

## Responding

We responded to all complaints within **20 days**



## Resolving

All complaints were **fully resolved** and learning actions taken forward



## Local resolution

All complaints were **locally dealt with** and resolved by the local team



**48**  
complaints



**3617**  
compliments

## This year:

- Our aim was to respond to complaints and feedback within 20 days. We dealt with all reported complaints within this timeframe, most were responded to within 5 working days.
- We aimed to communicate with all complainants within 24 working hours of receiving their communication and achieved this in 85% of cases.
- We improved our recording of learning and tracking actions. We recognised that although we were capturing our learning and carrying out actions some complaints required subsequent actions and follow up to make the changes necessary. To keep track of these we have now added an update process to our quarterly reports.
- We continued to raise complaints and learnings within our leadership team meetings and Quality Oversight Group. Complaints are discussed, looking in depth at what happened, understanding the issues that led to the complaint being raised, picking up on anything that could be improved on and reducing the chance of that complaint re-occurring. We then share this with relevant teams, asking them to follow up any actions required. These actions are then followed up at the next meeting to ensure they have been completed.
- We have been working with our colleagues in Corporate Governance to review our Complaints policy and procedures so that we can instigate an organisationally led approach to capturing, responding and learning across all our departments. This will ensure we have a rounded picture of how we are working in meeting people's expectations and improving the way we work.

# Organisational learning – actions moving forward

## Communication – 21 complaints

A large proportion of the complaints received in this area have been due to a breakdown in communication or lack of clear expectations between staff and our service users. We have learnt from these complaints, working with Managers and staff to ensure we are giving clear messages and that our literature says with certainty what our service users can expect from us. The learning will also be used in new guidance and training for our staff.

Other issues have included a lack of clear communication on removing data from our systems this led to a complaint where the person did not receive a communication confirming that his data had been removed, this has also now been resolved with a clear process and communications with people requesting data removal.

We also saw a small proportion of complaints regarding information on our website and in the news about the symptoms portrayed in FAST. There were concerns that there was not enough information about the other symptoms people could portray when having a stroke, we responded explaining that the FAST campaign deals with the most common symptoms and uses the acronym to ensure the general public are able to recall and use effectively, we try where possible to ensure all our information mentions the other symptoms. We also had a complaint from a Clinical Psychologist regarding the wording in our 'Words your medical team might use' leaflet. They were concerned that 'someone who studies and treats emotional and cognitive problems' could be imply a psychologist was not qualified. Our Marketing and External affairs team acknowledged this and have since updated the wording.

## Lack of Support – 8 complaints

We received some complaints from service users who felt the service offered was either cut short or because it wasn't available in their area. We are currently only funded by local NHS and Local Authority bodies to reach 40% of the UK population. Where we received complaints that service was cut short, we investigated and found the stroke survivor had received the support that was promised but ongoing support was needed due to other health issues not related to their stroke, so we worked with other agencies to take over their support.

## Finance/Grants/Invoice – 2 complaints

Complaints in this area have included where Life After Stroke Grant items ordered have then changed incurring additional cost or have not been able to be fitted. These issues have all been fed back and processes updated along with how we communicate to grant applicants prior to selecting items.

## Volunteering – 8 complaints

We received some complaints due to volunteer management issues with our recruitment administration and expenses claims. Volunteers told us that they were waiting too long for their expenses and were not being communicated with. They were also unhappy that they were unable to volunteer due to their application not be processed for a longer than expected time which was frustrating. When we looked into these complaints we found they had occurred due to a lack of clarity regarding responsibility between our administration team and new local Volunteer

Officers. This was swiftly resolved with each of the teams defining their role and responsibilities for tasks and ensuring they communicated clearly with the volunteers.

## Other – 9 complaints

There were also complaints in singular themes which included issues with support at an event, a lack of understanding regarding how we handle data and when we can and cannot remove certain information, group activities not being available to all group members, and the way we have used our funds on marketing materials. All these individual complaints were fully investigated and resolved by the team concerned they also shared any learning and changes with us to make sure we don't repeat any mistakes.

## Examples:



## When we get it right – you told us:

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“My coordinator was like a guardian angel, they have been there and provided support when I have been at my lowest. Your care and support is most appreciated especially at the present time when I am self-isolating, your humour always carries me forward, thank you and please stay safe.”

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“I felt that my family didn’t understand what I was going through, but you reassured me and answered my questions.”

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“After the information and advice you provided, I had the first good night’s sleep in months!”

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“You were kind and supportive in a nightmare time in our lives. You treated us with dignity, listened to our fears, informed us of our rights and gave us hope that we’d find a way through.”

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## Reflections:

- During March a small number of complaints occurred due to Covid19, a service user expected a home visit to take place and felt abandoned and another due to receiving multiple copies of Stroke News for group members after we locked down. Unfortunately these were circumstances beyond our control, we apologised to our service user and followed up with support by telephone and apologised to the volunteer in receipt of the magazines explaining that due to the timeframes around the closure of groups and lockdown we had been unable to cancel the order in time.
- The amount of compliments were significant, as they have been in previous years. This year we supported over 66,306 people across stroke support and so the compliments received were small in proportion, however we are only capturing compliments through our database for local services which only shows a small snapshot of the quality support being provided.
- We know that teams are capturing feedback from people accessing our groups, clubs, helpline and other support services but these are not being brought together as a whole, and don't allow us to see the full picture. We are working towards a way to consistently capture and review these which will help us to make improvements across all the services we offer.

## Looking to the future:

- Our complaints procedure is an evolving process. We are always working to improve how we capture and learn from the feedback we receive.
- Our complaints policy and procedure is under further organisational review in line with the Code of Fundraising Practice and we hope to implement a more integrated approach to complaints and feedback in coming months.
- We want to improve understanding of capturing feedback and complaints and define our classification of complaints further, ensuring that there are methods to capture the valuable learning from feedback given about our services to make improvements.
- We want to make it clear to beneficiaries that we listen and learn, so they are assured that any improvements made are based on what they tell us. We will work on ways to share this with beneficiaries and positively encourage them to engage in feedback.