



ANNUAL REPORT

PROMOTING RIGHTS AND RESOLVING
CONCERNS. **WE ARE HERE TO HELP.**

2023

CHAIRS FORWARD

It is with great pleasure and pride that I present our annual report for the year 2022-23. Despite the numerous challenges we faced, we have managed to achieve impressive results that speak to our dedication and commitment to providing exceptional services to all consumers of health and disability services. Our success this past year would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our Advocates, and we are honored to share our progress with you.

Over the past year, we received

2,857
complaints

AND successfully closed

2,980
complaints

We provided 1,314 education sessions to groups of consumers and providers, and we have continued to expand our networks with 3,351 indicating our commitment to community engagement.

WE ALSO
MANAGED TO CLOSE

21,738
enquiries

demonstrating our ability
to handle a high volume of
queries effectively.

CONTENTS

02



Working alongside consumers of health and disability services are the super powers our Advocates bring with every interaction they have and here is an amazing example of what this means to a consumer:

My husband and I are writing to you to give some feedback regarding our dealings with [advocate] and a complaint we were dealing with against [provider].

We had a very upsetting experience with [provider], which resulted in the passing of our mother/mother-in-law, in 2022. We decided that the best way to proceed and obtain much needed answers about what had happened, would be to use the advocacy service provided.

From the first phone call we received from our [advocate], we felt supported and listened to. [advocate] was extremely professional and friendly and made sure we were kept up to date at every stage.

We are extremely happy about the service we received and felt it necessary to inform yourself - in this day and age people are very quick to complain, but not so much to give positive feedback when it is due.

Please extend our heartfelt thanks to [advocate] - he has such a warm, caring nature which is essential for the role he plays, - Thanks very much

As well as the work we do with consumers, we have also made considerable progress in increasing our operational efficiency, reducing operational costs, and streamlining our processes. Our team has remained steadfast in their efforts, delivering exceptional results and providing exceptional service to our clients.

Our commitment to innovation and sustainability has also continued to drive our progress. We have implemented new technologies, systems, and processes that have improved our performance, reduced our environmental impact, and increased our social responsibility.

We are also pleased to note that we have strengthened our relationship with the Health and Disability Commissioner both operationally and strategically. Additionally, despite pressures across the health and disability sector our staff remained pivotal in supporting and empowering consumers of health and disability services during these times of change.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Board and Management team for their hard work and dedication this past year, which allowed us to land another successful contract.

As we move forward, we remain committed to achieving even greater success, and we look forward to working with our stakeholders to create a brighter future. We will continue to invest in our people, processes, and technology to provide exceptional value to consumers of health and disability services and stakeholders.

In summary, we are proud of what we have achieved over the past year. We look forward to continuing our work and making even greater contributions in the coming years.

SARAH HUTCHINGS
– CHAIR NATIONAL ADVOCACY TRUST

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INTRODUCTION

Our staff have been at the forefront of many changes both internally and externally this financial year ending in June 2023. They have continued to perform extremely well knowing and understanding the wide-ranging issues consumers of health and disability services are facing every day.

This report speaks to the integrity and passion our staff have as they continue with dedication and commitment to deliver high quality advocacy for consumers of health and disability services. The feedback and case studies outlined in this report are a true testament to our staff and what they offer every day to consumers.

Over this past year the staff have also been instrumental in learning and championing a new CRM system. There have been some challenges with the change over from the old IBM Notes system, however, the efficiencies gained from the new cloud-based system is already beginning to be recognized. Work continues on the system, and we know the most challenging part of the change process is behind us. Some of the reporting we can now run takes us 10 seconds to generate compared to more than 40 minutes the prior system would take in the most extreme cases. We have also introduced Power BI to assist us with our reporting and will be investing in our team to up-skill in this new tool that works alongside Microsoft Dynamics.

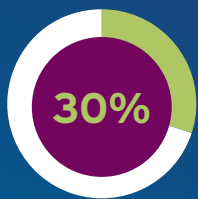
With the new contract with the Health and Disability Commissioner and limited funding available across the health and disability sector, we have continued to adapt our service delivery model. What we previously called our 'Rapid Response' process during Covid-19 we have permanently implemented this service delivery model to form our new Direct Response process which enables us to get much more timely resolution for consumers and with far less utilization of advocacy resource. We have changed our operating model to mainly work virtually, however, whenever a consumer would prefer to meet face to face, we will always find a solution to do this.

The year ahead looks to continue to create opportunities, improve efficiencies and new ways of working. As a team we will continue to adapt our service delivery model to best meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities across Aotearoa. Our staff continue to be our greatest asset and this report, and the outcomes described is a true tribute to this.

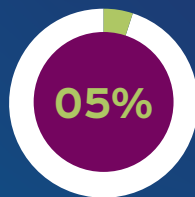
ENQUIRIES

The combined number of NAT and HDC enquiries received by the Advocacy service between 01 July 2022 and 30 June 2023 was

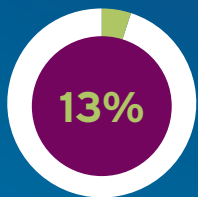
21,738



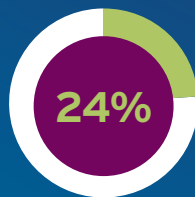
Networking, Education or used Advocacy before



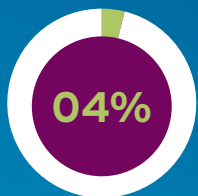
Advertising



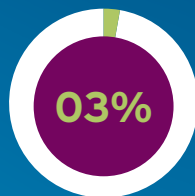
Advocacy Website



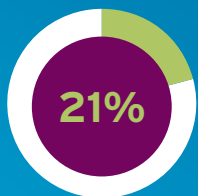
Health or Disability provider



Family or Friend



Other Agencies



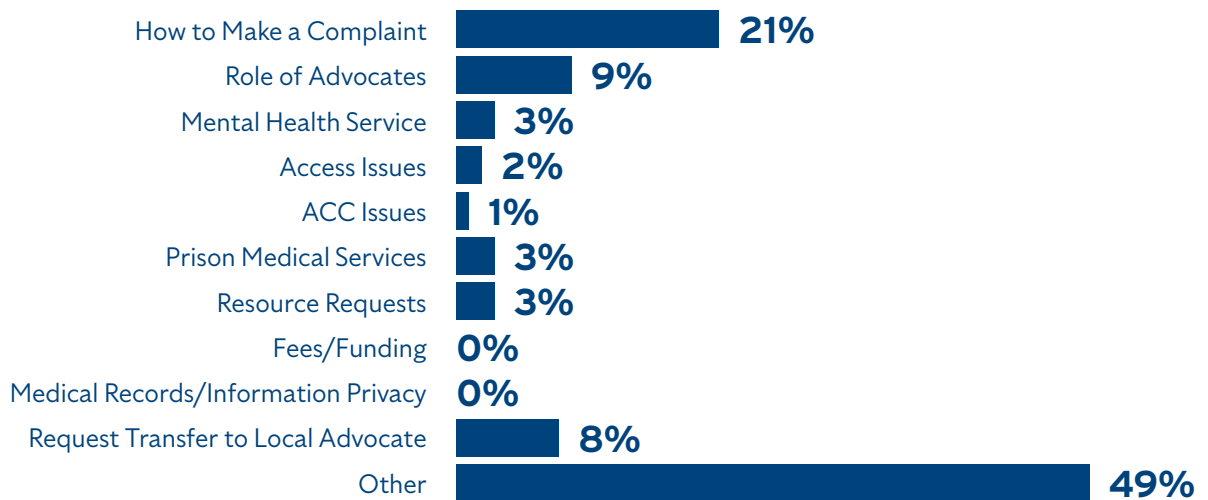
Other

Complainants who identified a health or disability service provider as the referral source was 24% up 3% from last financial year. The number of referrals via the advocacy website decreased by 6% from the year prior.

Website traffic increased 14% from the previous year as we had 42,666 visits, up from 37,348 visits the previous year. There were 33,979 unique visitors to the website, up from 28,136 the previous year.

Through Facebook advertising we reached 324,146 profiles through paid advertising and organic reach, of which 13,297 (up from 5,191 the previous year) clicked through and visited our Facebook page. On Facebook we increased our following from 4,926 profiles to roughly 6,200 profiles.

SUBJECT of enquiries 22/23



Mostly consistent with previous years, the subject of most enquiries is seeking information on how to make a complaint, but there was a decrease in this area. The ‘other’ category includes enquiry subjects such as “Disability services, funding, and resources”, “Request for transfer to HDC, HDC resources”. “Drug and alcohol treatment”, ACC/MSD, Work and Income”.

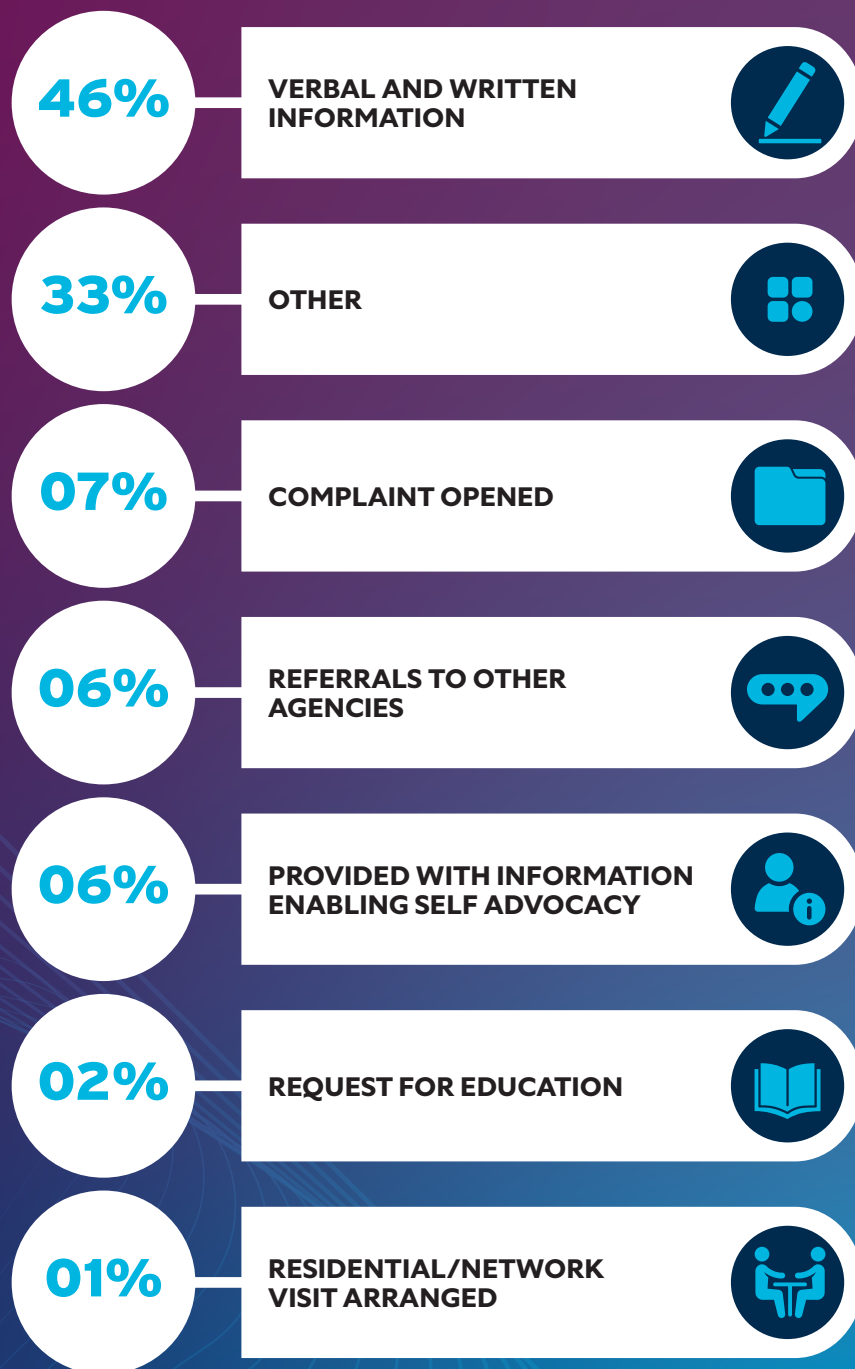
ENQUIRIES outcome 22/23



**ENQUIRIES
CLOSED**



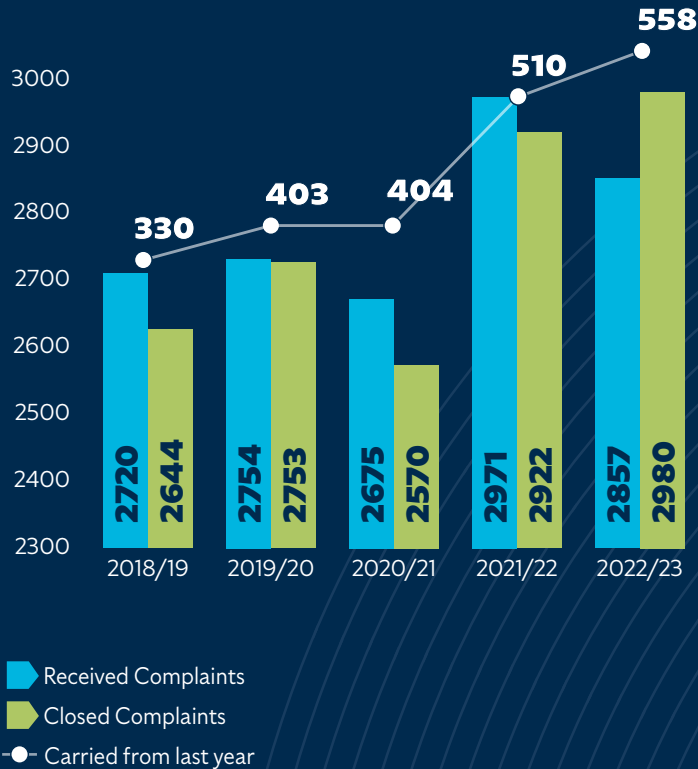
-3%



The number of complaints opened following an enquiry decreased by 3% when compared to the previous year. In practice this may also indicate more direct loading of complaints rather than initial conversations recorded at an enquiry level first. Based on data from ADS prior to going live with the new CRM, the average time to close enquiries where 'complaint opened' was the outcome was 47-48 minutes. The 'other' category includes where the enquirer was unable to be contacted and where the enquirer had requested to be put through to HDC.

COMPLAINTS

COMPLAINTS BY YEAR



AT YEAR END, 30 JUNE 2023, ADVOCATES HAD WORKED ON A TOTAL OF

3,415
complaints

558 of those were carried forward from the previous year and 2857 were received between 01 July 2022 and 30 June 2023.

REFERRAL METHOD RECEIVED 2022/23

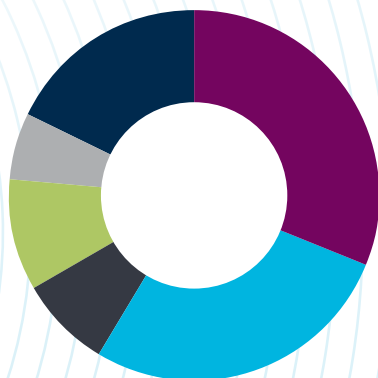


- ▾ Networking, education or used the service before
- ▾ Health or disability service provider
- ▾ Formal & Informal referrals from HDC
- ▾ Advertising
- ▾ Family or friend
- ▾ Others

Advertising continues to be the most common way people who open complaints are referred to our service. This year advertising was up 2% from the year prior at 40%.

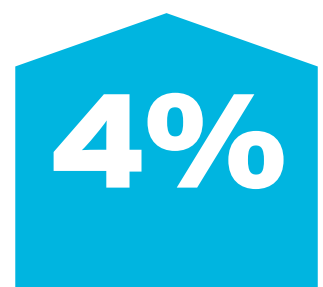


COMPLAINTS SERVICE TYPE RECEIVED 2022/23

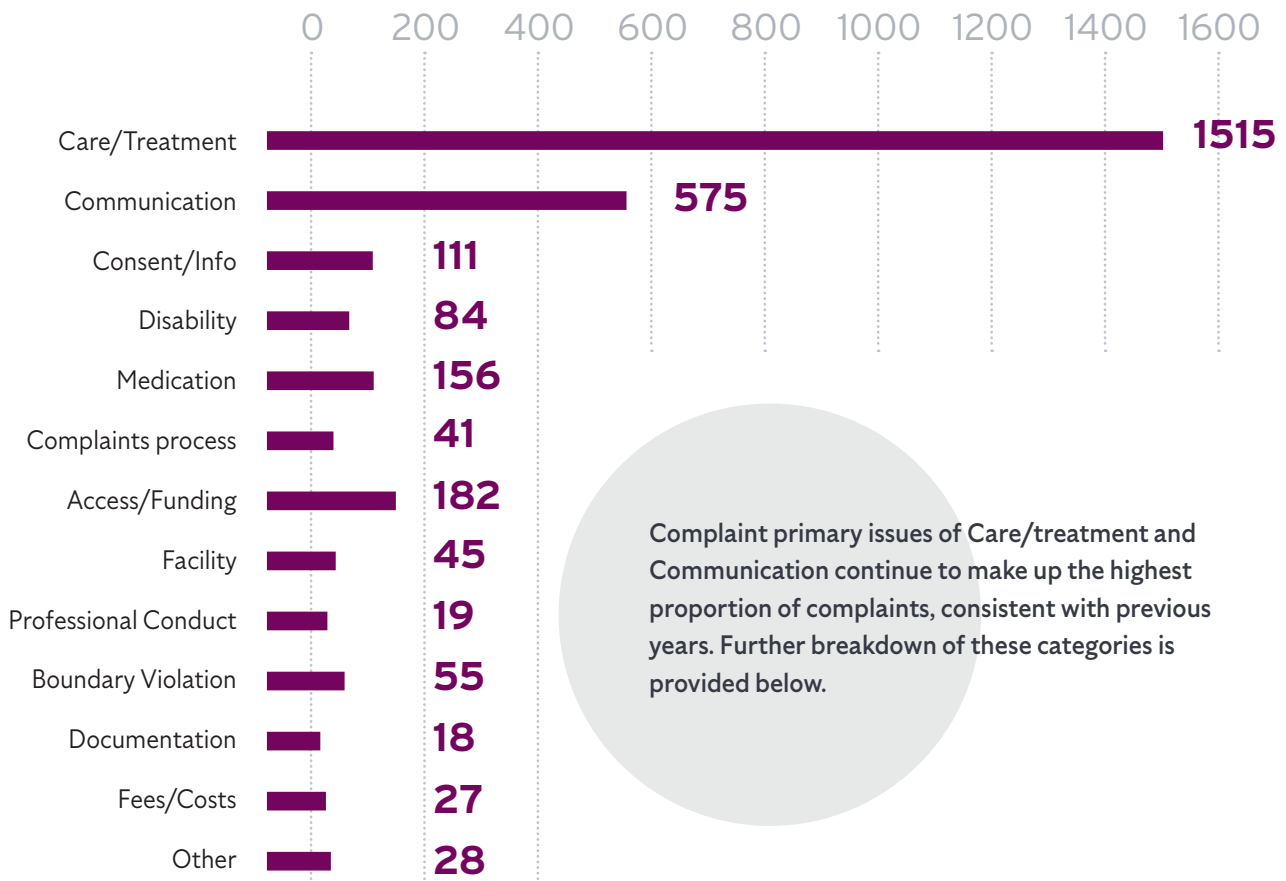


- ▾ DHB (excl. Mental Health Service)
- ▾ Prison Health
- ▾ General Practice
- ▾ Residential Services
- ▾ Mental Health Service
- ▾ Other

This year the number of complaints from residential services remained consistent with last year, as did complaints received for General Practice. Complaints about 'other' services was up by 4% from previous year.



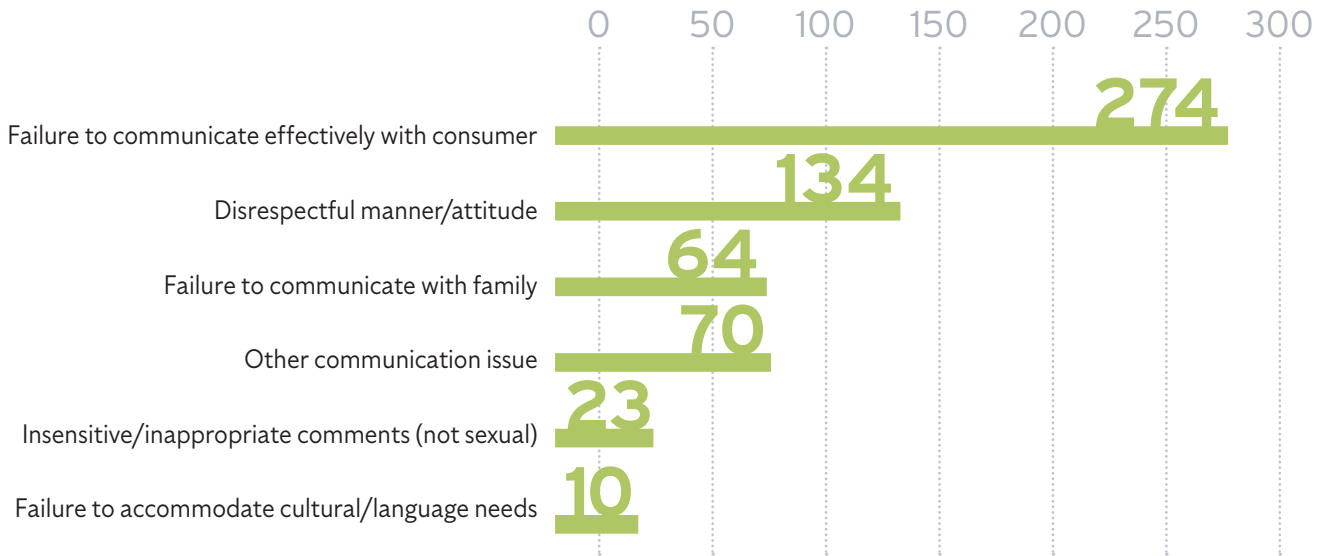
COMPLAINTS RECEIVED - ISSUES -2022/23



COMPLAINTS RECEIVED - ISSUES - CARE/TREATMENT - BREAKDOWN 2022/23

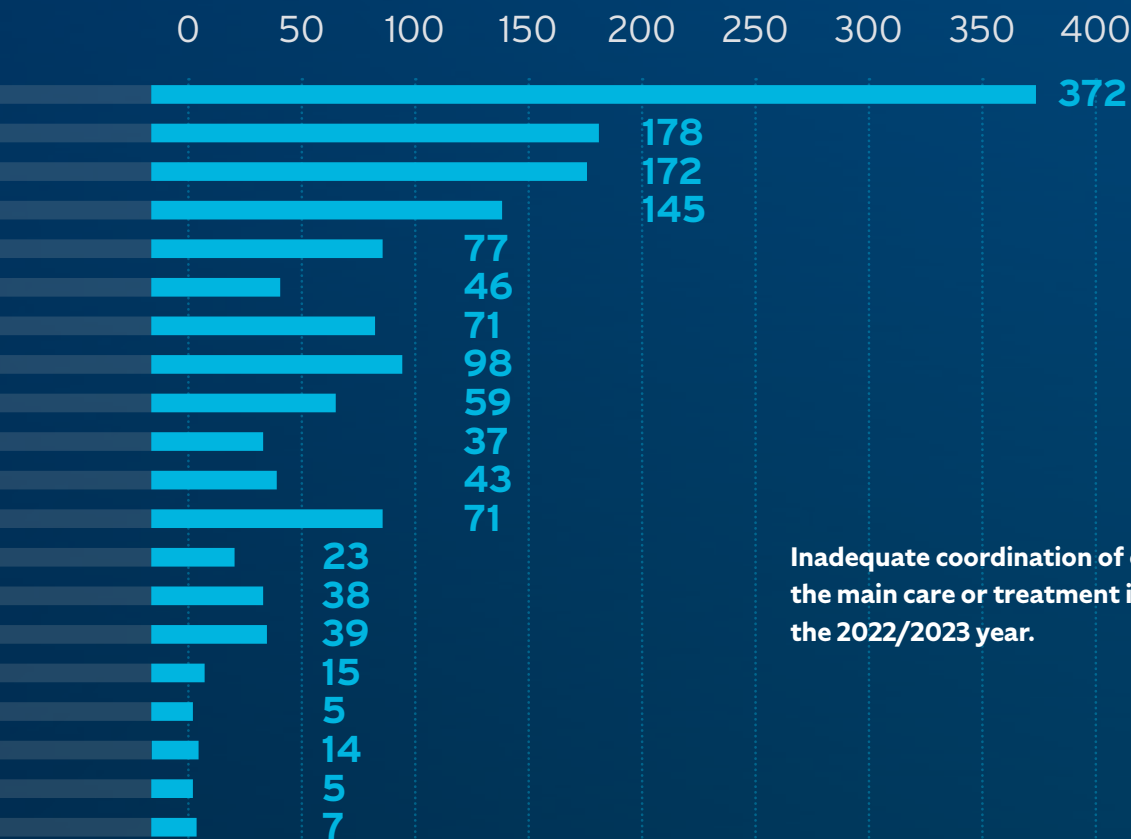
- Inadequate coordination of care/treatment
- Inadequate/inappropriate treatment/procedure (clinical)
 - Delay in treatment
 - Inadequate/inappropriate examination/assessment
 - Missed/incorrect/delayed diagnosis
 - Inadequate/inappropriate follow-up
 - Unexpected treatment outcome
 - Other care/treatment issue
- Inadequate/inappropriate care (non-clinical)
- Inappropriate withdrawal of treatment
- Inadequate/inappropriate monitoring
- Delayed/inadequate/inappropriate referral
- Rough/painful care or treatment
- Refusal to treat
- Refusal to assist/attend
- Inadequate/inappropriate testing
- Personal privacy not respected
- Inappropriate/delayed discharge/transfer
- Unnecessary treatment/over servicing
- Inappropriate admission or failure to admit

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED - ISSUES - COMMUNICATION - BREAKDOWN 2022/23



Failure to communicate effectively with the consumer was the main communication issue that presented in the 2022/2023 year.

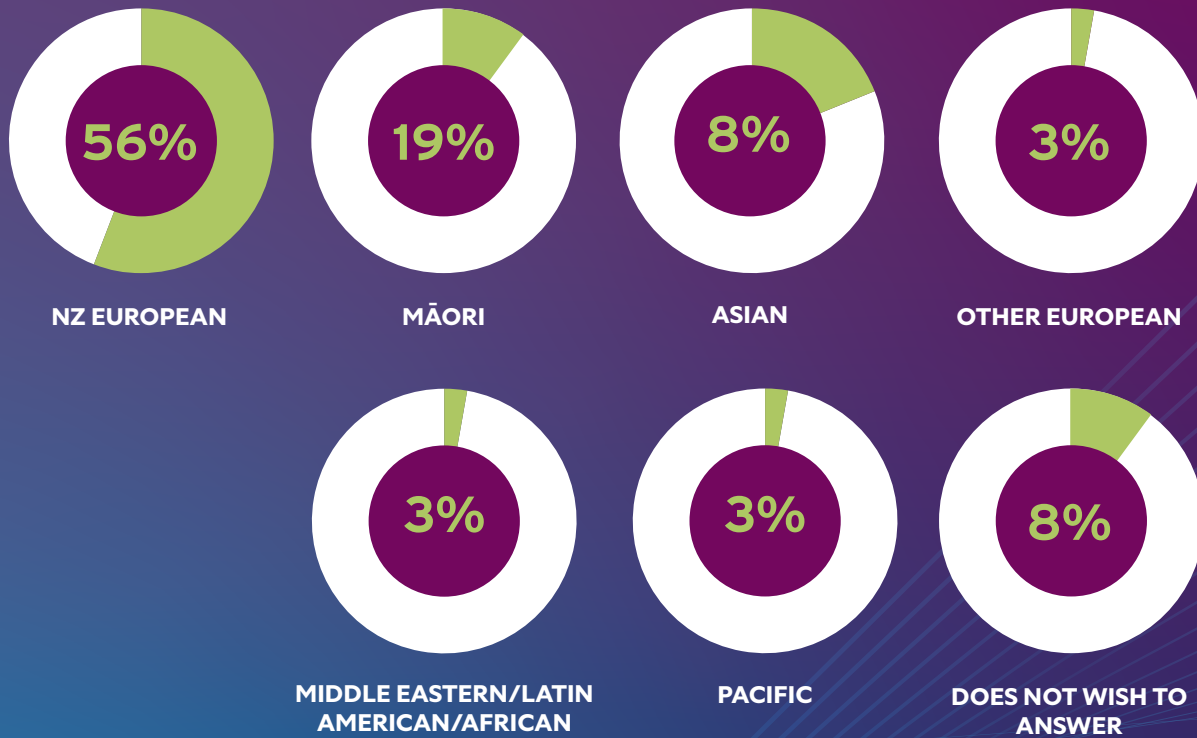
Complaints Received



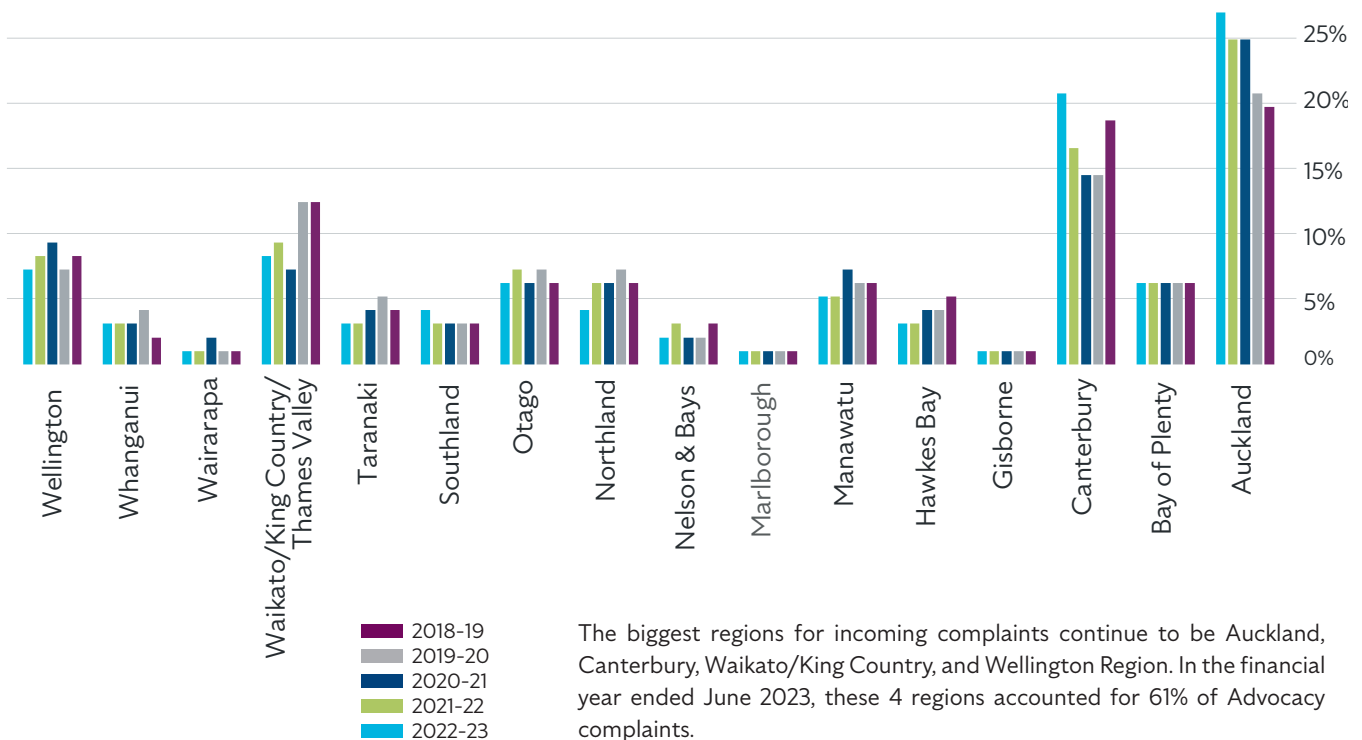
Inadequate coordination of care or treatment was the main care or treatment issue that presented in the 2022/2023 year.

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED - ETHNICITY

The graph below allows comparison of ethnicity data of consumers with regard to all complaints received by the service in the 2022-2023 year. Statistics NZ identifies the population of NZ European at 56%, Māori at 19%, Asian at 8%, Other European at 3%, Middle Eastern/Latin American/African at 3%, Pacific at 3% and 'Does Not Wish to Answer' at 8%.



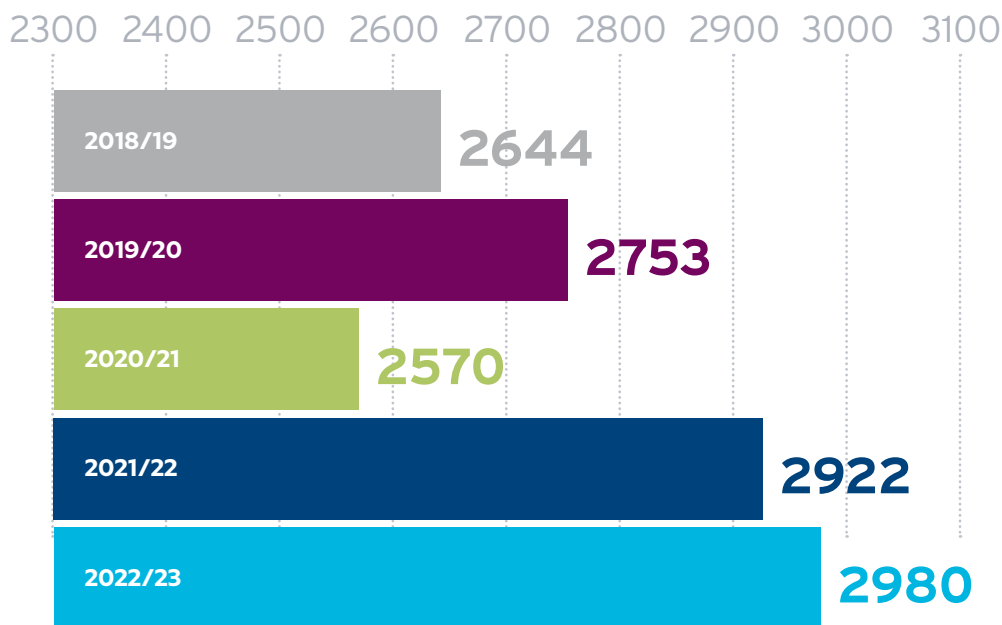
COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY REGION



CLOSED COMPLAINTS BY YEAR

A TOTAL OF **2,980**

complaints were closed during the year.



The service continued to survey both complainants and providers upon closure of complaints each month. Complainants who responded to surveys indicating they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the complaint resolution process equated to 95%, and providers who indicated they were either very satisfied or satisfied equaled 95%.

Facilitating the speedy resolution of complaints while achieving good outcomes for complainants continues to be a focus for the service. 83% of complaints were closed within three months of being received, 99% in six months and 99% in twelve months. Eighty-one (2370) percent of the complaints closed were resolved, referred, or withdrawn.

PROVIDER IMPROVEMENTS

resulting from complaints.

While resolution outcomes are often focused on what an individual states is important to assist them to move forward, many of the improvements made to services have a wider impact for service users.

Examples of changes where advocates supported complainants through the process to resolve their concerns:

1

A Medical Centre put triage training in place for their reception staff to assist them to escalate urgent patient requests to doctors for a priority call back. They also increased their Doctor, Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Prescriber availability to manage urgent and acute requests, and they increased the availability of emergency appointments where patients can book in to see a doctor on the day they called.

2

Te Whatu Ora created a patient information sheet for when a patient is referred to community palliative care services to increase the information available regarding these services.

3

An emergency department put in place a waiting room concierge service to offer patients in the waiting room more assistance. This was in response to the significant wait times some of the more 'stable' patients experience.

4

An "Iron Infusion Consent Form" was created at a general practice documenting all the common risks of iron infusion. Further to this they also developed a new policy that required nurses to document frequent checks during an infusion, as well as an improved aftercare policy.

5

A rest home provider put in place Interim free standing heaters throughout the building to improve their heating to the residents. They then decided to implement three phase power to enable a greater safe drawing of power to the building.

6

A district Reviewed the communication processes around the induction of labour pathway. They also worked with the private LMC obstetricians to ensure they fully understood the booking process and what to do if they do not receive confirmation of a request for a booking. They also reviewed communication to ensure that when an induction needs to be postponed, this will be communicated to the woman concerned by the hospital specialist involved in the decision.

EXAMPLES OF UNSOLICITED FEEDBACK FROM CONSUMERS

Thank you very much for your help with making my complaint to the [Provider]. I'm pleased to report that I was contacted today and have an eye appointment next Thursday morning. I appreciate your help in resolving this matter and thank you for the work you do. Have a lovely evening.

Thank you for your kind words and support throughout this. I'm happy to leave this for now and hope that this has indeed made a difference for current and future patients at [Provider]. Thank you again for all your help. I couldn't have navigated this all without you. You're certainly in the right job because you have shown so much professionalism and compassion. I am truly grateful.

"Thank you for your ongoing effort with this - it really has been greatly appreciated! I am aware the brain fog can make me very hard work on occasion! ... However, if all else fails I am now happy that there is a paper trail of what went down, and this is largely due to your input - thank you! Sincere thank you for stepping up and collating the information, for following up with [Provider] via telephone - which ultimately "encouraged" them enough to schedule an appointment and keeping on moving this forward. Thank you. Many thanks and kind regards"

Thank you for calling and thank you so much for everything that you've done to help and support us. As I said before I really appreciate it. Thank you for always updating me with all emails from Them and the team. We are so thankful that we reached to the right person on the right time to help us. Thanks again and God bless"

Hello [Advocate], Thanks for your email and a successful outcome. You have been very diligent with our complaint and with the clarification of your role and that of the advocacy service. It was a good outcome and we hope that [Provider] will take on board the issues raised and that their service will improve due to it. You have been professional to deal with and have kept us in the loop as to the timeline, response and outcomes. I felt you took the complaint seriously and that [Provider] acknowledged our concerns and will look at improving this part of their service. All the best and thank you again"

"Dear [Advocate], Thank you for our talk yesterday. It grounded me ... made me think for hours. I understand that the reason I tried to add as much detail as possible to the email you kindly had made was that I felt I was unheard. Your fair but firm talk yesterday humbled and grounded me and I sincerely appreciate it. Thank you for your time and professional support. Have a great day...

Dear [Advocate], This is just a short note to say thank you for your assistance whilst I am a guest of the Crown. To hear your voice at the other end of the telephone meant a great deal to me ... you have been a great assistance.

Good afternoon [Advocate], My sincerest and heartfelt thanks for all your efforts in getting this letter for [Consumer] to the commissioners. From our first discussions and right through the whole process you been so very helpful, caring, understanding and extremely professional. At least we can say we have done our utmost on [Consumer's] behalf to ensure that the same doesn't happen again

Kia ora [Manager], ... [Advocate] has been assisting me with an issue from August until today. My case was closed today, as I am very satisfied with the outcome. I wanted to pass on to you how very helpful, patient, thorough and professional [Advocate] has been whilst assisting me. I have immensely appreciated all the communication, both via emails and calls, which again has been very thorough and professional. I have greatly appreciated all of the assistance [Advocate] has provided, from the drafting of my complaint, sending and following up on it. I felt very comfortable sharing the details of my issue and at times I probably "overshared" bombarding [Advocate] with information, but again [Advocate] was very professional in his approach and never once made me feel uncomfortable or judged. I have expressed my grateful thanks to [Advocate] ... I'm hugely thankful for the mahi the Health & Disability Advocacy Service provides. Thank you all. Ngā mihi

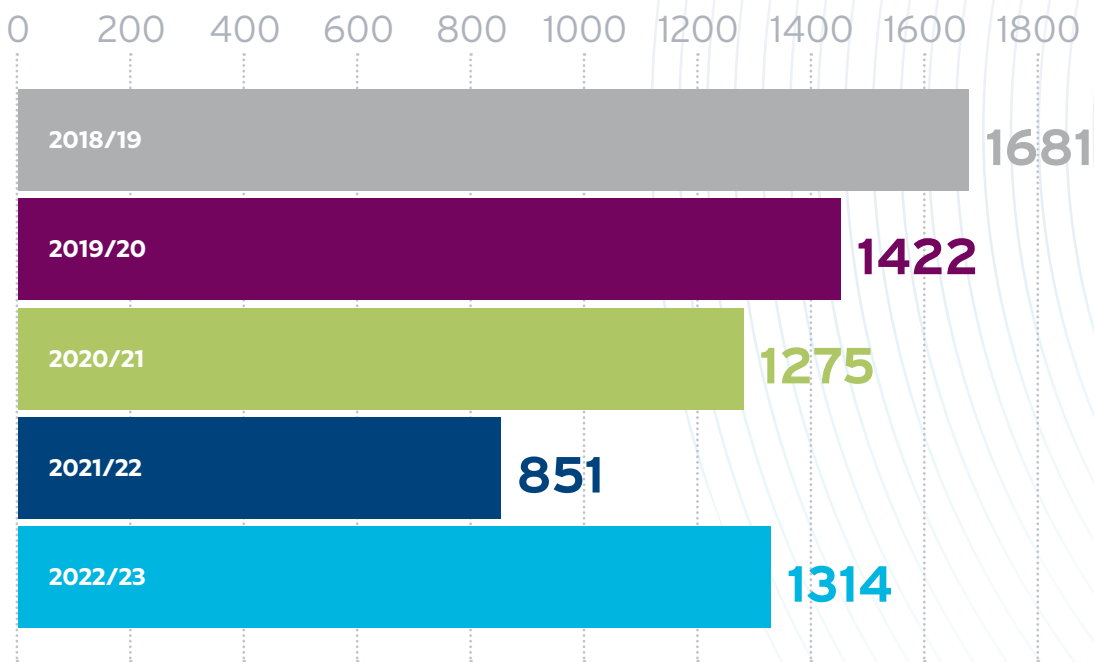
Good afternoon [Manager], ... I recently reached out to the [Health and Disability] advocacy service to get some support around issues [sic] was having with my fathers care. [Advocate] was the person who helped me work through this and she was just wonderful!!! Her kind but reassuring way and passion for getting the rights of consumers heard was awesome and she really supported me to do what is right for my father, myself and for all those that come after us. I really appreciated her understanding with my situation and support to get the ball rolling with minimal strain on me at such a difficult time. I just wanted to reach out as we are fast to complain (which is kinda your wheel house) but hardly ever do we take the time to praise and thank. I hope to talk with [Advocate] again soon around how the process is going as I know she is eager to see what happens. ...Thanks again for the great service you all do.

Hi [Manager], I just wanted to reach out to you to say that I had the best experience with [Advocate] looking after my health and disability complaint. She has been so amazing to deal with and really helped us through a difficult time in our lives. Her support and encouragement has not gone unnoticed and we are forever thankful. Its been a really rough 9 months since my husbands myocarditis post covid jab scare and she has been there every step of the way when I have needed counsel. So just wanted to pass on to you that you have a wonderful staff member and you guys are doing a fabulous job, Thanks again ...

EDUCATION

Education of consumers on their Rights and providers on their duties as set out in the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights continues to be an important part of the work advocates do. Delivering education also provides a healthy balance for advocates whose main workload is associated with supporting complainants to resolve concerns about the care or treatment they have or are receiving.

EDUCATION BY YEAR



In the year ended 30 June 2023, 67% (886) of education delivered by advocates was for consumers and providers who have contact with Māori; Pacific peoples; refugee and migrant groups; disabled and Deaf communities; mental health and addictions services and support groups; disability and aged care residential facilities and day-based programmes; the elderly and their whanau and support, including home care services. Of the 886 education sessions, 523 (59%) were delivered to residential care settings, and the remaining 363 were with non-residentially based groups as described above.

A further breakdown of the education provided in residential care settings saw that advocates delivered 395 sessions (76% of the residentially based sessions) to staff and/or consumers in aged care facilities.

Education sessions provided by advocates continue to be well attended and well received. Groups where there were five or more participants made up 75% (990) of all education sessions delivered. We received a total of 2,477 returned surveys from providers or consumers who attended education sessions.

Of those 91% indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the education provided by advocates, and 92% indicated they had increased knowledge of the advocacy service.

EXAMPLES OF SURVEY FEEDBACK FOLLOWING EDUCATION SESSIONS.

“ I just wanted to say thank you so much for presenting at our training session... The attendees found it very informative and left with more confidence to start helping. It was a great session! I apologise that it might have felt rushed, perhaps we look at a longer (or even separate) session next time? Or even some pre-work? ”

1

“ Morena [Advocate], I was networking with our local [Provider] Liaison person in Whangarei last week and he was telling me you provided a great session to him and his colleagues in Wellington recently. He advised it was a great opportunity for other staff to meet and hear what Advocacy does and that you were fabulous. ”

2

3 “ Hi, my sister and I attended a presentation by one of your representatives ..at [Provider] last Wednesday in support of our Mother who is a resident. Just a quick email of praise for [Advocate] who was articulate and clear in his message to an audience of many that had limited hearing and some who had difficulties with understanding. His patience and compassion for getting his message across to those present was admirable and greatly appreciated. He is a great asset to your organisation and his empathy was evident. Please thank him for the respect he showed on the day and tolerance of those that can unintentionally be sometimes difficult to present to. ”

“ I just wanted to say thank you so much for all your support of [Provider] over the years. The Wahine always looked forward to your visits, and we always learnt a lot and had great discussions coming out of all the information you shared. Your kindness and patience was always evident. I am sure our women would be keen for another visit next year. ”

4

“ This is a note to say how impressed I was with [Advocates] presentation at the Self Advocacy Forum this week. She used great examples to highlight specific points and made it easy for the participants to understand. [Advocate] has a warm and open approach which meant rapport was built quickly with participants. [Advocates] did a great job facilitating small group discussions. Please let them know their presence and participation were much appreciated. ”

5

“ Kia ora [Advocate], Thank you for the attached and please forward this email onto your team leader. I would like to thank you for the training session you did for the team last Thursday, I have had so many positive comments from the staff regarding this session, you were very informative, you had the team all engaged and interacting! This is not an easy thing to do! However, you did it with ease, the team enjoyed this session and more importantly learnt a lot! I will definitely be recommending this service to other practices. Nga mihi nui. ”

6

NETWORKING

NETWORK VISITS AND MEETING BY YEAR



Networking continues to be an important way for us to promote the advocacy service and code of rights. Networking will often lead into complaints and assist advocates to book future education sessions. Our focus is on priority groups, which include people with disabling conditions, including mental health and addiction, former refugees and migrants, Māori, Pasifika, older people, those who live in rest or residential homes received 75% (2,530) of the 3,351 visits and meetings during the past year. Of the 2,530 networks carried out with priority groups, 808 (32%) were with people living in rest homes or residential homes.

The Trust contracts an independent organisation to make a phone call to rest and residential homes that advocates visit. Through this conversation they seek anecdotal feedback on how the residents and staff found the visit, what they got out of it, and how they found the advocate related to the residents.

2018/19

3,803

2019/20

3,705

2020/21

3,794

2021/22

3,304

2022/23

3,351

AT LEAST FORTY-SIX PERCENT (1,525) OF NETWORK MEETINGS AND VISITS WERE WITH CONSUMER FOCUSED GROUPS OR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.



CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1

- Provider hired more staff to shorten triage system from 3 months to less than 72 hours with new patients.

A consumer was referred to Advocacy through a HDC s37 to resolve their complaint. When the consumer made the initial complaint, they had not received any assistance or a response from the provider; no follow up contact had been made for three months since they applied. Once I contacted the consumer, they had received an appointment notification for a month later.

The consumer expressed concerns about the wait time and queried if they hadn't had processed a complaint they would still be waiting for a response. I provided advocacy support by writing a letter outlining the issues with wait times. The provider response did not address the consumer's concerns fully so a meeting was arranged to discuss the issues in depth. A meeting was held which I facilitated as the advocate. As a result of this meeting an apology was received regarding the long wait time, a change was made in the providers 'new patient triage system', a new staff member was recruited within their organisation with the aim to decrease the wait time from several months to 72 hours.

In addition to ensure improved communication once the advocacy complaint was closed the advocate asked about the support options available for the consumer. A plan was created for when the consumer should expect to receive assistance, a medication review took place, and an agreement was made to update the consumer on a regular basis regarding their progress.

The meeting ended with both parties happy with the outcome.

CASE STUDY 2

- Issues in a Residential Facility

A consumer was admitted to a residential unit who support people with their mental health. They resided there for approximately one month, in which they advised they encountered multiple difficulties during their stay. When they first arrived, their room was not ready; therefore, they waited in the main foyer and fell asleep. Once they were allocated a room, the windows could not be opened, their underfloor heating could not be turned off, and the heat affected their ability to sleep. They could only lock their bedroom door with assistance from a staff member, and some of the staff did not knock prior to entering. Minimal information was provided to them about how to access essential facilities such as the toilets and shower, or where to find essential items such as toothpaste, toothbrushes and soap.

During their stay, they got in contact with an advocate, who wrote a letter to the provider. The letter outlined the issues and requested information from them about the possibility of reviewing their practices going forward. The provider came back with a detailed response letter. They provided the consumer with a sincere apology for the experience they encountered during their stay. They also provided detailed explanations to each of the issues highlighted in the complaint, which are as follows:

- ▶ They explained that when their service is busy, they are not always able to get consumers' rooms ready in time, but will try to minimise any discomfort and stress as much as possible.
- ▶ A maintenance request was actioned to have the temperature issue in the bedroom fixed.
- ▶ Reminders were then provided to staff members about knocking on bedroom doors prior to entering, and that staff are also expected to show people how to lock and unlock their doors during their orientation.
- ▶ They advised they would consider adding further details to consumer information packs about how they can access essential items such as toothpaste, toothbrushes and soap. Upon receiving this response, the consumer was happy that the provider

CASE STUDY 3

- Lack of effective communication and poor coordination of services.

An elderly consumer, Mr A, approached our service as he was having issues with an order for specialist inner soles and orthotic shoes he had made to his provider; the order was not totally fulfilled and after a period of six months he was still waiting for one pair of shoes and his communication had gone unanswered. Not having the footwear support had reduced his mobility and impacted his quality of life.

We agreed Mr A would consider his complaint resolved if he received a written explanation about the reasons why the provider had not been proactive; we questioned the poor communication, requested a time-frame to receive the missing shoes and asked about potential actions that could be taken to avoid repetition of similar issues in the future.

In response, the Chief Executive, apologised for the distress caused, the lack of effective communication and the long delay, recognising that the service provided was well below the expected standard. As a result of Mr A's complaint, two improvements to their service were made:

▶ A system was set up whereby items are tracked, checked, and linked to partially supplied orders to prevent the same from reoccurring.

▶ A dedicated National Practice Manager will be appointed who will ensure that follow-up communication is carried out to notify consumers of any delays in the supply of products.

Mr A received the second pair of shoes by courier and advised he was satisfied with the explanation and has accepted the apologies offered and the improvements



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