

Our ref: PT/jm

Ask for: James Merrifield

Your ref:



01656 644 200

Date: 9 July 2013



James.Merrifield@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Mr Bob Hudson
Chief Executive
Public Health Wales NHS Trust
14 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Dear Mr Hudson

Annual Letter 2012-2013

Following the recent publication of my Annual Report, I am pleased to provide you with the Annual Letter (2012-2013) for Public Health Wales NHS Trust.

As outlined in my Annual Report, the number of new complaints to my office increased by 12% compared with 2011/12. Health complaints continue to be the most numerous type of complaint and now account for more than a third of all complaints received. Whilst some of the increase can be attributed to changes brought about under the Putting Things Right redress arrangements, the increase almost certainly reflects a greater dissatisfaction with the health service.

In reference to the overall performance of Health Boards in Wales, there has been a 35% increase in the number of investigation reports issued by my office during 2012/13 compared with 2011/12. I have also again had cause to issue a number of Public Interest Reports identifying serious concerns and failings, all of which have concerned health bodies. Whilst the average number of 'not upheld' reports issued against health bodies has remained the same as last year, I am disappointed to note such a large increase in the average number of 'upheld' reports from 11 to 21 reports.

It is worth noting a further year-on-year increase in the levels of 'Quick Fixes' and 'Voluntary Settlements' achieved by this office, from 13 to 16 cases. In order to maximise the opportunities to learn lessons from these types of cases, you can now find the summaries of quick fixes and voluntary settlements included in my quarterly publication, The Ombudsman's Casebook.

However, I am disappointed to note that the amount of time taken by public bodies in Wales in responding to requests for information from my office has not improved. I

am concerned that 45% of all responses took longer than five weeks, with 28% of responses taking in excess of 6 weeks. Whilst I appreciate that resources are stretched at this time, such delays obstruct me from providing complainants with the level of service which they should rightly expect to receive and I urge all Welsh public bodies to review their performance.

In reference to your Trust, the number of complaints received and investigated remains at the same level as 2011/12. Of the two complaints received during 2012/13, one case was closed on the basis that it was out of jurisdiction whilst the other case was closed following initial consideration by my office. As there were no complaints taken into investigation by my office, there were no recorded response times relating to Public Health Wales NHS Trust.

As with previous exercises, I have copied this correspondence to the Chair of your Health Board with the intention that it be considered by the Board. I would also welcome the opportunity to meet and my office will be in contact shortly to make the necessary arrangements. Finally, a copy of this letter will be published on my website.

Yours sincerely

Peter Tyndall
Ombudsman

Copy: Chair, Public Health Wales NHS Trust

Appendix

Explanatory Notes

Sections A and B provide a breakdown of the number of complaints against Public Health Wales which were received and investigated by my office during 2012-2013. The tables also contain the figures for 2011-2012.

Section C compares the number of complaints against Public Health Wales received by my office during 2012-2013, with the equivalent figures for 2011-2012. These figures are broken down into subject categories

Section D compares the number of complaints against Public Health Wales which were received and investigated by my office during 2012-2013, with the equivalent figures for 2011-2012.

Section E compares the complaint outcomes for Public Health Wales during 2012-2013, with the equivalent outcomes during 2011-2012. Public Interest reports issued under section 16 of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005 are recorded as 'Section 16'.

Section F illustrates the response times for those complaints which were taken into investigation during 2011-2012. Where no response times have been recorded, the graph contains an illustration of the average response times for health bodies, and the average for all public bodies in Wales during the same period.

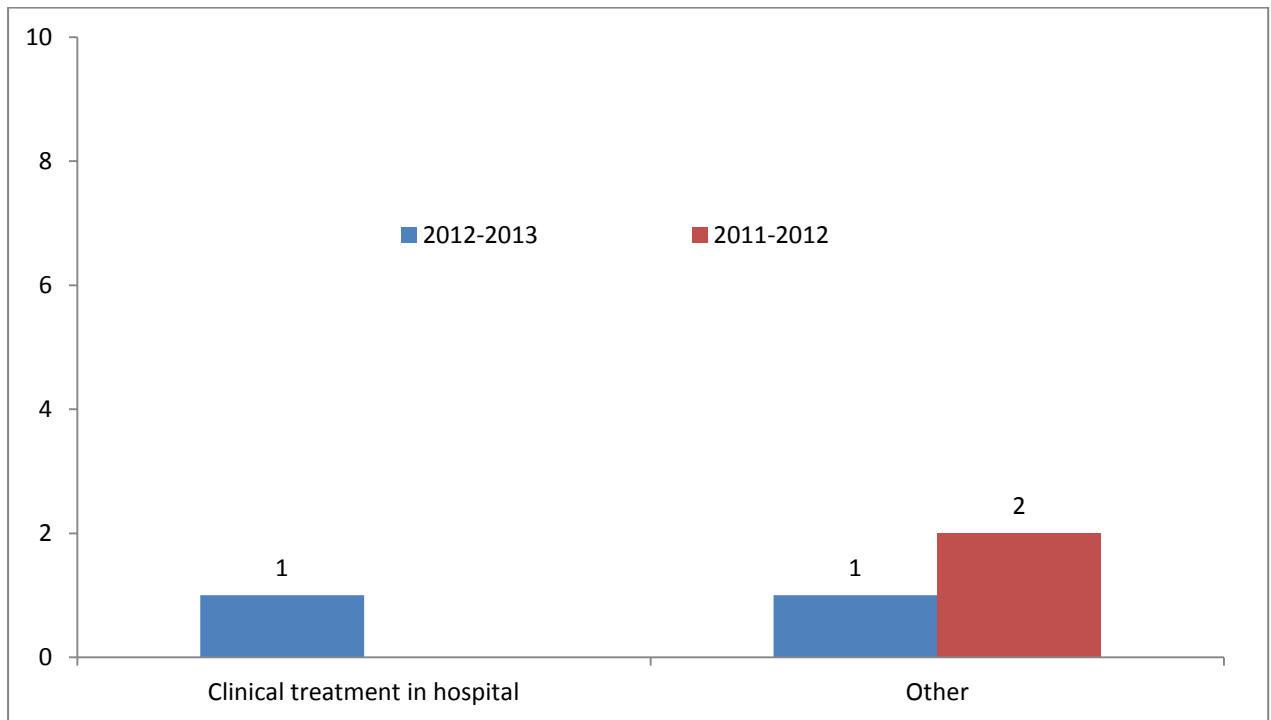
A: Complaints received by my office

Subject	2012-2013	2011-2012
Clinical treatment in hospital	1	0
Other	1	2
TOTAL	2	2

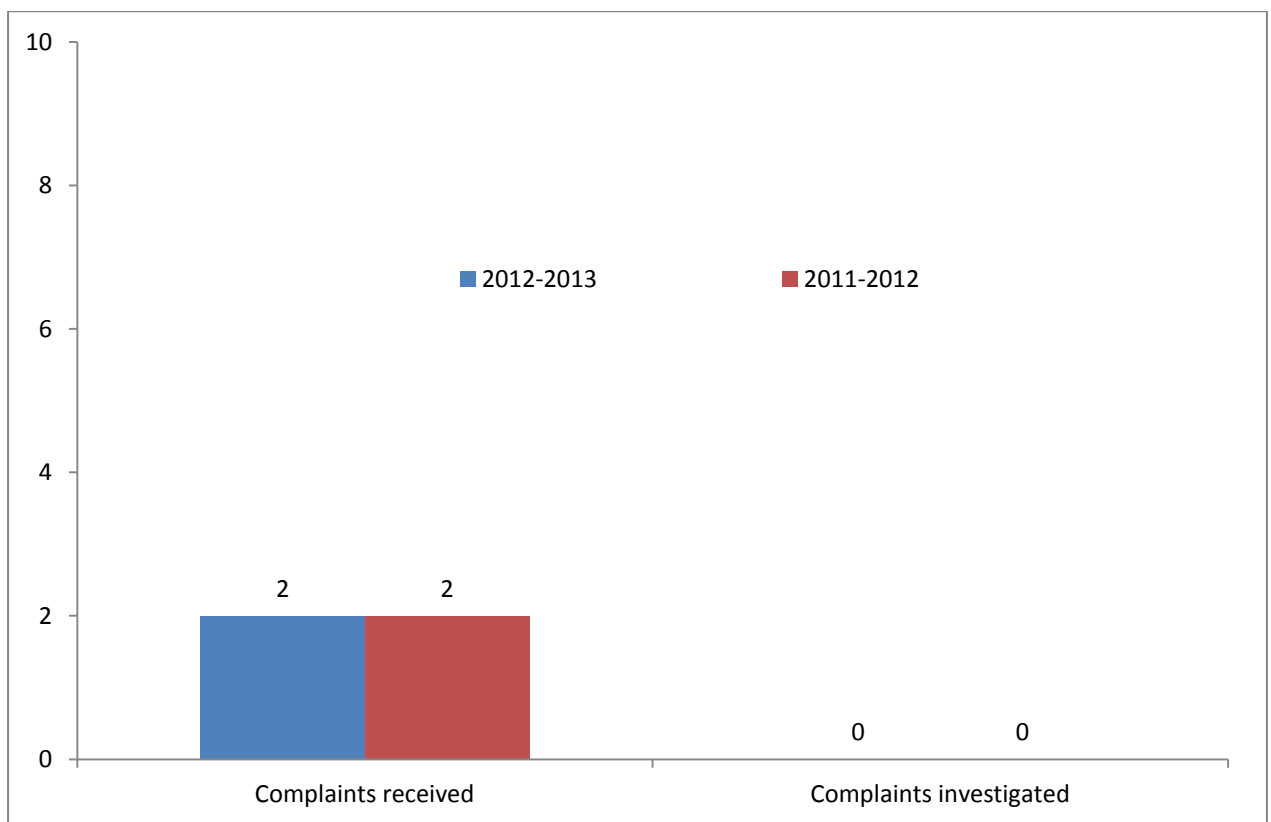
B: Complaints taken into investigation by my office

	2012-2013	2011-2012
Number of complaints taken into investigation	0	0

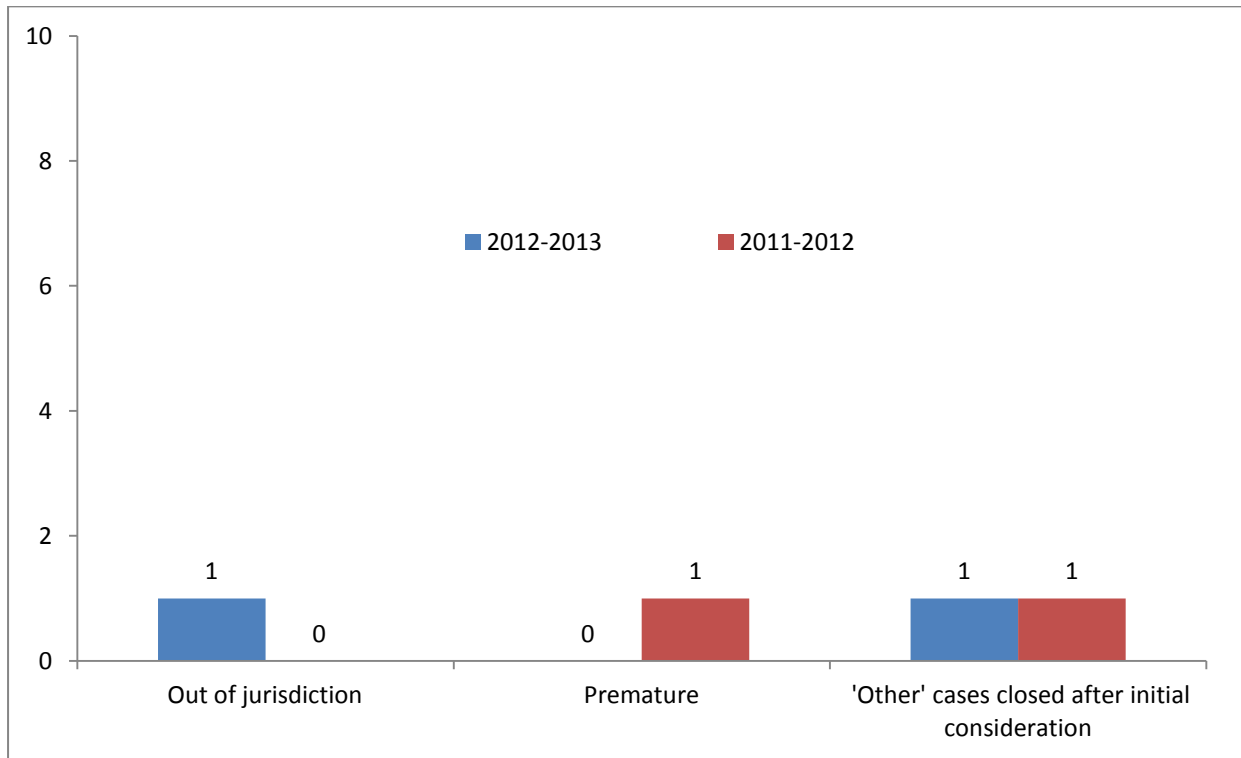
C: Comparison of complaints by subject category



D: Comparison of complaints received and investigated during 2012-2013 with the figures for 2011-2012



E: Comparison of complaints by outcome during 2012-2013 with 2011-2012 figures



F: Response times, 2012-2013

Graph F relates to those complaints which were taken into investigation during 2012-2013. As there were no complaints against Public Health Wales which were taken into investigation during 2012-2013, there are no response times for Public Health Wales. However, we have included the average Health Board response times and the average response times for all bodies in Wales for your information.

