KO41(b) – Dental Written Complaints

A guide to completing the Dental section of the NHS written complaints collection

28 April 2015
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Background

The information obtained from the KO41(b) collection monitors written General Practice (including Dental) complaints (by service area and type) received by the NHS each year. It also supports the commitment given in Equity and Excellence to improve the Patient Experience by listening to the public voice.

This information is published annually in a statistical bulletin. The latest bulletin can be found at the following link: Data on written complaints in the NHS

For the 2014-15 complaints collection the KO41b is split into two areas (Dental and GP). Business Services Authority (BSA) will be collecting information from Dental practices and NHS England will collect data from the GP practices. This will be done via two web tools, one for Dental returns run by BSA and the other for GP returns run by NHS England. This guidance is specifically aimed at the Dental collection. Information on how to access the web tool is included within this guidance. This information will then be supplied to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) and published in August 2015.

The survey should not take long to complete, however if you have any issues please see the links below:

If you are having problems with the web system please contact BSA on nhsbsaresearch@nhs.net

If you have any queries regarding definitions please contact HSCIC on nhs.comp@hscic.gov.uk
Completing the return

General guidance

1) The KO41(b) should be completed with information about written complaints about dental health services made by, or on behalf of, patients in the period 1st April to 31st March.

2) For the purposes of this return a written complaint is one that is made in writing to any member of staff, or is originally made orally and subsequently recorded in writing. Once it is so recorded, it should be treated as though it was made in writing from the outset. Oral complaints and comments/suggestions that do not require investigation should not be included.

3) If a written communication contains more than one complaint that requires separate investigation then each should be recorded separately. However, where a single complaint covers several aspects of care/treatment received, the complaint should be recorded only once, under the principle cause of complaint.

4) Complaints forwarded to the Ombudsman are to be excluded because a complaint could span several reporting years and could corrupt data returns.

5) If the complaint is transferred to another organisation, the organisation that deals with it should record it.

6) If the organisation investigates a complaint made about another organisation, the complaint should be recorded against the organisation being complained about and not the organisation conducting the investigation.

7) **DO NOT INCLUDE** investigations instigated by outside agencies, for example the Police, Health Service Commissioner or Coroners Court.

8) Local resolution (LR) is the first stage of the complaints procedure when front-line staff should aim to provide the fullest possible opportunity for investigation and resolution of the complaint, as quickly as is sensible in the circumstances.

9) Returns on the total number of written complaints against pharmacists and opticians are not required.

Definition of complaint upheld

If any or all of a complaint is well founded then it should be recorded as "upheld locally." Note: The Ombudsman adopts this principle in their adjudications.
Definitions of complaints by area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of complaint</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>Any dental treatment or surgical issues including procedures or activities undertaken by dentists or dental care professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental administration</td>
<td>Administrative activities undertaken by the practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Any other issues not covered by the above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definitions of complaints by subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of complaint</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications/attitude</td>
<td>A contact made either face to face or by telephone, facsimile, email or website and issues relating to verbal/non-verbal characteristics, or content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premises</td>
<td>The physical environment and psychological effect of the site occupied by the practice/service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice/surgery management</td>
<td>Decisions made by the practice manager about the operation of the practice/service (e.g. access to individual practitioners, appointments, opening hours, locum cover)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental administration</td>
<td>Activities undertaken by the reception and administrative staff within the practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>Clinical decisions, advice and treatment provided by a care professional within the practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Any other issues not covered by the above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Submission of data to BSA online web tool

The BSA web tool is available by following the link given in the email sent to you from NHS Dental to start their survey.

The survey is split into three parts:

1. Organisation details

Once you click on this link you should see the first page (as shown below). Please fill in your organization details, i.e. contractor name, contractor number and the area team you are associated with. Then below this select whether you had any written complaints within the year 2014-15 (select yes or no).

Note: you can save a partially completed survey at any point in the process just by clicking on the ‘Save’ button at the bottom of each page.

Once you have completed this page select the ‘Next’ button

If you have had no written complaints within the year and selected ‘no’ you will be directed to the final page which thanks you for completing the survey. Please ensure you click on ‘Submit’ to save your final response.

If you selected ‘yes’ you will be taken to the following page:
2. Numbers of complaints by service area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complaint by area</th>
<th>Number of complaints received</th>
<th>Number upheld</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental number of complaints received</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other number of complaints received</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of complaints received</strong></td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type in the number of complaints for each category in each of the boxes within the two columns. The left hand side column refers to total number of complaints for each category and the right hand column refers to the number of those that were upheld. Only positive integer numbers should be entered.

Make sure the sum of the individual boxes in each column match the total number of complaints in the bottom box for that column.

Also ensure that the number of upheld complaints in the right hand column is either equal to or less than the number of complaints in the left column.

The comments boxes at the bottom of the page allow you to add any additional information.

Once this is completed click on ‘Next’ which takes you to the next page – see below.
3. Complaints by subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complaint by subject</th>
<th>Number of complaints</th>
<th>Number upheld</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications - attitude number of written complaints received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventive number of written complaints received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical - surgical number of written complaints received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same practice examination number of written complaints received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental - chiverton number of written complaints received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of written complaints received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type in the number of complaints for each category in each of the boxes within the two columns. The left hand side column refers to total number of complaints for each category and the right hand column refers to the number of those that were upheld. Only positive integer numbers should be entered.**

**Make sure the sum of the individual boxes in each column match the total number of complaints in the bottom box for that column.**

**Also ensure that the number of upheld complaints in the right hand column is either equal to or less than the number of complaints in the left column.**

**The comments boxes at the bottom of the page allow you to add any additional information.**

**Note:** A complaint can be made concerning more than one subject area. Where this has occurred, record a complaint under each subject area contained within the complaint letter received. Therefore the complaints by subject total should be equal to or greater than the total in the previous page (complaints by area).

Once this is completed, click on ‘Next’ which will take you to the end of the survey, you should see this page, please make sure you click on ‘Submit’ (or ‘Save’ if you need to come back to it).
Thank you for completing the template.

Once submitted you should see the final page thanking you for completing the survey.

**HSCIC data download**

Shortly after the deadline the HSCIC will download the information which will be published in August 2015 (for more information on publication dates please see the HSCIC publication calendar [here](http://www.hscic.gov.uk/datacollections/ko41b)).

**Contacts**

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If you are having problems with the web system please contact BSA on [nhsbsaresearch@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsaresearch@nhs.net)

This guidance is available here: [http://www.hsic.gov.uk/datacollections/ko41b](http://www.hsic.gov.uk/datacollections/ko41b)