



Patient Advice and Support Service

Annual Report 2017-18

7,941
PASS
enquiries

98% of
respondents
very
satisfied or
satisfied

3,151
clients
supported
by PASS

citizens
advice
scotland

Patient Advice and Support Service Annual Report

On 1st April 2017, a new upgraded PASS website and PASS helpline went live. This was followed shortly after by the launch of webchat on 20th April. The introduction of these was preceded by an intense period of preparation for the changes to the service which were both technical and operational. This involved choosing, purchasing and installing the new software to enable the provision of a helpline delivered by a distributed network of Patient Advisers throughout the country, and ensuring the Patient Advisers who would be responding to the phone calls and chats were trained and supported to deliver the service.

From April onwards, the service changed substantially. As the CAS IT department learned new skills in the provision of helpline software, the Patient Advisers were asked to work in a new and different way, with the emphasis on the helpline and what one bureau manager described as a “national service delivered locally”. Improving the routes of access into the service has made it easier for clients to access PASS, particularly the “click to call” facility on the website. This has resulted in more clients than anticipated using the service, and coming to us **not** with the straightforward questions we expected people to ask on a helpline, but with the same complex enquiries we had always supported clients with. The number of Patient Advisers did not increase with the introduction of the helpline and with the increase in client numbers, the year 17/18 has involved looking at how advisers manage that demand. This has not been easy when they continue to have clients coming “through the door” as well as those who are finding the service online and phoning the helpline, and advisers have had to look at new ways of working.

The helpline has been very successful and we have learned many lessons from, for example, how to support advisers through change, and that increasing the routes of access will increase the number of clients as it becomes easier to access a service. It is vital that plans are in place to manage that demand. As we move into 2018/19 we will continue to improve how we manage the demands on the service to maintain our high client satisfaction rate where 98% of respondents very satisfied or satisfied with the service.

Christine Lang
Patient Advice and Support Service Coordinator
Citizens Advice Scotland

Snapshot of the year

In 2017/18, PASS supported

3,151 clients



7,941 enquiries



Supporting clients

As a result of using the service, clients are given information and advice which enables them to make informed decisions about what they would like to do. Below is a summary of the work carried out to support clients.

- 1,701 clients received information from Patient Advisers
- Additionally, 237 clients received information about patient rights and responsibilities when using the NHS
- 493 clients were given information to take action on their own behalf
- 398 clients had one or more formal letters written on their behalf
- Patient Advisers had informal contact with NHS staff on behalf of 146 clients
- 177 clients were sign-posted to other resources
- 52 clients were assisted to meet with NHS staff
- 36 clients were helped to access and/or review their medical records

Patient Advisers do a great deal of work for each client. An example of the work done for/support given to one client is below. The Patient Adviser

- Advised the client of his rights and responsibilities
- Assisted with the client's understanding of communication he had previously had with his GP about his concerns
- Assisted the client to follow up a complaint he had sent to Practitioner Services prior to contacting PASS
- Supported the client to understand responses they received
- Supported the client to add their own view of the event with the GP to the records for a particular date. These included the client's apology for any behaviour that may have caused concern for the GP at the time
- Reinforced the options advised by the NHS for registering at another GP or via Practitioner Services.

Behind the scenes, advisers undertake a great deal of work to support clients -

- Advisers reviewed the cases of 407 clients (this includes, but is not limited to, reading clients' notes, preparing for meetings, and pulling together information to draft complaint letters)
- Advisers requested information or action on behalf of 295 clients
- Advisers prepared case papers for 106 clients

As a result of the above work –

- 516 clients were enabled to take action on their own behalf
- 129 clients received a response or explanation from the NHS
- 93 clients received an apology from the NHS
- 89 clients withdrew their complaint
- Local resolution was obtained for 55 clients

Case study - outcomes from PASS support

As a result of PASS supporting a client to raise a complaint with a GP practice about the treatment of their late father, the practice

- offered their condolences and an apology
- held a Significant Event Analysis meeting
- committed to looking at how to improve continuity of care for patients
- committed to consider urgent referrals at an earlier stage for patients with similar presentations in future
- reviewed the management of the client's father to identify issues which might prevent something like this happening in future.

How our clients felt

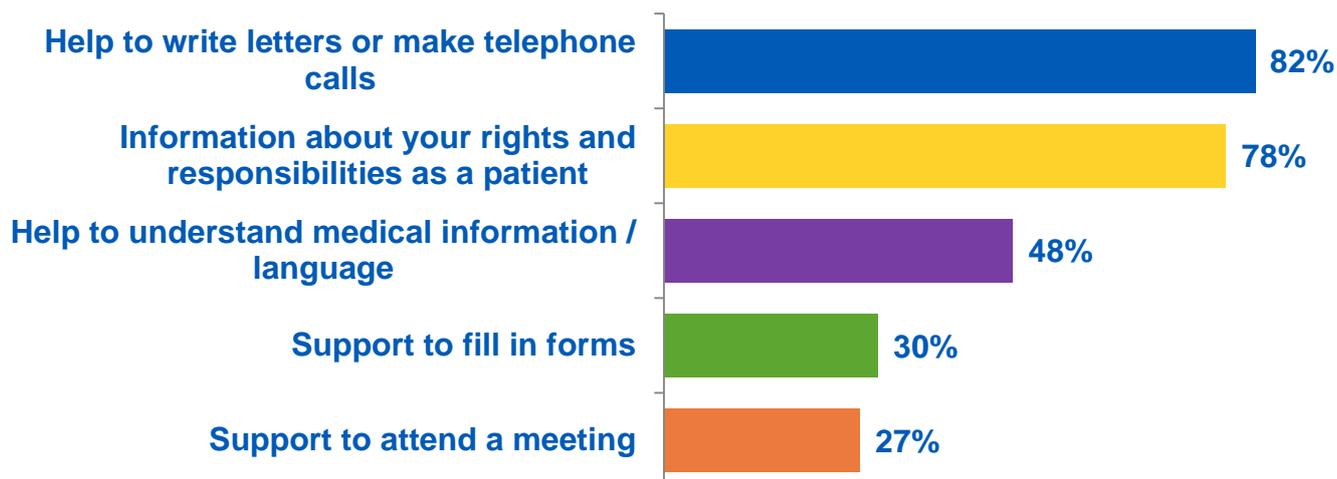
Many of our clients noticed improvements in their lives after using the service.

- 90% of clients had an improved knowledge of patient rights and responsibilities
- 89% reported improved peace of mind
- 81% had an increased ability to help themselves
- 79% said their mental health had improved
- 30% received assistance with other aspects of their life (in their local citizens advice bureau)

What our clients think

Citizens advice bureaux gather client feedback from PASS clients on an ongoing basis. Between April 2017 and March 2018 we received very positive feedback, with 98% of respondents 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the service they received from the service. More than nine out of ten (96%) respondents felt it was very easy or easy to contact PASS.

What type of support did clients receive from PASS?



Complaints about PASS

Every quarter, CAS gathers performance management information from bureaux. In this way, information on complaints about the service and what stage they were resolved at is collated. In the year 2017/18 there were 3 complaints. These were all resolved at stage1 (Formal internal investigation by manager of delegated staff member).

Patient Advisers resolving issues through local resolution

The Patient Adviser met with the client and discussed the new complaint process and with agreement from the client, drafted a letter of complaint for the client to present to the GP practice. There was also a complaint about the out of hours service. After the complaint was submitted, the Patient Adviser used the local resolution process, and, on behalf of the client, arranged for a GP to meet with the client after a pre-arranged appointment the client had in the GP practice.

Following this meeting, the Patient Adviser established that the client had received the answers that she desired and no longer wished to continue with the complaint to the GP or the out of hours service. The client advised that having discussed the matter, she was satisfied that there was nothing that could have been done differently or that would have changes the outcome.

Prison complaints

In the year 2017/18, PASS was used by prisoners as below

Health Board Area	Prison	Clients
Lothian	HMP Addiewell	9
Tayside	HMP Perth	8
Lothian	HMP Edinburgh	3
Dumfries and Galloway	HMP Dumfries	1
Greater Glasgow and Clyde	HMP Barlinnie	1
Grampian	HMP Grampian	1
Total		23

Work is ongoing to raise awareness of PASS among prison healthcare staff as client numbers remain low. The PASS National Coordinator met with the Prisoner Healthcare Lead Nurse at Healthcare Improvement Scotland who sent tailored information about PASS to Health Care Managers and NHS Board Leads in order to increase engagement.

In the prisons not listed above (HMP Castle Huntly, HMP Cornton Vale, HMP Glenochil, HMP Greenock, HMP Inverness, HMP Kilmarnock, HMP Low Moss, HMYOI Polmont, HMP Shotts) the service was not used.

Patient Advisers do a great deal of work for each client. An example of the work done for / support given to an individual client is below. The Patient Adviser

- Met with the client to discuss and draft a complaints letter to the NHS Complaints team, and send it on the client's behalf
- Discussed the response from the NHS with the client, and drafted a follow up email asking for more information/clarification from the complaints team
- Met with the client to discuss the option of meeting with NHS staff, which the client declined
- Requested two medical reports on behalf of the client.
- As the client was unhappy with the NHS response, discussed the option of taking the complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).
- Drafted and, following agreement with the client, submitted a complaint to the SPSO.
- Supported the client during the SPSO investigation.
- Met with the client to discuss the SPSO response and explain that the SPSO would check the Board implemented their recommendations and that the client would receive an apology from the Board.

Citizens Advice Scotland

Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) are responsible for operationally supporting the Patient Advice and Support Service by ensuring the delivery of marketing, information, training and advice to CAB throughout Scotland, and the provision of contract compliance data to the Scottish Government. CAS also maintains and develops relationships with external stakeholders and the Scottish Government on an ongoing basis. In April 2017, CAS began the first of 3 years of the new tender to deliver the Patient Advice and Support Service.

Interactive website

The tender for the PASS service specified the introduction of an interactive website which allows "click to call". The website includes webchat, a contact us form, information about patient's rights and responsibilities (including a link to the Patient Charter) and a list of frequently asked questions. These can be viewed at www.patientadvicescotland.org.uk

PASS national helpline

The tender for the PASS service specified the introduction of a national helpline. CAS introduced this used a distributed network model whereby specialist Patient Advisers are able to log in from their desks and answer the phone. This means that all clients phoning the helpline speak with a specialist adviser. CAS introduced a new phone system to allow this to be delivered in a rotational basis, created a podcast and written training materials for the Patient Advisers and provided support with the advisers around how to handle calls. The helpline has been well-used from the moment it launched. When the new website was made live for testing on 30th March 2017 calls were received through the national helpline in the first hour. In the year 2017/18 there were 1910 calls to the helpline.

Upgrade to the case recording system

In October 2017, CAS upgraded the case recording system, CASTLE, which advisers use to record information about the advice they have given to clients. The upgrade has been designed to make adding information to the system simpler and faster, be easier for advisers to use, and give us the opportunity to improve reporting to make it more robust and client-focused. We are now seeing the results of this with advisers recording more outcomes for clients. The CAS Research Team have advised us that the changes to the system mean that it is not possible to compare any statistical data from 17/18 with any from previous years. This will be possible from April 2018 when figures can be compared with those from April 2017.

Patient Adviser training

Regular Patient Adviser training days are held at the CAS office in Edinburgh. These provide a useful opportunity for Patient Advisers to develop working relationships, share best practice and support each other. In 2017/18 Patient Advisers discussed service delivery on the helpline, how they had managed difficult cases (which enabled them to share good practice) and received training on the updated case recording system. There was training

from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and NHS 24 on how they deliver their helplines. Induction training was also delivered to new Patient Advisers to help them answer telephone calls on the national helpline, and respond to webchats and email enquiries on the PASS website.

Regional Events

In spring 2018, two events were organised for Patient Advisers, Complaints Officers/ Managers and Scottish Health Council staff. These were run with the NHS Complaints Personnel Association for Scotland and are the only events which bring these groups of staff together. There was training from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, an update from the Scottish Government on Duty of Candour, a sharing best practice session and suicide awareness training in the afternoon. CAS was pleased to receive very positive feedback.

“Good to put faces to names and services”

“Useful to hear about people’s experiences and challenges”

“Great session on a subject that I have had no training on”

*

*This referred to the suicide awareness training.

Marketing

In preparation for the introduction of the PASS helpline and webchat, the PASS marketing materials (leaflets, posters, pens, and post it notes) were redesigned to include the new helpline number. These were distributed in April following the launch of the new PASS website and helpline to citizens advice bureaux, the Scottish Health Council, NHS complaints officers, NHS inform and other local and national stakeholders. Marketing material can be ordered at pass@cas.org.uk

Contact us

The service can be accessed by

- phoning us on 0800 917 2127
- chatting to us online at www.patientadvicescotland.org.uk/
- speaking to us in person at any Scottish citizens advice bureau
- using the contact form at www.patientadvicescotland.org.uk/
- emailing us at pass@cas.org.uk

Triggering a Significant Event Analysis

The client stated that their partner had sudden and severe leg pain and attended Accident and Emergency within 2 hours of this starting. The doctor found the patient's foot cold with no pulse. The doctor gave the patient painkillers and said to return if it didn't improve. Two days later the client took their partner back to Accident and Emergency. The client's partner was taken to another hospital by blue light ambulance where their leg was amputated above the knee. The client believes the Consultant at the hospital said that if the pain in the leg had been treated, and operated on within 6 hours of it first occurring, the amputation could have been avoided.

The Patient Adviser met with the client and wrote a complaint letter on the client's behalf. When the Board received the complaint they instigated a Significant Event Analysis (SEA) review, which they acknowledged should have been triggered automatically by the event.

The Patient Adviser attended review meetings with the client and their partner and supported them in following up the outcome of the review. As a result of the complaint -

- The NHS Board issued a full written apology to the client and their partner.
- Additional equipment was purchased for Accident and Emergency to ensure investigations were easily carried out on patients presenting with similar symptoms.
- A review was carried out on current practice for worsening statements
- A review was carried out on the processes when patients are re-admitted to Accident and Emergency as an SEA should have been triggered automatically.