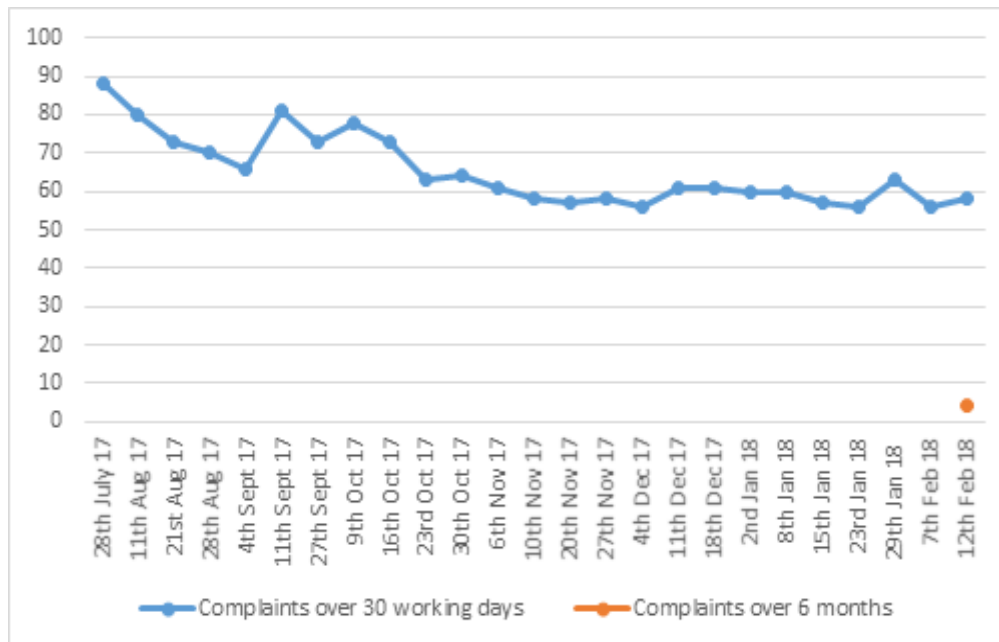
Since October 2016 all complaints have been managed by the six Service Delivery Units (SDU's) within the Health Board. Complaint training workshops were held to support the move of the investigators from a corporate position to SDU's. As part of the workshops a representative of the Ombudsman's office presented on the role of the Public Service Ombudsman and emerging themes for complaints.

The table below sets out the number of new Ombudsman cases received by financial year from 2014/15.

Financial Year	Number of Complaints received by the Ombudsman for ABMU	New Ombudsman Cases
2014/15	106	23
2015/16	126	44
2016/17	90	26
2017/18	95 (as at 31.01.18)	36 (1/4/17 to 14/02/18)

Managing the backlog of complaints

Since November 2016 the Health Board has been undertaking focused weekly review meetings of long standing complaints and as at 28th February 2018 only 4 complaints are now over 6 months old. All SDU's are working hard to achieve the 30 working day target and aim to establish early contact and early resolution of complaints, particularly for the green graded complaints.



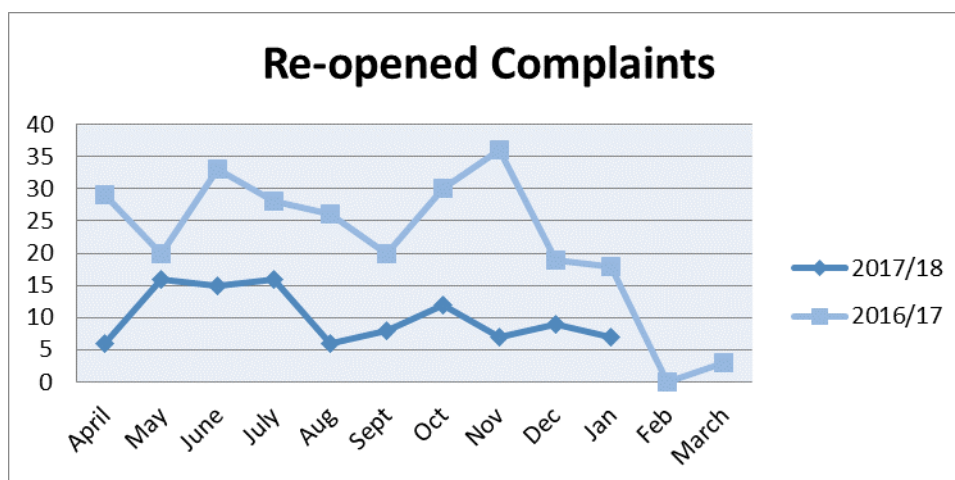
Complaint Performance

The Health Boards performance against the 30 working day target improved in quarter 4 of 2016/17. The improved performance has continued to be achieved in 2017/18 as a result of which the performance on aggregate for April to November 2017 exceeds the Welsh Government target of 75%.

From February 2018 a quality assurance process of checking all complaint responses prior to Chief Executive approval and signing has been introduced in order to ensure a consistent, Health Board approach to responding to complaints.

No. of Re-opened Complaints

The number of re-opened complaints decreased in 2017/18 when compared to the same period in 2016/17.



3.0 Assessment

A breakdown of the 36 New Investigations received for the period 1/4/2017 – 14/2/18 is shown below.

Speciality	Morriston	Princess of Wales	Singleton	Mental Health & Learning Disabilities	Primary Care	Total
Cardiology	5	2				7
Urology	3					3
Oncology		1	2			3
Medicine/Elderly Care	2	2				4
Surgery	1	3				4
Gynae		1	2			3
W & CH		1				1
Orthopaedics	1	1				2
Ophthalmology			2			2
Burns & Plastic	1					1
Mental Health				2		2
Primary Care					2	2
Early Settlements	2					2
Total	15	11	6	2	2	36

Of the 36 New Investigations, early settlements have been agreed in two cases, and one has been investigated and concluded by the Ombudsman, with the remaining cases at various stages of the investigation process. In total there are 38 open Ombudsman Investigations 5 of which remain open from 2016/17. Neath Port Talbot Unit have not received any new Ombudsman cases in 2017/18 to date.

4.0 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

- Note the report and the actions taken/being taken as a result of the increase in the number of Ombudsman Investigations.