

Adult Services Feedback

Shropshire Council Information Sheet
2015/2016



Summary

This information sheet provides an insight into the compliments, comments and complaints received by Adult Services during 2015/16. This more formal feedback is used alongside surveys, engagement events, meetings and other forms of customer feedback to inform service development and improvement. Many of the complaints received during 2015/16 have resulted from changes made to the way services are provided. Complaints often occur following an assessment, when the support provided has changed in some way or when an individual moves between services.

Background

Shropshire Council works to encourage engagement with people using Adult Services and their carers/ family members in a wide variety of ways. Some forms of engagement and feedback are informal and based on face to face discussions. Feedback is also obtained through service meetings, training and events. A User Survey and Carers Survey are completed regularly and the results of there are highlighted in information sheets like this one. Formal feedback in the form of comments, compliments and complaints is also captured for regular analysis. It is this more formal feedback that is explored within the report.

Compliment	Many people get in touch with a compliment when the information or support they have received has exceeded their expectations. It is really helpful to learn when a service has been provided well or when a member of staff has done a great job. We like to recognise compliments alongside any complaints. It is good for us to say 'thank you' to our teams and staff members too.
Comment	An issue or concern that can't be categorised as a complaint may be recorded as a comment. Feedback about a service could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a suggestion to improve it.• a question as to whether something could be done differently.• an idea for delivering a service differently.
Complaint	We aim to make it as easy as possible to make a complaint. A complaint is a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction about the service provided by the Council. Family members and advocates may also make a complaint on behalf of one of our customers. We will ask for consent to ensure that the complaint is not being made against the customer's wishes.

There are two types of complaint for Adult Services:

- Statutory complaints – these complaints relate to social care or contain an element of social care and fall under Shropshire Council's 'Policy and Procedure for Resolving Complaints and Improving Services' available here:
<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/feedback/adult-social-care-complaints/>
- Corporate complaints - some complaints we receive for Adult Services do not relate to social care services and these are handled as corporate complaints.

All complaints, both statutory and corporate, are included in this report in order to provide a comprehensive overview.

The Complaints Process

Complaints, comments and compliments can be made by telephone, email, letter or by using our website based form. Support is also available from complaints officers based with Shropshire Council's Feedback and Insight Team located within Commissioning Support (see contact details at end). For a copy of a leaflet with advice on how to make a complaint see:

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/feedback/adult-social-care-complaints/>

There are a number of stages within the Complaints Process (see following page).

Stage	Timescale	Actions
Complaint received		Assessment of complaint – severity/impact/likelihood of recurrence - identify this as a safeguarding issue or if there is any involvement of other agencies. Determine whether a risk assessment is required and possible required and whether additional information is needed.
Acknowledgement	Within 3 working days	If the complaint is about a social care provider or a partner organisation then consent to share this with the named organisation is required from the customer and agreement gained that the organisation be allowed to investigate and respond to the complaint. The Feedback and Insight Team can act as main contact and work with other agencies to agree a combined response.
Mediation meeting	Mutually agreed timescale	It can be helpful to arrange a mediation meeting to discuss the issues and work towards a solution. If no meeting is possible it is essential that contact either by letter or telephone is made with the customer to agree a way forward which will shape the action plan and work towards an agreed timescale of resolution.
Response with steps that will be taken and timescale	Mutually agreed timescale	Following the mediation meeting the Customer Insight Team will send out a letter giving details of the action plan, timescale of resolution and confirm the name of responding officer. If no meeting has taken place but contact has been achieved by letter, email or telephone and agreement has been reached via this method – the Feedback and Insight Team will send out a letter confirming timescales and confirm the name of responding officer.
Investigation	Mutually agreed timescale – no longer than 6 months.	Issues are fully investigated by an appropriate Investigating Officer.
Response	Mutually agreed timescale– no longer than 6 months	Following the investigation a copy of the investigation and a full response is sent to the customer. The customer is advised of their right to take the matter to the LGO if they are unhappy with the response and investigation findings. They have 12 months in which to do this.
Review	6 months	We monitor complaints that are coming up to six months without resolution and review the status with the relevant officers.
Referral to LGO		The customer can decide to take the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) for their consideration. The LGO will investigate and issue their findings.

Adult Services Customer Feedback 2015/16

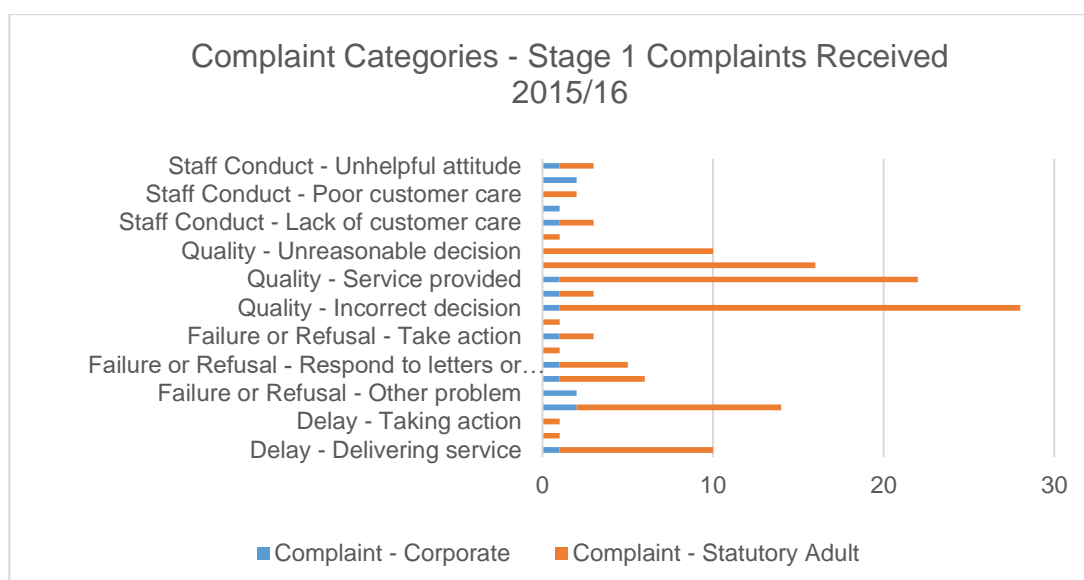
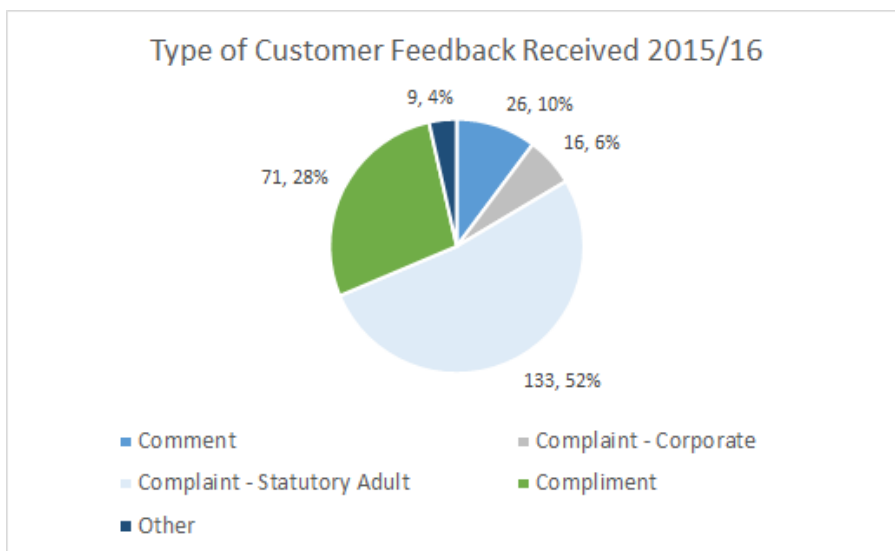
In 2015/16 there were 255 cases of feedback recorded for Adult Services. There were:

- 26 comments and 9 other types of feedback (including general enquiries)
- 71 compliments
- 16 corporate complaints
- 133 statutory complaints
- The average number of customer feedback responses recorded per month was 21.25.
- June and July 2015 saw the greatest total number of comments, compliments and complaints recorded (28 then 27). October 2015 saw the fewest total number of comments, compliments and complaints recorded (15).
- Quarter 4 saw the lowest levels of customer feedback received in the year. Numbers were fairly consistent across quarters 1 and 2 with an increase in quarter 3.
- The majority of customer feedback recorded is formed of complaints rather than comments or compliments (this is due to recording practice). Compliments formed 28% of all feedback.

Adult Services Complaints 2015/16

Of all the customer feedback received in the year, complaints comprised 58% (149). Of the 149 complaints received 16 were corporate complaints and 133 were statutory complaints.

'Quality' was the main category under which complaints were made to Adult Services. Within that category a large proportion of complaints related to incorrect or unreasonable decisions, quality of the service provided, and quality of the information provided. A significant sub category was failure or refusal to deliver a service.

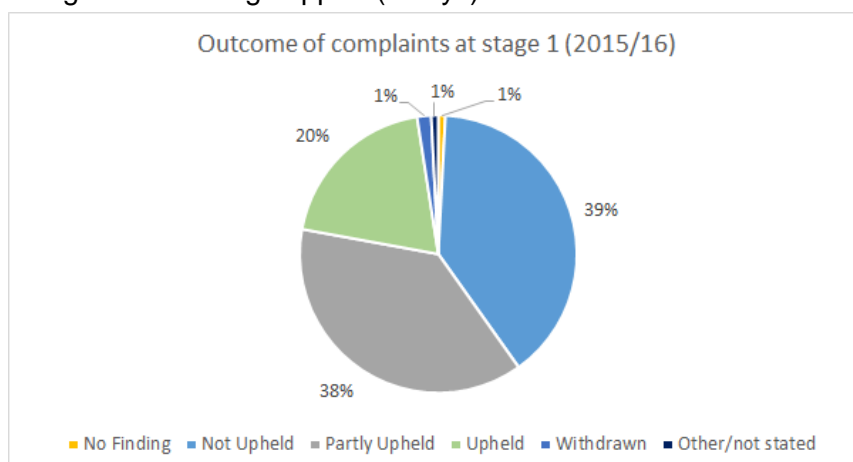


Common themes highlighted within complaints made during 2015/16 are:

- Complaints concerning charges for care and invoices received.
- Lack of, or poor communication (many relate to lack of early information concerning invoices).
- Reductions in level of care/support.
- The time taken between requesting and receiving support (delays).
- Lack of support when moving between services.
- Quality of assessments.

39% of all stage 1 complaints in 2015/16 were not upheld (the investigating officer did not consider the Council to be at fault), 38% were partly upheld and 20% were upheld.

9 complaints progressed to a review and 5 to the Ombudsman (LGO).



Example complaints can be helpful in better understanding the type of feedback Shropshire Council receives for Adult Services. (Please note: some wording may have been altered to retain anonymity or clarify the message)

X feels that social services “did not help her in her time of need when there was a safeguarding issue”. X also feels that her social worker is “useless” and is not much help to her.

X has “received several unnecessary and distressing letters” since his mother’s death. X comments on “weaknesses in operational processes” and suggests they could be reviewed and changed to prevent reoccurrence. X is unhappy about a delay in the response.

Over the last 3 years the customer has had 8 reassessments all by different Social Workers and OTs. The customer feels that each person who reassesses is not forward planning. His condition is progressive and when he identifies things that he will need they are not implemented soon enough. A request for evening support has been turned down so he cannot eat because there is a chance he may choke, he limits drinks because he cannot safely use the bathroom on his own.

The concern is that an invoice was sent for care; during a time that no care was provided due to a stay in hospital.

The complainant is unhappy about the lack of clear information concerning whether her mother was self-funding her care or not.

- Shropshire Council recognises that complaints can generate significant learning that may be used to inform service improvement and improve customer experience. During 2015/16:
 - 68% of complaints had learning points recorded under the theme of communication and information.
 - 14% of complaints had learning for service quality.
 - 7% had learning relating to the delivery or ‘non delivery’ of a service.
 - Of the remaining 11% of learning points recorded; 4% were linked to the impact of policies and procedures on customers, 4% were linked to the lack of adherence to policy/procedure and 3% were related to funding/finance.

Examples of the learning and actions generated by complaints are shown below:

The setting up of an independent panel to review all decisions/appeals in order to improve deprivation of capital decision making.

The Financial Assessment Team has introduced a case management system. New cases are now monitored at fixed 4 and 8 week points.

There is a recognition that improvement is required in how Best Interest Meetings are conducted.

Improvement needs to be made to ensure people raising safeguarding concerns are communicated with more effectively.

Actions to ensure people raising safeguarding concerns are communicated with more effectively.

If a number of people are visiting, then it may be feasible for another meeting to be arranged, in order not to overwhelm the service user.

Adult Services Compliments 2016/17

Adult Services received 71 compliments in 2015/16, a significant proportion of all customer feedback received. Although compliments do not necessarily result in the same degree of learning

as complaints, they do help to highlight areas of service delivery that are most effective and where customer experiences have been particularly positive. Examples are shown below:

I would like to pass on a compliment to one of the ICS/START workers. The family spoke very highly of X saying she is a credit to the team. She always treats the service user with respect and they can trust her to ensure she does not do for the gentleman but encourage him to do what he can for himself.

We would like to say how much we appreciate the adaptations to our property, it has enabled us to live as independently as possible and with much less worry.

X was absolutely marvellous. She really knows her stuff and was so kind and helpful.

All the people I have spoken to have been so polite and helpful.

X tried to catch me on numerous occasions, but I was always unavailable. X did not give up hope and we eventually spoke yesterday. He took time to explain the assessment he carried out on my Mum..... X was not rushed and listened patiently to my views.

The installation of a level access shower and stair lift has helped X regain some independence. Thank you all so much. It has meant more to us than you could even imagine.

Issues commonly raised within compliments made during the year were:

- The difference equipment, adaptations and support make to independence and daily activity.
- The value of the information provided.
- Assistance with assessments and changes to care packages.
- The kindness, commitment and professionalism of adult social care staff.

Key Findings

- Shropshire Council values the customer feedback it receives and uses it to inform service development and improvement.
- The compliments, comments and complaints adult services received in 2015/16 were used to better understand customer and carer experiences.
- In 2015/16 there were 255 cases of feedback recorded for Adult Services (149 complaints).
- Common themes include lack of communication, lack of information concerning invoices/charges and requests made for payment for care.
- 20% of complaints were upheld and 38% partly upheld.
- Only a small proportion of complaints progressed to the LGO stage (5 within the year).
- Learning points and actions were generated from the feedback received. These were used to make improvements in communication, adopt new practices such as a case management system with monitoring points and improve decision making processes.

How do I find out more?

To make a comment, complaint or compliment concerning Shropshire's Adult Services please contact the Customer Service Centre:

Email: customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk or telephone 0345 678 9000.

Alternatively visit the Council's website: <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/feedback/>

To find out more about the collection and analysis of customer feedback data please use the contact details below.

Contact Us

For more information please contact Shropshire Council's Commissioning Support Unit.

🌐 **Website:** <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk>

✉ **Email:** commissioning.support@shropshire.gov.uk ☎ **Telephone:** 01743 258524