| TITLE | Annual Report on the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department and Children and Supporting Families Department's Complaints, Enquiries and Expressions of Gratitude Procedure for 2023-24 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PURPOSE | To prepare an Annual Report on the implementation of the Representations and Complaints Procedure for submission to the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee in order to scrutinise and monitor the arrangements for dealing effectively with complaints received from service users and their representatives. |
| AUTHOR | Marian Parry Hughes – Head of Children and Supporting Families Department Aled Davies – Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department |
| CABINET MEMBERS | COUNCILLOR Dilwyn Morgan COUNCILLOR Elin Walker Jones |
| DATE OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | 26/09/24 |

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 that came into force on 1 August 2014, the Director of Social Services is required to produce an annual report on the way complaints are handled and investigated within the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department. The report is produced by the Customer Care Officers of both Departments, on behalf of the Director of Social Services.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the number of complaints received by the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department during the year, the reasons for them as well as the solutions. The report also contains a summary of the lessons learnt and the action taken on the complaints received. There are also details about the number of access to information requests and freedom of information requests received during this period.

2. Context

2.1 Both Departments are required to put a statutory Representations and Complaints Procedure into practice, in accordance with the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014. There is a commitment to prepare an Annual Report on the implementation of the Representations and Complaints Procedure for submission to the Council's relevant Scrutiny Committee so that it can scrutinise and monitor the arrangements for dealing effectively with complaints received from service users and their representatives. It is important that a record is kept of the representations and complaints so that the Department can learn lessons from them, as part of the process of improving the services provided. It is good practice to share the annual complaints report with the members of the Council to ensure transparency. The statistics for complaints under the Department's Representations and Complaints Procedure are reported separately to those of complaints where a response was provided under the Council's corporate Concerns and Complaints Policy. This enables the Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet to regularly scrutinise the statistics for complaints.

2.2 The Children and Supporting Families Department's Customer Care Officer is managed by the Assistant Head of Safeguarding and Quality in the Children and Supporting Families Department.

> The Adults, Health and Well-being Department's Customer Care Officer is managed by the Department's Assistant Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.

> Although the Officers are based within their Departments, it is important to note that the Officers are independent to ensure that complaints are dealt with according to the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014. The Social Services Complaints Procedure specifically concerns individuals receiving a service from one of the two Departments, or who have the right to represent the service user.

The Customer Care Officers are responsible for:

- Coordinating the service's arrangements in order to comply with the Representations and Complaints Procedure;
- Record complaints and positive and negative representations from service users and their representatives;
- Monitor the response to complaints within the timetables determined in the regulations for dealing with complaints under Stage 1 of the procedure;
- Co-ordinate investigations by independent investigators into formal complaints under Stage 2 of the procedure;
- Ensure that a formal written response is sent along with a copy of the independent investigation report (or a summary of the outcome) to the complainant within 25 working days under Stage 2 of the procedure, and inform the complainant if a delay is anticipated;
- Co-ordinate responses from Social Services to enquiries from the Office of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales regarding complaints about matters relating to the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department;
- Monitor Action Plans to ensure that lessons are learnt from complaints in order to improve the quality of services;

- Develop the internal Representations and Complaints Procedure;
- Ensure that information is available to facilitate access to the Representations and Complaints Procedure for service users and their representatives.
- Provide training and support to promote understanding of the Representations and Complaints Procedure among the staff of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department.
- The Customer Care Officer for Adults is a member of the Disabled Parking Spaces Panel which is responsible for coordinating the process of assessing applications from the public for designated disabled parking spaces outside their property.

3. Ease of use of the Complaints Procedure

- 3.1 When a person contacts the Customer Care Officers, it relates to dissatisfaction with the Departments' service, and deciding to make a complaint is usually their last resort. The Customer Care Officers focus on facilitating access to the Complaints Procedure so that people are aware of their right to be heard and have a full investigation into their complaint.
- 3.2 To this end, information about the complaints procedure receives considerable publicity and is available in a variety of formats e.g. leaflets, on-line and 'easy to read' versions. All the information is available in Welsh and English so that the complainant can choose his/her preferred language. Alternative arrangements such as Braille or other languages are available on request. Advocacy or other support is available to the complainant in their chosen language to assist the progress of the Complaints Procedure. Information leaflets are continuously amended and updated.
- 3.3 In accordance with the arrangements of the complaints procedure, on some occasions, it is not possible to receive a complaint at that time. If there is a current Police investigation, an investigation under the Safeguarding procedure, a current Child Protection investigation, or the matter is being addressed before the Court, we cannot accept the complaint. Accepting a complaint could disrupt any ongoing investigation that is currently taking place. In such a case, we would advise the complainant of the reasons, once the investigation has come to an end we can then start the complaints process.

4. Matters recorded as Enquiries

4.1 The aim is to respond to every complaint with fairness, impartiality and respect so that the individual is confident that his/her complaint will be handled professionally and positively, rather than negatively. Often, when the individual decides not to follow the Complaints Procedure, the matter is dealt with as an enquiry or informal complaint. Another example of this would be a letter from a Member of Parliament or local Councillor who wishes to express dissatisfaction or wants an answer to a specific question.

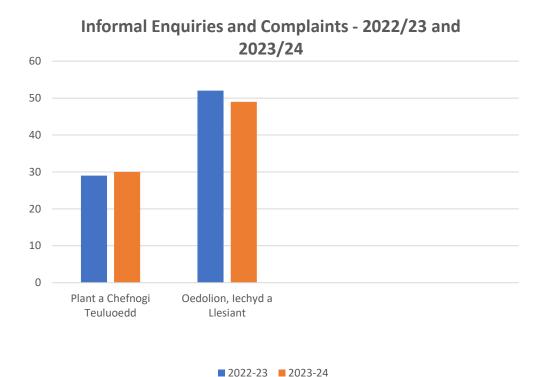
4.2 By responding positively during these initial stages, some matters can be effectively resolved without the need for the Complaints Procedure as this is an opportunity to address any misunderstandings or to respond to enquiries. Without a doubt, this is the best outcome for everyone. See Table 1(a) and 1(b) below for a breakdown of the source of each enquiry and the unit/service that is responsible for responding to that particular enquiry.

TABLE I (a) – Enquiries and Informal Complaints received by the Children and Supporting Families Department

| | 2022/23 | 2023/24 |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Solicitors | I | 2 |
| Ombudsman Enquiry | 2 | 3 |
| Local members | I | |
| Members of Parliament or Assembly Members | 7 | 5 |
| Service Users | | I |
| Relative | 18 | 15 |
| The Public | | I |
| Foster Carer | | I |
| Other Agent e.g. advocacy service | | 2 |
| Total | 29 | 30 |

TABLE I(b) – Enquiries and Informal Complaints received by the Adults, Health and Well-being Department

| | 2022/23 | 2023/24 |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Solicitors | | |
| Ombudsman Enquiry | | |
| Local members | 4 | 3 |
| Members of Parliament or Assembly Members | 25 | 16 |
| Service Users | 2 | |
| Relative and/or Carer | 9 | 14 |
| The Public | 9 | 10 |
| Issues with Disabled Parking Spaces | | 2 |
| Another agency | | l |
| Other Counties | | l |
| The Police | | |
| Older People's Commissioner | | |
| External Companies Providing Care | | |
| Cyngor Gwynedd Staff (another Department) | | |
| Health Board Staff | | |
| Total | 52 | 49 |



5. Stage 1 – Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure – Local Resolution

- 5.1 Every effort is made to resolve the complaint so that the complainant and the Department are satisfied. Obviously, a local and early resolution is the best resolution for everyone, and this can be achieved by investing time and effort early. However, if the complainant decides to lodge a formal complaint under Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure, the usual procedure is for contact to be made on the telephone, via e-mail or face to face with the complainant or a representative to try to resolve the matter. Over the years, the Customer Care Officers have successfully established close working relationships with the teams, managers and legal service as a means of discussing and resolving matters, and this is reflected in the small number of complaints that reach Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure.
- 5.2 Sometimes, a concern can be resolved by the end of the following working day, and in such cases, it does not need to be recorded as a complaint under Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure. Instead, they will be recorded as Informal Enquiries and Complaints. In addition, on some occasions, the complainant would state that they do not wish to make a formal complaint under Stage 1 or Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure.

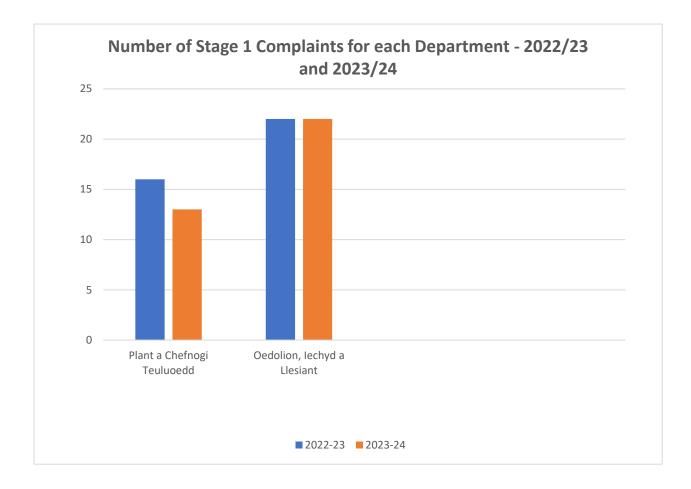
At other times, the concerns received are related to historic issues and, consequently, they are not eligible for investigation under the Complaints Procedure, albeit some sort of response will be provided when appropriate. In the case of some concerns, it is not possible to respond to them under the Complaints Procedure if doing so would harm legal proceedings or

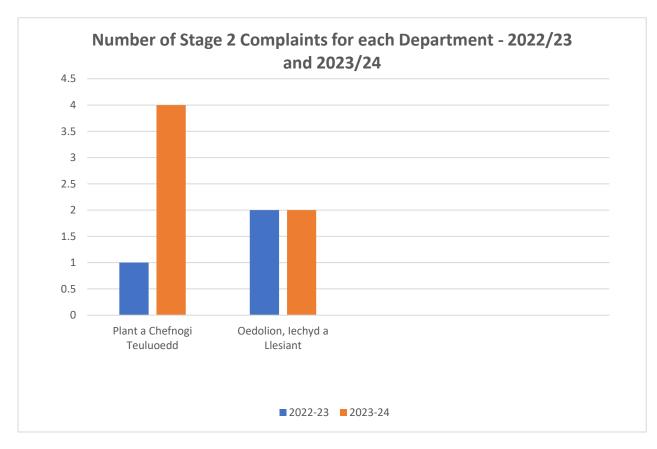
adult protection investigations currently underway. The complainant will be informed of their right to resubmit the complaint once the current case is concluded, if they so wish.

- 5.3 Formal complaints are dealt with under the Social Services statutory complaints procedures. Following receiving the complaint, it is sent on to the relevant Team Manager and the Assistant Head. The relevant Team Manager or the Assistant Head will contact the complainant on the phone to discuss their complaint and try to find a solution. Following this discussion, the Assistant Head sends a letter confirming the discussion on to the complainant. If the complainant does not want a phone discussion, then it is possible to only send a written response. In accordance with the guidelines, the Department has 10 working days to contact the complainant to discuss their complaint, and then five working days to confirm the discussion by letter.
- 5.4 If the complainant is unsatisfied with the response under Stage 1 of the complaints process, then they can ask for the matter to be escalated to Stage 2 of the Social Services Complaints procedure. In accordance with the guidelines, the relevant Department has 25 working days to complete a Stage 2 investigation. In exceptional cases, it is possible to extend the timetable if necessary. It is also important to note that the Complaints Arrangement allows the complainant to ask the relevant Department to upgrade their complaint straight to Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure and choose not to receive a formal response under Stage 1.
- 5.5 **Table 2** below shows the number of formal complaints received by both Departments between 01/04/23 and 31/03/24, with figures from the following year included for comparison.

Examples of the complaints received by both Departments are seen in **Appendices 1(a) and 1(b).**

| TABLE 2 Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|--|--|--|--|
| CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | | | | |
| Stage 1 | 16 | 13 | | | | |
| Stage 2 | 1 | 4 | | | | |
| Ombudsman | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| Total | 17 | 17 | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DEPARTMENT | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | | | | |
| Stage 1 | 22 | 22 | | | | |
| Stage 2 | 2 | 2 | | | | |
| Corporate Complaints Procedure | 0 | 2 | | | | |
| Ombudsman | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| Total | 24 | 26 | | | | |





6. Stage 2 – Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure – Formal Investigation

6.1 Should a complainant wish to escalate his/her complaint to Stage 2, he/she would have to provide a full record of the complaint along with any achievable outcomes; this would then form the basis to what we call a Stage 2 Investigation. For both Departments, the investigation is conducted by a person independent of the Council, known as the Independent Investigator. In addition, in a case of a complaint regarding the Children and Supporting Families Department, an Independent Person needs to be appointed. Their role is to meet the complainant, interview relevant staff and read the social care file. Following this, they create a report of their findings along with any recommendations for the relevant Departments. The Department will prepare a response to these recommendations to be shared with the complainant.

Both Departments are responsible for funding their own investigations by commissioning an independent investigator, and the independent person when relevant, as a self-employed individual. Investigation costs vary according to the complexity of the matter and the time needed to gather the evidence and create the report.

If the complainant continues to be unhappy after following the Stage 2 process, they can ask the Ombudsman to investigate further.

By following the principle of focusing on an early and local solution successfully, and dealing with matters quickly and effectively, the need to move complaints forward to Stage 2, is uncommon in Gwynedd. It is understood that Gwynedd leads all other north Wales counties in this regard. It is a clear sign of the commitment of the Customer Care Officers, through the willing cooperation of the relevant staff in each individual case, to resolve every complaint in an effective and timely way.

6.2 During 2023/24, the Children and Families Department received four applications to upgrade a complaint to Stage 2 of the Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure. The four complaints were upgraded immediately to Stage 2 following the complainant's direct application in accordance with the social services complaints guidelines. Therefore, Stage 1 had not taken place in these cases. This is an unusual trend. Considering the circumstances of the four cases, the reasons for this are understandable. An analysis of the four Stage 2 Investigations is in **Appendix 1(a)**.

Two complaints moved to the Adults, Health and Well-being Department from Stage 1 to Stage 2 during 2023/24. Both complaints were upgraded to Stage 2 of the complaints process following the complainant's request after they received a formal response under Stage 1. See **Appendix 1(b)** for further details.

7. Investigations into complaints received by the Public Services Ombudsman

- 7.1 If the complaint is not resolved at the end of an investigation under Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure, the complainant has the right to refer the case to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, or the Welsh Language Commissioner, or the Equality and Human Rights Commissioner, depending on the nature of the complaint.
- 7.2 A complainant has the right to contact the Ombudsman at any point, but the Ombudsman usually expects the complainant to go through the whole complaints process before they look at the matter. Therefore, the Ombudsman would refer the complainant back to the Department to try to solve the complaint locally.
- 7.3 Every historical matter that was open under the Ombudsman has now been resolved and closed to the Children and Supporting Families Department. No new investigations were received by the Ombudsman's office in 2023/24 by either of the two Departments during the period of this report.

8. Complaints about services jointly provided with the Health Board

8.1 A joint complaints protocol exists for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the six Local Authorities in North Wales. No joint responses were submitted to complaints under this protocol during 2023/24.

9. Adherence to the Statutory Complaints Procedure Response Timetable

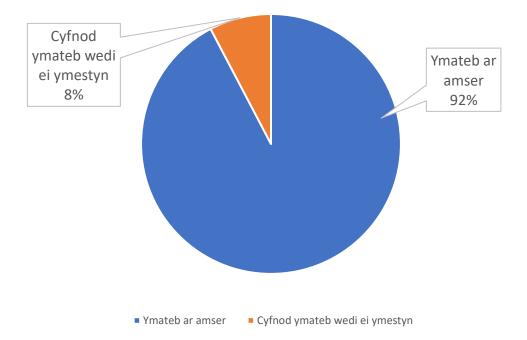
- 9.1 The Local Authority has a duty to provide information on the way it investigates and deals with complaints within the timetable noted in the Guidelines and Regulations. Once a complaint is received, the relevant manager or senior practitioner will offer to contact the complainant to propose a meeting/phone call within 10 working days in order to discuss the complaint and seek a resolution. Then, we will write to the complainant within 5 working days of the discussion to confirm the terms of the complaints resolution.
- 9.2 The Adults, Health and Well-being Department managed to respond to 82% of Stage 1 complaints within this timetable during 2023/24. The Children and Supporting Families Department managed to respond to 92% of complaints within the same timetable during 2023/24.
- 9.3 The reasons for any late responses were mainly related to the complexity of the complaint in question, and the research that needs to be undertaken to be able to provide a full response. The sickness absences, annual leave etc. of the Customer Care Officer and staff associated with the complaint also have a significant impact on the ability/failure to adhere to the response timetable.

The timetable for providing a written response confirming the outcome of the discussion is very tight, namely 5 working days. Nonetheless, most complainants do receive a response within the timetable or have agreed to extend the timetable.

Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure – Children and Supporting Families Department – Response Performance 2023/24

| Stage 1 (tota | al – 13) |) | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Complaints received within 12 months of the incident | Compl receive month the inc | ed 12 s after | Acknowle dged within 2 days | to w | iscussion resolve ithin 10 ays | Decision announced within 5 days | Respo se time extend d | Э | Average number of days extendec |
| 13 | 0 | | 13 | 12 | 2 | 12 | 1 | | 5 |
| Stage 2 (tota | al – 4) | | | | | | | | |
| NumberNumber ofacknowledgedNumber ofwithin 5 daysresponsesworking days | | 5 | | layed under nal circumstar | ices | | Number completed within 6 months | | |
| 4 3 | | 1 (5 additional days) | | | | 1 | | | |

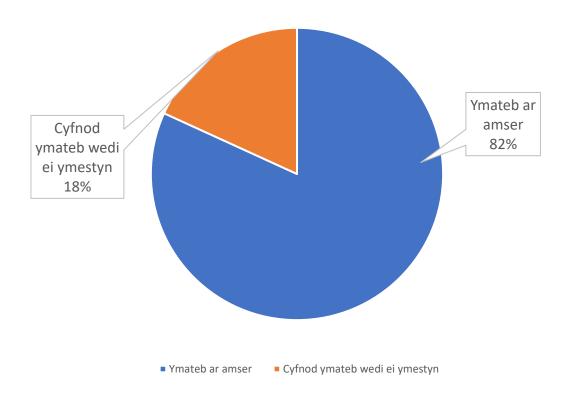
Perfformiad ymateb i Cwynion Cam 1 a Cham 2 Plant a Chefnogi Teuluoedd - 2023/24



Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure – Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department – Response Performance 2023/24

| Stage 1 (tota | Stage 1 (total – 22) | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------|
| Complaints received within 12 months of the incident | Compl receive month the inc | ed 12 s after | Acknowle dged within 2 days | t0 Wi | iscussion resolve ithin 10 ays | Decision announced within 5 days | Respor se time extende d | ; | Average number of days extended |
| 22 | 0 | | 22 | 19 | 9 | 18 | 4 | | 10 |
| Stage 2 (tota | al – 2) | | | | | | | | |
| | umber cknowledged ithin 5 daysNumber of responses received within 25 working days | | Total delayed under exceptional circumstances | | | | Number completed within 6 months | | |
| 2 | | | | | 2 | | | | 2 |

Perfformiad ymateb i Cwynion Cam 1 a Cham 2 Oedolion, lechyd a Llesiant - 2023/24



10. Cyngor Gwynedd's Corporate Complaints Procedure

- 10.1 Some matters that are beyond the remit of the Social Services Complaints Procedure are dealt with under Gwynedd's Corporate Complaints Policy. Complaints that are handled under the Corporate Complaints Procedure mainly relate to matters that are not associated directly with the care services that the Departments offer under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.
- 10.2 Two complaints were received this year from the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department and they were addressed under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. More information about these complaints is available in **Appendix 2**.

11. Learning Lessons and Identifying Trends

Learning Lessons

- 11.1 Quarterly reports on dealing with complaints are presented to the Management Teams of the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department. This is an opportunity for the Assistant Heads to analyse every complaint and to discuss and learn to improve the service provided to Service Users.
- 11.2 The Management Teams include the lessons learnt in their amended work plans and any training needs are identified. The current lessons to be learnt log is administered by the Customer Care Officers. The log is regularly distributed amongst the Assistant Heads to notify them of the lessons that have been identified. The log will be updated with any information about actions taken in connection with the lessons to be learnt. It is hoped that this will be a more effective way of identifying lessons and ensuring that improvements are actioned.

Complaints Trend – Children and Supporting Families Department

- 11.3 The Children and Supporting Families Department works daily with a wide range of different families. Some families come to the Department's attention through a direct request for assistance, for example, if their child is disabled. Most families come to the Department's attention because of concerns for a child or young person's health and safety.
- 11.4 Due to the nature of the Department's work, and specifically Social Workers, tension or conflict with families is unfortunately inevitable at times. Social Workers must make very difficult decisions, and families are not always happy. The Department understands and accepts that families can be dissatisfied, which then leads them to make a formal complaint against the Department.
- 11.5 It is fair to note that it is difficult to see whether there are specific trends or clear themes in the complaints received during 2023/24, as each complaint

tends to be unique to each case. In accordance with the Complaints Procedure, the Team Manager or the Assistant Head will discuss the complaint with the complainant. Through discussion, the Team Manager can respond to matters directly and most cases are resolved over the phone; it is clear that this way of dealing with complaints works. In most cases, the complaint stems from misunderstanding and miscommunication. Once the matters are fully explained, the complainant will be happy most of the time.

11.6 It is also very important to note, on several occasions when a complainant initially contacts the Customer Care Officer, they are highly emotive – they could be angry or concerned about a decision or a misunderstanding. In most cases, the complainant will be satisfied once they have been given the opportunity to discuss their concern with the Customer Care Officer, first of all, and then with the relevant Team Manager, and they would be happy with the outcome of these discussions.

Tiresome Complainants / Difficult Individuals

11.7 We work in a special field, with the need to respond to vulnerable cases to ensure the well-being of Gwynedd children and young people. This can lead to conflict with families; between the need to safeguard a child which is contrary to their parents' wishes. This therefore means that we come across some difficult and dangerous individuals at times.

The biggest trend in 2023/24 and seems to be continuing into 2024/25 is individuals that can be described as difficult or tiresome complainants. Difficult complainants are individuals where an effort has been made to respond to their complaint but they continue to be dissatisfied and usually behave in an increasingly abusive or threatening way. Despite presenting explanations through the Stage 1 process or sometimes the results of Stage 2 independent investigations, they continue to be dissatisfied and it is not possible to persuade or satisfy them. They become increasingly frustrated, and it is challenging to try and keep their comments confidential. For example, complainants who choose to share sensitive information publicly about their circumstances by spreading rumours about organisational corruption and threaten individual staff members. There are corporate policies to deal with tiresome complainants. This allows us to manage how we respond to them. The threshold for this is high and staff can experience long periods of difficult contact and face threats before being able to put this to work. This means not only dealing with continuous communication from individuals about matters but that these individuals are sometimes threatening to the staff trying to maintain their statutory duties. On several occasions, the need to escalate matters for the attention of Health and Safety has been raised, and the need to write warning letters to those individuals to explain that such behaviour will not be accepted by the Council. The balance of ensuring an individual's right to complain and receive full attention in accordance with the complaints arrangements and ensuring staff safety is very difficult at times. Also, when dealing with difficult individuals like this,

there is a need to ensure that the complaints procedure does not disrupt the Service's ability to safeguard the child/young person.

It is also important to note, that as a Department we welcome complaints, it is a way to understand what is happening in our department and learn and develop in accordance with need. Individuals who are identified as tiresome complainants use the complaints process to try and put pressure on staff to change decisions, sometimes they use the process to get their own way despite not being the best action for the benefit of the child or young person in question. Clearly, this is not the purpose of the complaints procedure, this process is to give a voice to individuals who feel that they have been failed by the Department, and not to put pressure and threaten Council staff.

Complaints and Enquiries Trends – Adults, Health and Well-being Department

- 11.10 The Customer Care Officer is part of the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit (Adults) and has a close relationship with the Care Monitoring Officers and the Safeguarding Officers. This is essential in order to share information to identify Safeguarding cases. Sharing information about any complaints received regarding the care of individuals in residential homes is useful to identify broader care problems in those organisations that will require further investigation from the Monitoring Officers
- 11.11 A variety of complaints and enquiries were received on different themes during the year and no specific theme became apparent.

There was a substantial reduction in the number of complaints/enquiries received on the most prominent theme brought to our attention during the last two years, namely complaints and enquiries about the difficulties that we have had as a Department to provide sufficient domiciliary care hours when the need arose. Two complaints were received on this theme this year.

No other specific trends were identified among the wide range of issues received during the year 2023/24.

12. Training and Staff Awareness of the Complaints Procedure

12.1 Providing training to staff about the Complaints Procedure is an important aspect of Customer Care, so that staff members are fully aware of the procedure and are confident of their role within it. The Customer Care Officers are always available to discuss any specific cases with the Departments' staff members and offer advice on the best way of dealing with enquiries or complaints against the Department. An e-learning session for every staff member of both Departments has been developed to ensure that staff are fully aware of the complaints procedure and the expectations on staff during the process. We will monitor the numbers undertaking the training and target staff members that have not completed it.

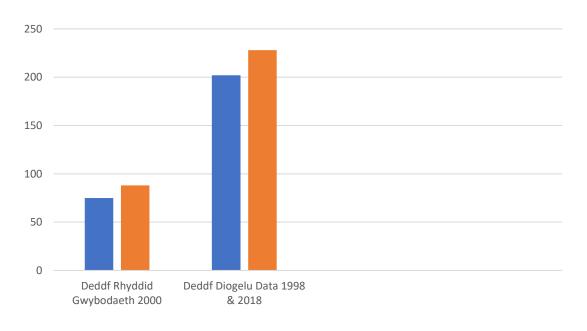
13. Other Duties

- 13.1 The Adults, Health and Well-being Department's Customer Care Officer is a member of the Disabled Parking Spaces Panel, which is responsible for coordinating the process of assessing applications from the public for designated disabled parking spaces outside their property. A Panel meeting is held every three months. The Officer is responsible for ensuring that application forms are up-to-date and correct, and is responsible for receiving enquiries over the phone, by letter and e-mail. The Customer Care Officer is responsible for the whole process of recording the receipt of applications and their outcomes, co-ordinating Panel meetings, and communicating application outcomes by letter after each Panel meeting.
- 13.2 The Children and Supporting Families Customer Care Officer also deals with access to information requests in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 / Data Protection Act 2018. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 were introduced on 25 May 2018, and as a result, there were some changes in the way access to information requests are dealt with. The Adults, Health and Well-being Department has an Administrative and Information Officer who is responsible for receiving and responding to these requests.
- 13.3 The access to information requests under the Data Protection Act 1998 / Data Protection Act 2018 are made by individuals, the Police, Solicitors, the Health Board as well as other Local Authorities. In accordance with the Act, there are specific timetables to adhere to, and the response timetable has become much more challenging since the new Act was introduced.
- 13.4 Determining what information is appropriate to be released is work that demands skill and can be emotionally challenging at times. The Officers who deal with information requests spend long hours on some of the more complex requests that the Departments receive. This means that a large bulk of hours are spent to ensure that information requests are responded to within the specified time.

13.5 It is also the responsibility of the Children and Supporting Families Department's Customer Care Officer to coordinate responses to freedom of information requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The number of requests under the Data Protection Act 1998 have increased over the last year. We are seeing an increase in requests from the Police, other Agencies and subject access requests, the reason for this increase is unclear.

The number of information requests received by both Departments can be seen in **Table 5(a) and 5(b)** below.

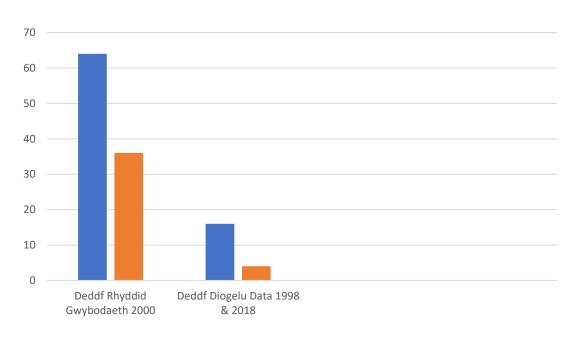
| FABLE 5(a) - Information requests - Children and Supporting Families | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | | | | | |
| Requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 | 75 | 88 | | | | | |
| Data Protection Act 1998 / Data Protection Act 2018 | 202 | 228 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Total | 236 | 316 | | | | | |



Ceisiadau am Wybodaeth - Plant a Chefnogi Teuluoedd

2022-23 2023-24

| TABLE 5(b) – Information requests - Adults, Health and Well-being | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|--|--|--|--|
| | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | | | | |
| Requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 | 64 | 36 | | | | |
| Data Protection Act 1998 / Data Protection Act 2018 | 16 | 4 | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Total | 80 | 40 | | | | |



Ceisiadau am Wybodaeth - Oedolion - 2022/23 a 2023/24

2022/23 2023/24

14. Expressions of Gratitude

14.1 As well as responding to concerns, complaints and other representations from service users, their families, and members of the public, it is also crucial that we acknowledge and record the expressions of gratitude we receive from our service users, families, members of the public and from staff from other agencies.

In addition to the thanks and compliments recorded by the Customer Care Officer on the RESPOND recording system, we are aware that many thanks, gifts etc. have been delivered to the staff of Council residential homes. These come mainly from families of service users who wanted to show their appreciation to staff for taking such great care of their relatives,

Examples of these compliments and thanks can be seen in **Appendix 3**.

| NUMBER OF EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE DURING 2023-2024 – ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|-------|--|--|
| Adults Service (including Area Teams, Learning Disabilities Team, Mental Health Team and Occupational Therapy) | Internal Provider (Domiciliary care and residential) | Business and Finance | Telecare | Customer Care and Safeguarding | TOTAL | | |
| 39 | 73 | | | 2 | 114 | | |

| NUMBER OF EXPRESISONS OF GRATITUDE DURING 2023-2024 – CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TOTAL |
| |

15. Work Plans for 2024/25

- 15.1 The Customer Care Officers will continue to respond to concerns, enquiries and complaints by following the Welsh Government Social Services Complaints Procedure, ensuring that the lessons to be learnt from every case are addressed by the Departmental Management Team regularly and timely. Continue to monitor actions that take place to develop the service.
- 15.2 The Customer Care Officer will continue to chair the North Wales Customer Care Officers Group (NWCOG) for the coming year. Meetings are held every three months.
- 15.3 Further work will also be completed to try and encourage workers across both Departments to contact the Customer Care Officers to share any thanks or complimentary observations that they receive. There is currently a sense that staff members feel that it is not appropriate to share some observations, but the Customer Care Officers are eager to change this.
- 15.4 Encourage the staff to complete the e-learning training session to ensure that they are fully aware of the process and are familiar with the steps needed to take during the process.
- 15.3 Further to the Work Plan outlined in the 2022/23 version of this report, we managed to redesign the Social Services complaints and compliments information web page on Cyngor Gwynedd's corporate website. In addition, in accordance with the statutory complaints procedure, a copy of the 2022/23 annual report is now available to read on this web page.
- 15.4 This year we intend to conduct a programme to raise further awareness of the complaints and compliments procedure during the coming year. As a first step, we have designed a new poster for the Council residential homes. The purpose of the poster is to promote how service users, and/or their families, can raise a formal complaint and/or express praise about the service. The work of designing the posters were completed in August 2024 and they have been distributed to every Council-run residential home. We will monitor the impact that this will have on the number of complaints and/or positive observations that we will receive from this reference. Copies of these posters can be seen at the end of this report.

16. Statistics on the use of Welsh and English when responding to complaints and enquiries

16.1 The Customer Care Officer responds to enquiries and complaints in the chosen language of the enquirer or complainant. See the relevant figures on the use of both languages in the tables below.

The Complainant's language choice to make an enquiry/complaint in 2023/2024 – Adults, Health and Well-being Department

| | Welsh | English | Total |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|-------|
| Informal Enquiries and Complaints | 25 | 24 | 49 |
| Stage 1 | 7 | 15 | 22 |
| Stage 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Corporate | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Ombudsman | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The Complainant's language choice to make an enquiry/complaint in 2023/2024 – Children and Supporting Families Department

| | Welsh | English | Total |
|-----------|-------|---------|-------|
| Stage 1 | 2 | 11 | 13 |
| Stage 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Corporate | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ombudsman | 0 | 0 | 0 |

APPENDIX 1(a) – EXAMPLES OF COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS TO THE CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES DEPARTMENT DURING 2023/24

| Reference | Brief description | Stage | Team | Response | Lessons to be learnt | Grounds to the complaint? |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| GC/14096-23 | Complaint received from a parent who was concerned that the Department did not take his concerns about the well-being of his child seriously. He had sent evidence in and did not believe that anyone had looked through it in detail and therefore was worried for his child's well-being in the care of the other parent. | | Children Referrals | The Department wrote to the parent confirming that the Assistant Head of Supporting Families and the Team Manager had looked through the evidence as a whole. The Team had checked with the relevant agencies and no child protection concerns had been identified. The Assistant Head of Supporting Families was satisfied that the Team had fully considered every concern. It was explained to the parent, if any new concerns raised, for him to contact us back immediately. | No lesson identified. | No grounds to the complaint. |
| JC/14198-23 | Complaint from a parent about a Social Worker. The parent felt that the Social Worker had lied, not contacted her and had breached confidentiality. | U | Arfon Children's Team 1 | The relevant Practice Leader contacted the complainant to discuss her complaint on the phone, with a letter from the Assistant Head of Supporting Families confirming this discussion. The complainant received a full explanation for each point, with the Assistant Head of Supporting Families noting that she was satisfied that the Social Worker had behaved professionally. The child was transferred to the Post-16 Team during the complaint, with a new Social Worker identified. | identified. | No grounds to the complaint. |

| GC/14309-23 | Complaint from parents who felt that they had not received support from the Service, that there were no services in place for them as a family. | 0 | Derwen Service | The Service Manager had written to the family apologising that they felt that the Service had not supported them, and this was not the intention at all. They were asked how they wished to move forward to collaborate with the Service to support them as a family and meet the needs of the child. | No lesson identified. | No grounds to the complaint, but action points noted to discuss when meeting with the family. |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GC/14341-23 | A complaint from a parent that a foster carer had been careless when transferring a child following a contact session. There was concern that they had not taken care when holding the baby's head, and this could have hurt the baby. | • | Fostering Service | The Fostering Service Manager contacted the parent on the phone to further discuss the complaint. It was explained that the relevant Social Worker had fully discussed the incident with the Foster Carer. It became clear that the Foster Carer had a shoulder injury, and therefore the Foster Carer experienced pain up his arm when transferring the baby. The baby continued to sleep and did not show any discomfort. The Service was satisfied that the Foster Carer had not been careless, and advice was given on how to respond to similar situations in the future. | Advice given at the time | Some grounds, with a clear explanation and purposeful advice noted |
| GC/14525-24 | Complaint arrived from a relative to looked-after children. They were unhappy that the contact had moved from their home (outside of Gwynedd) closer to the foster home in Gwynedd. They were also unhappy that several contact sessions had been cancelled. | • | Dwyfor and Meirionnydd Children Team | The Assistant Head of Supporting Families wrote to the complainant fully explaining the situation. The decision to move contact sessions had been made during the children's Review. It had become apparent that the children were worried about contact and this disrupted their behaviours before and after the sessions took place. It was therefore decided that they needed stability for a | | No grounds to the complaint |

| | | | | period to try and ease their concerns. With the hope of revisiting the contact in the future when appropriate for the children. The Department ensured that they would do everything in their ability to facilitate contact, and ensure that they are appropriate for the well-being of the children. | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| EXAMPLES | OF STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS DU | JRING 2 | 2023/24 | | L | |
| GC14985-23 | The complainant submitted a complaint about several staff members within the Department. There were several points to the complaint, including one regarding sharing a receipt about a mobile phone, comments made during a Case Conference and that a Social Worker had refused to ensure that her work is available to be investigated by the parent as this was what he believed that the 'Code of Conduct' noted. | | Derwen Service | Independent Investigator concluded that there were no grounds to the complaint. | No lessons noted from the Independent Investigator. | No grounds to the complaint. |
| GC15036-23 | The complainant submitted a complaint that the decision to take the case forward to a Case Conference was premature in accordance with the child protection processes. This decision had therefore led to bias and lack of an open mind when dealing with the Section 47 | Stage 2 | Arfon Children's Team 1 | Independent Investigator concluded that there were no grounds to the complaint. The Investigator noted three recommendations. The Department received the full report, with a copy of the report shared with the | to the complaint, the Independent Investigator noted three recommendations | No grounds to the complaint. |

| | investigation. The complainant also felt that the Section 47 investigation did not meet the needs noted within the guidelines (WSP). | | | Department's Management Team will discuss these recommendations as part of an Action Plan and decide on the appropriateness of their actions. | |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| GC15325-24 | The complainant contacted to submit a complaint about the Arfon Children's Team 1 and the Independent Reviewing Officers. There were 43 points to the complaint, the examples were; feeling that the Social Worker was not fully investigating her concerns, feeling that no one was listening, the children were not seen in accordance with the statutory guidelines, not receiving an invite to reviews. | Children's Team 1 and | Following a full investigation, we received a very comprehensive report from the Independent Investigator. He noted that there were some grounds to two points, these were operational matters and had been resolved before the Independent Investigator met with the appropriate staff, and therefore the Department was able to explain this to the Independent Investigator during the investigation. There were no grounds to the other 41 points noted within the complaint. The Department received the full report, no recommendations had been noted. The complainant received a copy of the report following the outcome of the Investigation. | from the Independent Investigator. | No grounds to the complaint |
| GC15576-24 | The complainant was unhappy that the Social Worker had included a chronology within the report for the Case Conference. The complainant felt that they had made progress and therefore it | Dwyfor and Meirionnydd Children Team | Following an investigation, the Independent Investigator concluded that there were no grounds to the complaint. He believed that the Department had followed the correct procedures highlighted in the Wales Safeguarding | from the | No grounds to the complaint |

| was unfair to include historical information within the report. We provided a copy of the child protection guidelines to the complainant, which includes an explanation of the need for chronology in such an assessment. However, the complainant had not accepted this and asked us to escalate the matter immediately to Stage 2 of the social services complaints guidelines in accordance with her rights. | Procedures and that it was appropriate to include the chronology in the report. The Department received the full report, with a copy shared with the complainant. | |
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APPENDIX 1(b) – EXAMPLES OF COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS TO THE ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DEPARTMENT DURING 2023/24

| Reference | Brief description | Stage | Team | Response | Lessons to be learnt | Grounds to the complaint? |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| GC/13855-23 | A relative concerned about the relationship between the service user and her Support Worker from the Learning Disability Team. | 1 | (Learning Disability Team) | Concerns passed on to the relevant team. The matter was resolved through a discussion between everyone to be able to decide on a solution. | No lesson identified. | Confirm that there are grounds to the complaint |
| GC/13898-23 | A service user's relative expressed concern about the lack of domiciliary care hours available in the Llŷn area to increase the number of hours provided. | | | A promise was made to monitor the situation closely and to solve the matter as soon as possible. | No new lesson identified. | Confirm that there are grounds to the complaint |
| GC/14235-23 | A service user's relative expressed concern that the Council's minibus can no longer wait outside their home to collect them to attend day care as the road is too narrow. Asking the Council to pay for a taxi for him instead. | Stage 1 | | A satisfied resolution had been agreed after discussions between the Department and the family. | No lesson identified. | Confirm that there are grounds to the complaint |
| GC/14315-23 | A service user's relative expressed concern that her mother had been sent home from respite care in clothes that were not hers and was not wearing incontinence pads. | 1 | Provision | Full investigation carried out by the Home Manager and a full apology provided. | No new lesson identified | Confirm that there are grounds to the complaint |

| A relative of a service user was concerned that she was becoming in debt because the Department had not sent invoices for her contribution towards her care costs for some time. | | Welfare Unit (Business) | 1 371 , | No new lesson identified | Confirm that there are grounds to the complaint |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| A service user's relative expressed concerns about the quality of care from two domiciliary care staff members. | 0 | Provider | Full investigation carried out and a comprehensive apology/response was provided as a result. | No new lesson identified | No grounds to the complaint |
| A service user expressed concern about receiving an assessment of their domiciliary care needs. Requesting an assessment as soon as possible. | Stage 1 | (Community Resources | Full apology and response provided for the delay. Committed to provide an assessment as soon as possible. | No new lesson identified | Confirm that there are grounds to the complaint |
| A service user's relative expressing concern about the lack of communication from residential home staff. The family was dissatisfied that the staff did not inform them that their relative had fallen and wanted assurance that this would not happen again. | 1 | Provision | following a full investigation to the allegations submitted. | Importance of effective communication with families following similar incidents. | Confirm that there are grounds to the complaint. |

| EXAMPLES | OF STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS D | JRING | 2023/24 | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | A service user's relative expressed concern about the quality of domiciliary care from an external company, a delay before conducting a review of the care package and long delay before providing a response to her original complaint. | 2 | Adults Service Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team (Customer Care) | Procedure. | has identified the need to monitor the work of external care | |
| | A service user's relative expressing concern about the arrangements to manage infections in Council residential home. Made allegations that the service user had suffered because he was kept apart from other residents due to a dangerous infection. | 2 | Internal Provision (Residential and Day) | Procedure. | | No grounds to the complaint but the investigation had identified some areas to improve. |

| Ref. | Brief description | Category | Stage | Unit / Team | Outcomes |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GC/14979-23 | Member of the Health Board staff expressed concerns about communication problems between the Adults Service and the Health Board staff. | Corporate | Formal complaint | Adults Service | Full response provided and the matter has been resolved. |
| GC/15575-24 | Member of the public expressed concerns about some aspects of the Council's domiciliary care staff behaviour. Complaint had been implemented under the Corporate procedure as the Department does not provide a direct service to the complainant. | Corporate | Formal complaint | Internal Provider (Domiciliary Care) | Full investigation of the allegations carried out. No evidence to justify the allegations presented. Full response provided. |

APPENDIX 2 – Examples of Corporate Complaints - 2023/2024 – ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX 3 – EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE AND PRAISE – EXAMPLES FROM 2023/2024

| "I have enjoyed Nurturing Links Parenting and I feel that I have benefited through learning a lot of new techniques to be able to deal with situations and I have seen a big difference at home, the support that I have received from Maria has been excellent, nothing I asked was too much for her. Whether it was a phone call or a visit that had not been arranged. Thank you." | Thank you | Trobwynt Team |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| "This case was initially allocated to the Team Manager, Heidi Rylance and then re-allocated to Ceri Aspden co working with Olivia Chick. There was excellent communication throughout my involvement, which was important as one of the parents was particularly skilled at playing agencies off one another. I felt this Local Authority worked tirelessly and robustly with the parents. The Local Authority recognised the strong sibling bond and the balance of harm as removal would have also caused emotional harm. They gave parents every opportunity to change. Very grateful if this can be cascaded to the key social workers involved as recognition of their work in this case acknowledged by the appointed Guardian Fiona Bevan." | Thank you | Meirionnydd Children's Team |
| "Thank you so much for being so polite and easy to talk to, I really appreciate it. I will definitely take your offer to attend the 'understanding the teenage brain' course. Many thanks" | Thank you | Team Around the Family |
| "To Hafan y Sêr staff, thank you for everything that you do for XXXX and us. He has been with you for six years and has enjoyed every time. He will miss you and we will also miss you, you have been fantastic. It will take XXXX some time to get used to XXXX, Hafan y Sêr will be a special place for him. It is a sad situation but I am sure that XXXX will get used to the new situation. Thank you again" | Thank you | Hafan y Sêr Short Break Unit |
| "Hello Gwenan, My name is XXXX, I just want to pass on a huge appreciation to your project and how it really helped me and my family when we needed it the most. Maria has been a breath of fresh air and a very warm, efficient and brilliant worker of this project. She is so amazing that I didn't want her to leave us. She has really made a mark on me, and she is so part of my journey. A lot has happened to me over the course of 8 months which I am very sure Maria would have filled you in on it. She's with me every step of the way. Days of medical appointments, filling forms, emotional support and guidance, encouraging me on my goals, helping me to | Thank you | <u>Trobwynt Team</u> |

| look for what's out there as in job wise which I never thought in a million years I will achieve because of my caring role. I have met few amazing people through her because of her drive and determination. Holding my hands on my worst days taping my family back together giving me courage to connect with the community. Giving us food when we ran out she made it so easy to open up to her. She went over and beyond for me and my family. She even wanted to take on the case of my son regarding school but because she wasn't allowed to do so she decided to join in school meetings instead for support. I really want to go on and on but I hope all these heart felt words do tell you how amazing and incredible work this project has offered me and the family and I hope this project gets an excellent recognition for what it stands for. We will miss Maria and her laughs and the smiles that brightens up any cloud. Thank you so much for your Help! We are lucky to find you and the project. Many thanks, XXXXX." | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| "Eleri was highly praised today by XXXX who thanked her for all the support she has provided XXXX, going "above and beyond" in supporting her through two placement moves and getting her to a place where she is engaging in her education. The praise is well deserved, and I am sure that without Eleri's involvement, we would be looking at a very different situation." | Thank you | Arfon Children's Team 2 |
| I am sure that there are many other families benefitting from your expertise and support, you do such brilliant work, thank you again. Take care of yourself too though." | | |
| "Since suffering a stroke some years ago Mum was housebound at home and was lucky enough to receive regular domestic visits from the beautiful people formerly working with Abercare, and more recently for the Gwynedd Care Service. Words cannot express enough our thanks for all the love and hard work provided. Mum was always a staunch proponent of workers rights and would certainly agree that our beloved care workers deserve better pay and conditions. We thank the care workers for respecting the wishes of elderly and vulnerable care recipients, and getting things done often under difficult circumstances." | Thank you | Domiciliary Care (Internal Provider) |
| "I just wanted to say thank you for the help and support you've shown me over our time together. Without you, in what's been the lowest point in my life, I wouldn't be here and I realise life can be better. I feel honoured and privileged to have had you as my Support Worker but also sad that people need to be referred to the Mental Health Service to be able to work with such an amazing | Thank you | Mental Health Service (Adults) |

| person. Thank you for everything" [Mental Health Team] | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| "Years ago, when X got his PDA diagnosis we were told that the people who worked with him would need to be charismatic and confident. To our great joy, you all turned out to be not only that but also fun, compassionate, imaginative, thoughtful, cheerful, wonderful people. Because of this he not only listened to you but was happy to spend his days with you and I believe that he thought of you all as his friends. Not just anyone could do what you do. You are very special people and we are privileged to have had you in our lives." [Learning Disabilities Team] | Thank you | Learning Disabilities Services (Adults) |
| "Mum would not have received better care and love from anywhere else. There was nowhere better than Bryn Blodau. I have nothing but immense gratitude to you all for your kindness throughout the time that Mum was with you. Thank you for everything xx" | Thank you | Internal Provision (Residential and Day Care) |
| "I would like to praise the care and the support that my husband's Grandma received from Community Carers in the Botwnnog catchment area. She had been receiving care in her home for some years now. Unfortunately, she received a terminal diagnosis in October following cancer spreading. She wished to be at home in the end and with us as family staying with her and the carers facilitating, it was possible to do that. Understandably, it was a difficult period and she deteriorated very quickly. Unfortunately, she passed away at the end of November. | Thank you | Internal Provider (Domiciliary Care) |
| I am confident that the experience would have been very different without the support of the carers and Ann Owena Jones. They were all clearly experienced and confident in their work. The care was careful and kind, ensuring that Grandma's dignity was maintained until the end. They spoke to her through all the care steps, even when she appeared to be unaware and that was extremely kind. I also want to reiterate to them that they have really supported me. I was genuinely afraid of not being able to care for her enough in the end, and having the carers there to facilitate in a practical way was a lot of help. But more important than that, at such an emotional and challenging time, all of them were ready to listen, offer comfort when I was concerned and tried to make sure that I was coping. I greatly thank them for that! | | |
| Ann was especially a lot of help when trying to get support and equipment from different NHS services, and it was an extremely frustrating experience at times. | | |
| Therefore, with all of this, I would like to thank this amazing Team from the bottom of my heart and we are | | |

| eager to show our appreciation further by arranging a collection in her name for the Community Carers in the Botwnnog catchment area. She had a very small funeral but over £300 was collected. We would like to arrange to transfer it over and request for it to stay within this Team please." | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| "After a very long period of illness, my father passed away on the *** this year. I am very eager to officially record our satisfaction as a family of the excellent care provided from everyone associated with his care. Firstly, I would like to note our gratitude to Ann Wyn Pritchard and Siân Ceri Le Bon who made home visits to see my father. Their care was always dignified, thorough and respectful and their specialist knowledge was so valuable to help keep my father at home with his family. Secondly, thanks to Deian Llŷr Owain for making prompt arrangements to ensure that a care package was provided for dad when he came home from the hospital in March. Deian kept consistent contact to report on the progress of the arrangements, and that was appreciated as we put everything in place to get dad out of the hospital. | Thank you | Internal Provider (Domiciliary Care) Adults Service (Community Resources Team) |
| In addition, the domiciliary carers not only offered practical support to my father, but also offered emotional support to mum and the rest of the family as we cared for dad in his final months. It is not possible to find words that convey our thanks and appreciation to each one of them for their dignified care. It was the greatest pleasure getting to know such amazing people, who were doing very hard and difficult work, by showing kindness and empathy to us as a family in a sad situation. They have all gone the extra mile to do everything within their ability to help us care for my father. As a family, we cannot give enough praise for the excellent care that my father received from these extraordinary individuals. Without all the support, it would not have been possible for us as a family to care about my father in his own home, in accordance with his final wish. Finally, the sitting service provided by the Eryri Cydweithredol company was invaluable to give mum time for herself. We are particularly grateful to Gwenda and Nia for their kindness and for a kind and professional service. | | |
| I am confident that it will be possible to share this message with everyone that was associated with caring for my father, by passing on our sincerest gratitude and best wishes to them." | | |
| "I write to express our sincerest gratitude as a family for the excellent service and support that mum received over the years from the Support Services. | Thank you | Internal Provider (Domiciliary Care) |
| Whilst being witness to the resilience and tenderness of the care and the carers' tireless commitment to support and care for mum, we often said as a family that it would | | |

| have been impossible to receive a better service anywhere. | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Although there were challenging periods at times, we appreciated both of your support and commitment to provide this key service. Between you all, you have offered a 5-star service and, as a family, we will forever be grateful for your kindness. Throughout the lockdown period, through every weather and several challenges, the support workers' determination and commitment to care for mum was excellent. We cannot thank this great and loyal team enough, namely Carys Jones, Carys Richards, Linda Roberts and Nichola Jane Roberts. All of them always went the extra mile. | | |
| Although the health service shared that it would not have been possible to care for mum at her home due to the complex nature of her needs, the Support Services managed to support us as a family to respect mum's wish to stay at home. It would not have been possible for mum to remain at her home without this key service. We greatly appreciate it." | | |



GWRANDO, YMATEB, GWELLA!



Mae eich sylwadau'n bwysig i ni, gan ei fod yn ein helpu i wella ein Gwasanaethau.



Mae croeso i chi anfon:

- canmoliaeth
- sylwadau positif
- sylwadau negyddol
- cwyn ffurfiol

Os oes gennych gwyn, fe wnawn:

- · gasglu gwybodaeth yn llawn
- gwneud trefniadau i drafod y gwyn ac ymateb yn effeithiol
- adnabod ffyrdd o wella i'r dyfodol

CYSYLLTU Â'R SWYDDOG Gofal Cwsmer







Gofynnwch am ein llyfryn 'Gwrando, Ymateb, Gwella'



Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department

LISTENING, RESPONDING, IMPROVING



Your comments are important to us, as they help us improve our Services.

You are welcome to send us:

- praise
- · positive comments
- · negative comments
- a formal complaint

If you have a complaint, we will:

- · collect information fully
- make arrangements to discuss and respond effectively to your complaint
- · identify ways to improve for the future

CONTACT THE CUSTOMER CARE OFFICER





gcgc@gwynedd.llyw.cymru



Ask for the 'Listening, Responding, Improving' booklet