



Annual complaints performance report 2024-25:

Complaints about the Care Inspectorate

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Introduction

About the Care Inspectorate

Everyone in Scotland has the right to access high-quality, safe and compassionate social care and social work services that make a real and positive difference to their lives. The Care Inspectorate is responsible for regulating care services including services for adults, early learning and childcare, children's services, and community justice. This includes registration, inspection, complaints, enforcement and supporting quality improvement. Our role is to ensure that services meet the right standards, provide the quality of care that meets the needs of people experiencing care and support and to support them to improve if needed. We work in partnership with other scrutiny and improvement bodies, looking at how care is provided by community planning partnerships and health and social care partnerships across local authority areas. This helps all stakeholders understand how well services are working together to support positive experiences and outcomes for people.

Our job is not just to inspect care but to support improvement in the quality of care where it is needed. This means we work with care providers, offering advice and guidance and sharing good practice, to support them to develop and deliver improved care. If we find that care isn't good enough, we take action. We identify areas for improvement and can issue requirements for change and check these are met. If we believe there is a serious and immediate risk to life, health or wellbeing, we can impose an improvement notice or apply to the Sheriff court for emergency cancellation of a service's registration.

We support people to raise concerns, and we handle complaints made to us about registered care services. We robustly challenge poor-quality care and we are independent, impartial and fair. We have a duty to protect people and will refer adult and child protection concerns to the relevant social work agencies or Police Scotland. We influence social care policy and development both nationally and internationally, sharing our learning with others, contributing to the transformation of social care in Scotland.

Complaints about the Care Inspectorate

The policy and procedure for complaints about the Care Inspectorate reflect our commitment to valuing complaints as a source information to improve how we work. Our policy and procedure are based on the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) [Model Complaints Handling Procedure \(MCHP\)](#).

We monitor and report on our performance managing complaints about the Care Inspectorate in line with the requirements set by the SPSO. The consistent application and reporting of performance against the SPSO key performance indicators (KPIs) helps us to understand and report on our performance in line with the Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP). We also use this information to compare; contrast and benchmark complaints handling with other organisations to share learning and improve standards of complaints handling performance.

This report relates to complaints about the work of the Care Inspectorate. Complaints about care services are managed and reported separately.

Our reporting model is based directly on the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) model complaints handling procedure (MCHP) and their complaints key performance indicators (KPIs). Under this framework we and other public bodies are expected to report against the following KPIs:

SPSO KPI 1:	The total number of complaints received
SPSO KPI 2:	The number and percentage of complaints at each stage that were closed in full within the set timescales of five and 20 working days
SPSO KPI 3:	The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage
SPSO KPI 4:	The outcome of complaints at each stage

This year's Complaints Annual Performance Report presents information about the way we have managed complaints about the Care Inspectorate between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

Part 1: Key Performance Indicators – Quantitative data

KPI 1: The total number of complaints received

Total number of complaints received	1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025
	91

The rate of complaints received between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 is broadly consistent with the trend recorded over previous years. A total of 13 complaints were revoked in the last year. This includes complaints assessed to be out with our remit and timescales, as well as complaints withdrawn by a complainant.

KPI 2: The percentage of complaints at each stage that were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days

The number of complaints closed in full at stage 1 within five working days as a percentage of all stage 1 complaints responded to in full	2024/25 Number	2024/25 Percentage
	18	67%

The number of complaints closed in full at stage 2 within 20 working days as a percentage of all stage 2 complaints responded to in full	2024/25 Number	2024/25 Percentage
	23	52%

The number of complaints closed in full after escalation to stage 2 within 20 working days as a percentage	2024/25 Number	2024/25 Percentage
	5	71%

Performance data over the last year reflects the complexity of complaints received about the Care Inspectorate and the extended timescales required to undertake investigations. Extended timescales are required where there are specific challenges gathering evidence to make an informed conclusion in relation to the concerns raised. Personal circumstances of complainants and staff absence can contribute to delayed evidence gathering. Any delays are communicated to complainants in writing explaining the reasons and the new planned date for completion.

SPSO KPI 3: The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1	2024/25
	5 days

Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2	2024/25
	47 days

Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation to stage 2	2024/25
	19 days

A large and complex complaint involving 17 complainants was investigated over quarters 3 and 4 2024/25. Due to the complexity and large number of complainants, an extended timescale was required to conclude the extensive investigation required. This is reflected in the higher than average number of working days to respond to complaints at stage 2 during quarter 4 2024/25.

KPI 4: The outcome of complaints at each stage

Number of complaints received at stage 1 which were upheld, not upheld and resolved as a percentage of all complaints closed at stage 1	2024/25
	Upheld: 0%
	Not upheld: 0%
	Resolved: 90%
	Revoked: 10%

Number of complaints at stage 2 which were upheld and not upheld as a percentage of all complaints closed at stage 2	2024/25
	Upheld: 50%
	Not upheld: 50%

Number of complaints upheld and not upheld after escalation as a percentage of all complaints closed after escalation to stage 2	2024/25
	Upheld: 14%
	Not upheld: 86%

In all instances where complaints are upheld, we will issue an apology and identify relevant learning to support service improvement.

Part 2: Key Performance Indicators – Qualitative: learning from complaints

The Care Inspectorate uses learning from complaints to inform improvement. Learning from complaints in 2024/25 has informed the following improvements in four broad areas of activity.

1. Complaints process and experience

We continue to regularly review and update our policy and procedure for complaints about the Care Inspectorate. Feedback from stakeholders is central to this work and we continue to refine and strengthen how we gather feedback about our procedure in practice. Over the past year we have met with complainants to learn how we can improve experiences for people making complaints. This led to a review of our complaints policy to better demonstrate the Care Inspectorate's values and quality expectations for supporting people who raise concerns or make complaints.

2. Staff awareness and training

Our complaints procedure and guidance are available for all staff on the Care Inspectorate intranet. Training on the complaints about the Care Inspectorate procedure is provided to new staff through our induction programme. We also

provide good complaint handling training to managers using the SPSO's guidance and good practice materials. We continue to refine and strengthen our approach to ensure all staff are aware of the procedure and the principles of good complaints handling. Enhanced support is also provided to complaints investigators.

3. Learning from complaints

A review has been undertaken to strengthen our approach to how learning from complaints is identified. Learning themes are identified during the management of complaints and information is shared with relevant teams to consider and develop an action or improvement plan. In every case we aim to maximise the learning for individual staff involved in the process irrespective of the outcome of the complaint.

4. Complaints recording and reporting

A review has been undertaken to strengthen our approach to recording complaints. Our new systems have resulted in improvements to how information is recorded to support effective reporting on complaints performance and trends. Quarterly performance reports are presented to the senior management team, and annual reports to our Board for consideration and comment.