

SDR 172/2008

30 October 2008

Complaints to the NHS in Wales, 2007-08

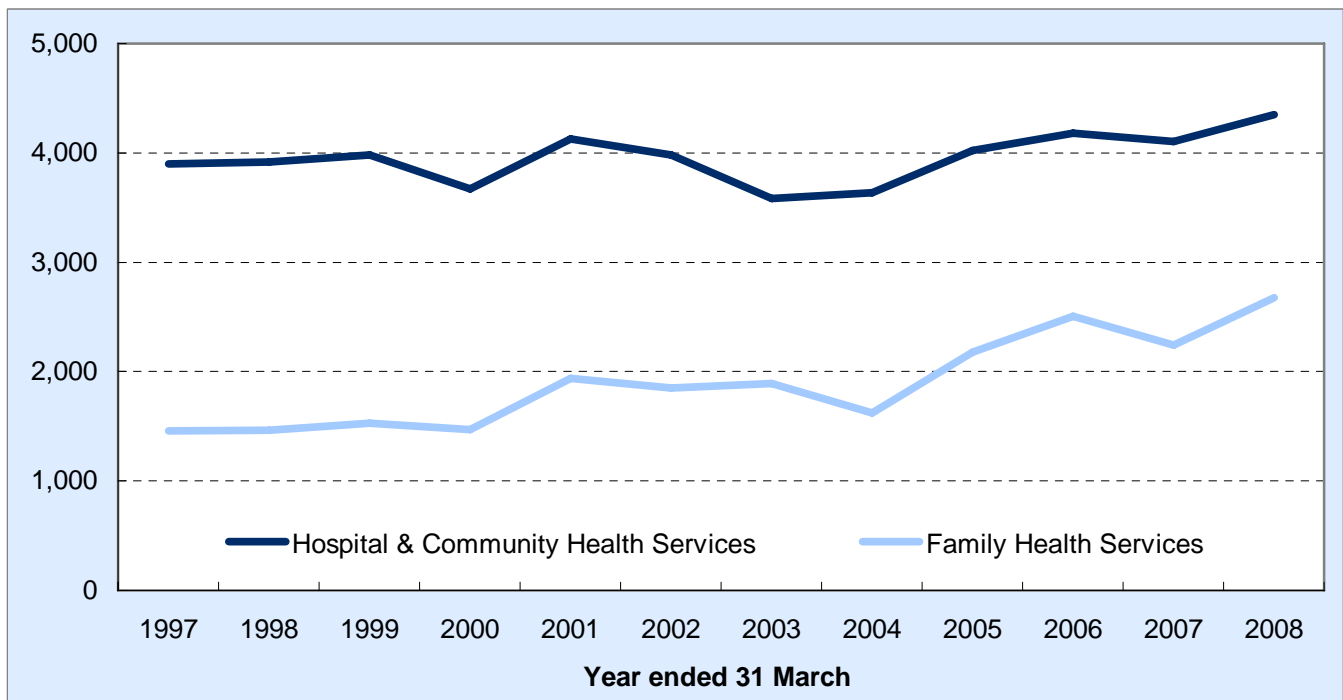
Information in this release is compiled from the KO41(A) and KO41(B) returns. All complaints which go into writing at any stage of the complaints procedure should be recorded on the KO41 returns. The KO41(A) return collects information about complaints relating to hospital and community health services (H&CHS), while the KO41(B) collects information about complaints relating to family health services (FHS).

Key facts:

In the year ended 31 March 2008:

- There were 7,022 complaints – up 11% on the previous year;
- Complaints about hospital & community services were up 6%;
- Complaints about family health services were up 19%;
- 66% of complaints about hospital & community services were concluded within the 4 week target compared to 62% in 2006-07.

Figure 1: Total complaints



This release is available on the Assembly's interactive data dissemination service StatsWales: www.statswales.wales.gov.uk

Contact: Tel: 029 2082 5036 E-mail: stats.healthinfo@wales.gsi.gov.uk **Next Update:** October 2009 (provisional)



Table 1: Total complaints

	Year ended 31 March					% change 2006-07 to 2007-08
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
Hospital & Community Health Services	3,638	4,023	4,182	4,104	4,348	6%
Family Health Services ¹	1,620	2,179	2,504	2,242	2,674	19%
Total	5,258	6,202	6,686	6,346	7,022	11%

¹ including complaints about LHB commissioned out-of-hours services from 1 October 2004.

HOSPITAL & COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES (H&CHS)

Key facts:

In the year ended 31 March 2008:

- There were 4,348 complaints about H&CHS – up 6% on the previous year;
- 4 out of 10 complaints were about in-patient services; and
- More than a quarter of complaints were about out-patient services.
- By profession, just over half the complaints were at about medical staff; and
- By subject, 4 out of 10 were about clinical treatment.

Table 2: H&CHS complaints resolved within 4 weeks, 2007-08

	Concluded within four weeks	Concluded after more than four weeks	Still being pursued ¹	Total H&CHS complaints	Percentage concluded within 4 weeks ²
Number of complaints	2,652	1,377	319	4,348	66%

¹ at 31 March

² excluding those cases still being pursued

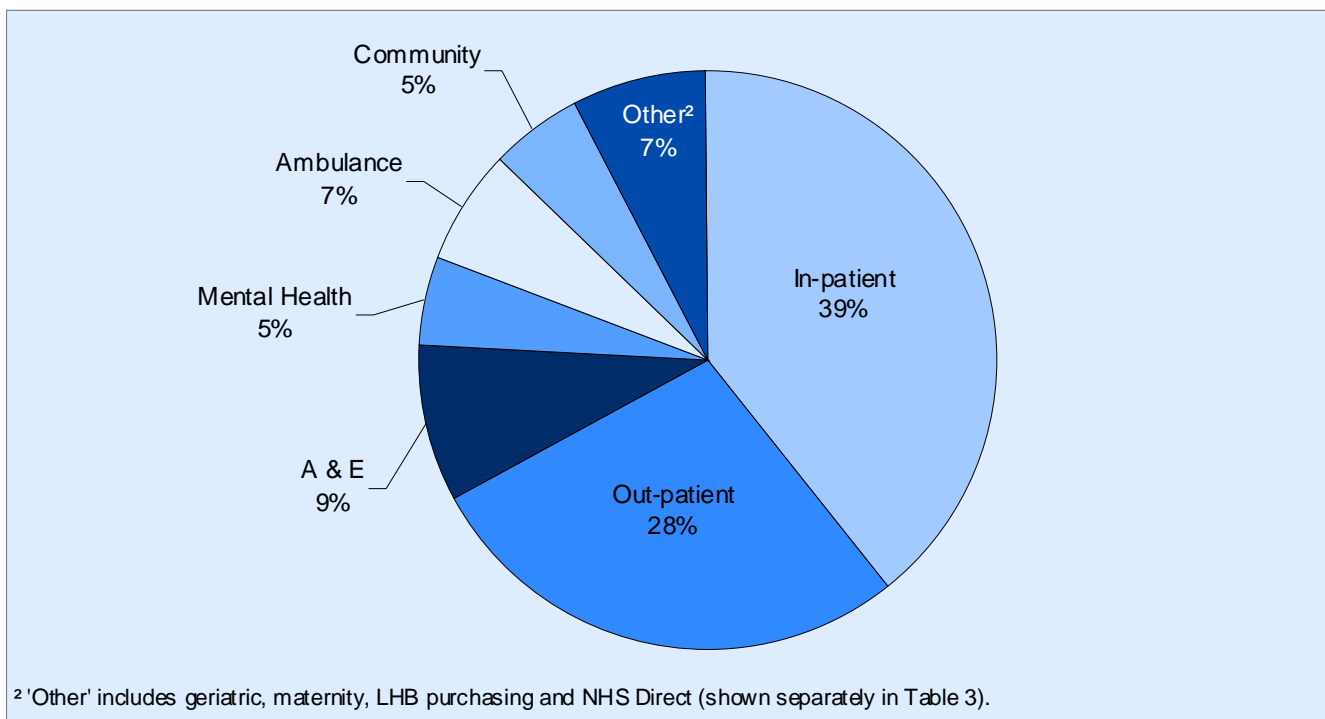
Table 3: H&CHS complaints by service area

Service area	Year ended 31 March					2008 % of total complaints
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
In-patient	1,316	1,293	1,416	1,498	1,703	39%
Out-patient	1,127	1,354	1,156	1,040	1,206	28%
Accident & Emergency	314	352	355	339	387	9%
Geriatric	26	49	92	58	54	1%
Mental Health	262	269	251	226	214	5%
Maternity	112	101	155	127	107	2%
Ambulance	230	283	325	305	288	7%
Community Hospitals	58	51	121	107	111	3%
Other Community Health	141	111	155	183	114	3%
Local Health Board purchasing	52	160	152	207	135	3%
NHS Direct ¹	4	14	29	1%
Total	3,638	4,023	4,182	4,104	4,348	100%

¹ Complaints about NHS Direct not collected until 2005-06

.. not available

Figure 2: H&CHS complaints by service area, 2007-08



In 2007-08:

- 4 out of 10 complaints were about in-patient services
- Just over a quarter of complaints were about out-patient services

Figure 3: H&CHS complaints concluded within 4 weeks, 2007-08*

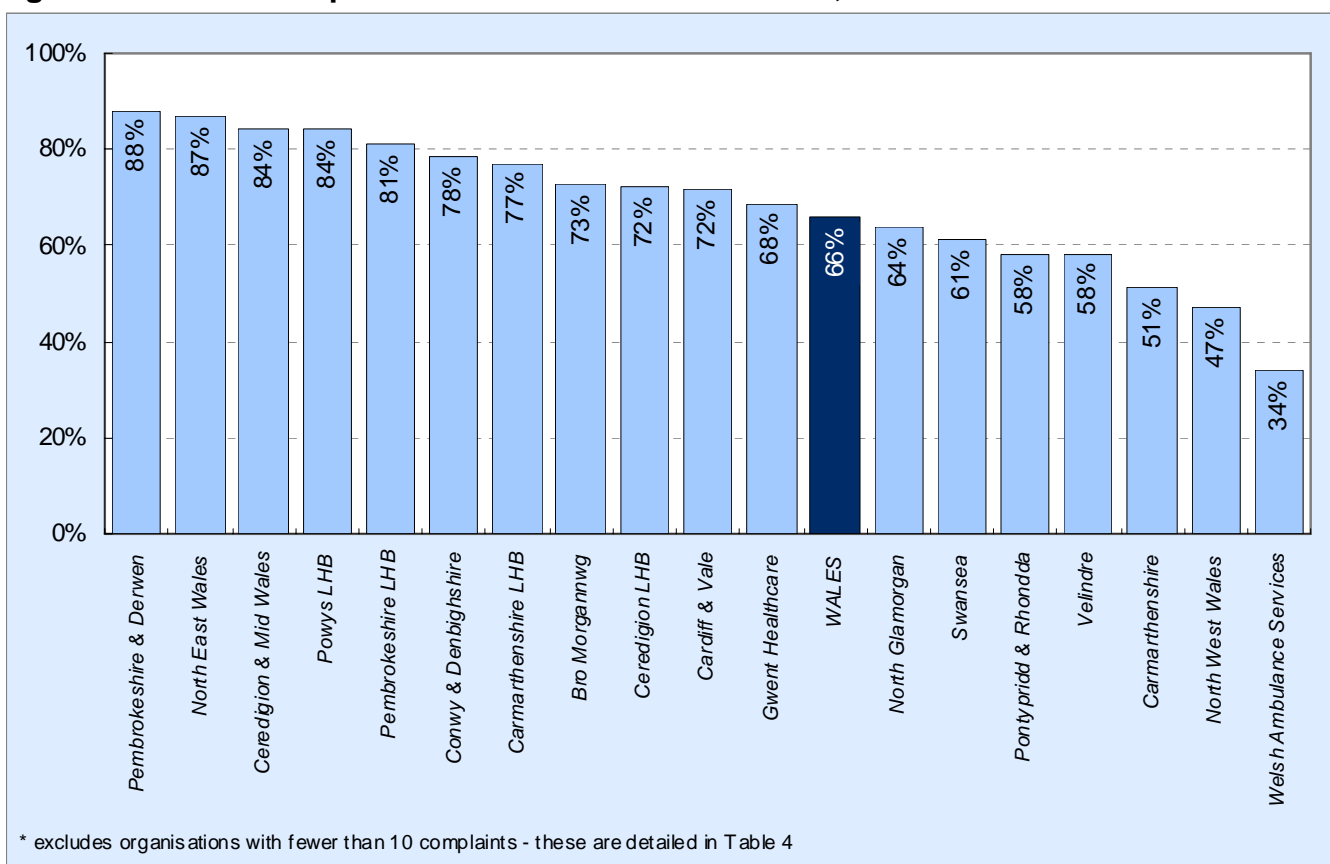


Table 4: H&CHS complaints dealt with under local resolution, 2007-08

	Number of complaints received				% concluded within 4 weeks ²	% of total complaints
	Concluded within four weeks	Concluded after more than four weeks	Still being pursued ¹	Total		
NHS Trusts:						
Bro Morgannwg	123	46	12	181	73%	4%
Cardiff & Vale	500	198	51	749	72%	18%
Carmarthenshire	106	100	36	242	51%	6%
Ceredigion & Mid Wales	48	9	8	65	84%	2%
Conwy & Denbighshire	186	51	4	241	78%	6%
Gwent Healthcare	344	159	80	583	68%	14%
North East Wales	183	28	7	218	87%	5%
North Glamorgan	103	58	7	168	64%	4%
North West Wales	164	185	3	352	47%	8%
Pembrokeshire & Derwen	179	25	2	206	88%	5%
Pontypridd & Rhondda	79	57	20	156	58%	4%
Swansea	380	242	38	660	61%	16%
Velindre	11	8	0	19	58%	0%
Welsh Ambulance Services	90	176	48	314	34%	8%
All Trusts	2,496	1,342	316	4,154	65%	100%
Local Health Boards (LHBs):						
Anglesey LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Blaenau Gwent LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Bridgend LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Caerphilly LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Cardiff LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Carmarthenshire LHB	10	3	-	13	77%	7%
Ceredigion LHB	13	5	2	20	72%	10%
Conwy LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Denbighshire LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Flintshire LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Gwynedd LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Merthyr Tydfil LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Monmouthshire LHB	1	-	-	1	100%	1%
Neath Port Talbot LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Newport LHB	1	-	-	1	100%	1%
Pembrokeshire LHB	55	13	1	69	81%	36%
Powys LHB	74	14	-	88	84%	45%
Rhondda Cynon Taff LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Swansea LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Torfaen LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Vale of Glamorgan LHB	-	-	-	-	.	-
Wrexham LHB	2	-	-	2	100%	1%
All LHBs	156	35	3	194	82%	100%
All Wales	2,652	1,377	319	4,348	66%	100%

¹ At 31 March

- less than 0.5%

² excluding those cases still being pursued

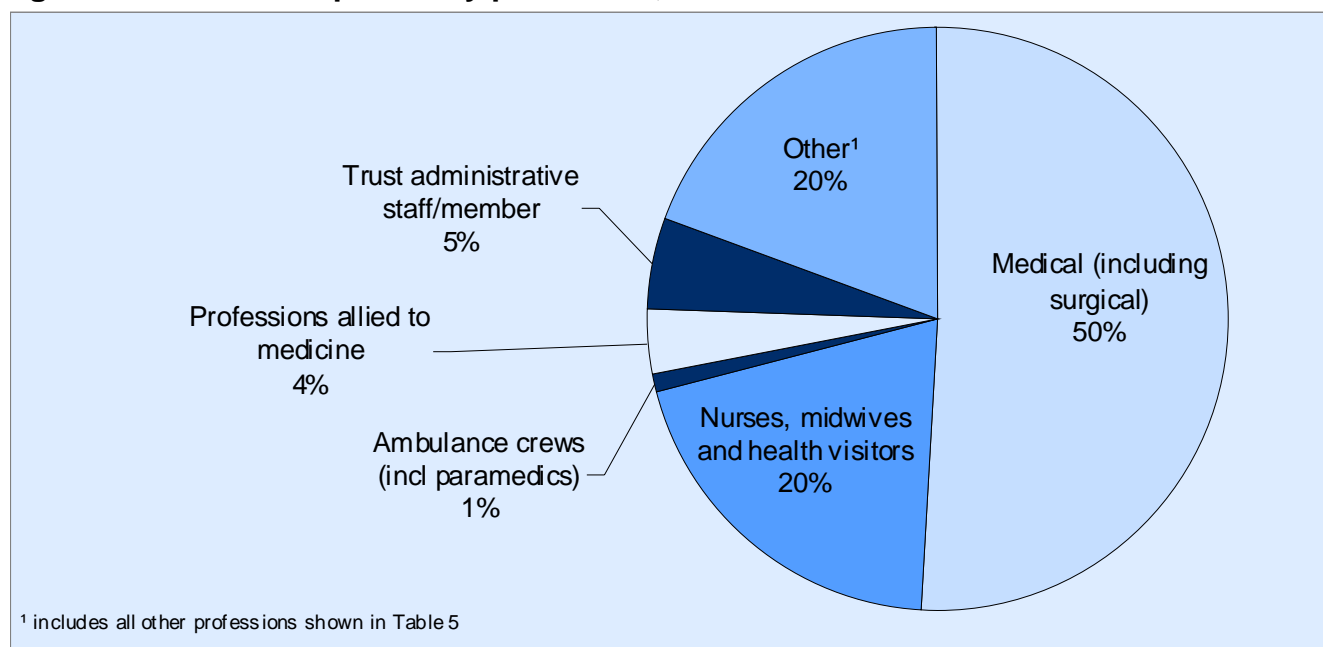
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Table 5: H&CHS complaints by profession

Profession	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2008 % of total complaint
Medical (including surgical)	1,913	1,964	2,066	1,915	2,209	51%
Dental (including surgical)	56	51	40	76	59	1%
Professions allied to medicine	292	459	272	189	164	4%
Nurses, midwives and health visitors	662	703	675	895	874	20%
Scientific, technical and professional	57	43	68	70	35	1%
Ambulance crews (incl paramedics)	246	284	336	314	41	1%
Maintenance and ancillary staff	48	83	50	65	58	1%
Local Health Board admin staff / member (excluding FHS admin)	13	44	28	19	7	-
Trust administrative staff/member	161	121	134	176	210	5%
Other	190	271	513	385	691	16%
Total	3,638	4,023	4,182	4,104	4,348	100%

- less than 0.5%

Figure 4: H&CHS complaints by profession, 2007-08



In the year ended 31 March 2008:

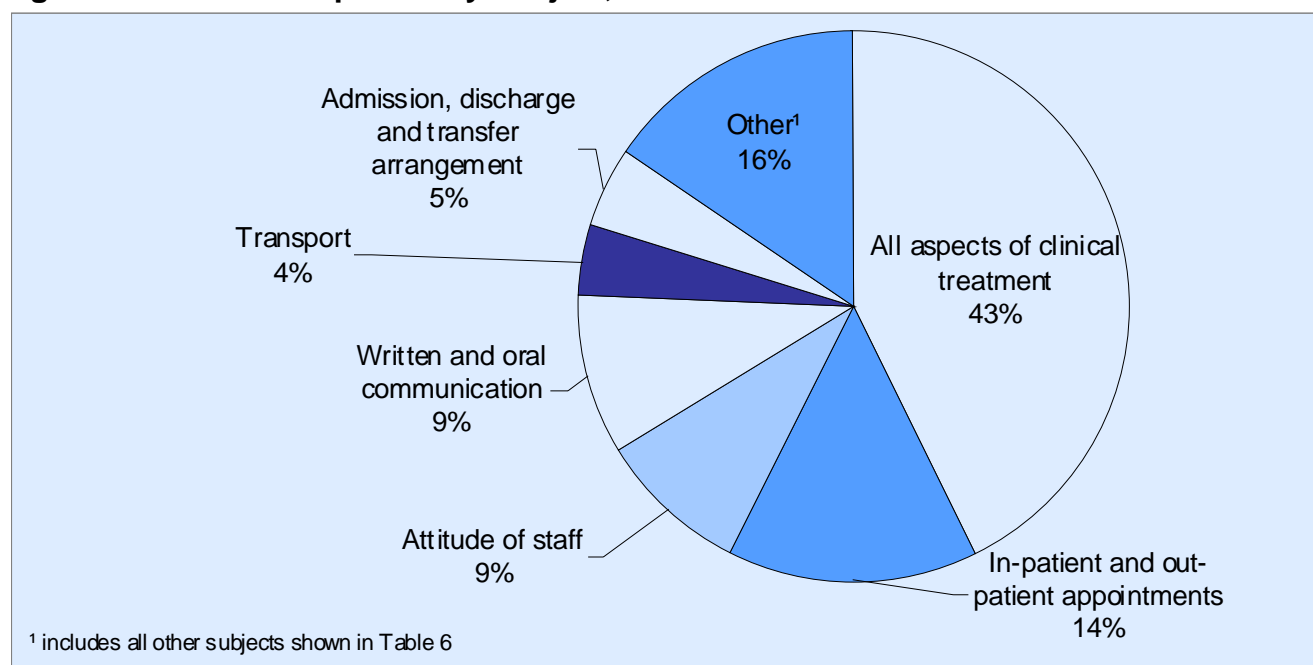
- half of the complaints related to medical/surgical staff;
- nurses, midwives and health visitors accounted for 20% of all complaints.

Table 6: H&CHS complaints by subject

Subject	Year ended 31 March					2008 % of total complaints
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
Admission/discharge/transfer arrangements	215	199	176	201	200	5%
Aids, appliances, equipment and premises	146	142	104	105	83	2%
Outpatient appointments	438	594	475	371	435	10%
Inpatient appointments	158	164	170	145	184	4%
Attitude of staff	396	421	450	433	390	9%
All aspects of clinical treatment	1,352	1,358	1,499	1,642	1,863	43%
Written and oral communication	326	305	362	419	410	9%
Consent to treatment	3	97	9	11	4	-
Complaints handling	0	23	3	5	1	-
Patients: privacy and dignity	47	52	31	44	41	1%
Patients: property and expenses	12	19	15	20	15	-
Local Health Board (LHB) purchasing	44	157	129	156	133	3%
Independent sector services/LHBs	0	3	9	1	2	-
Independent sector services/Trusts	0	5	18	2	5	-
Personal records	40	28	35	28	46	1%
Failure to follow procedure	48	32	13	21	25	1%
Patients: status, discrimination	5	1	6	4	8	-
Mortuary and post mortem arrangements	8	3	1	5	2	-
Transport	183	206	276	178	189	4%
Policy and commercial decisions	15	6	29	12	23	1%
Code of openness complaints	2	0	0	0	1	-
Hotel service	53	75	76	54	46	1%
Other	147	133	296	247	242	6%
Total	3,638	4,023	4,182	4,104	4,348	100%

- less than 0.5%

Figure 5: H&CHS complaints by subject, 2007-08



In the year ended 31 March 2008:

- 43% of complaints related to clinical treatment;
- in-patient and out-patient appointments accounted for 14% of complaints;
- complaints about staff attitude and written & oral communication each accounted for 9% of the total complaints.

Table 7: H&CHS cases requesting an independent review, 2007-08

Service area	Cases requesting independent review	Number of these still being considered ²	Independent review action ¹			Total
			Concluded within performance target	Concluded outside performance target	Still being pursued ²	
Hospital acute:						
- In-patient	109	26	0	3	7	10
- Out-patient	43	8	0	3	2	5
- Accident & Emergency	9	5	0	1	0	1
Geriatric	3	2	0	0	1	1
Mental Health	5	0	0	0	0	0
Maternity	7	1	0	0	0	0
Ambulance	4	1	0	0	0	0
Community hospitals	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Community Health	5	1	0	0	0	0
LHB purchasing	3	1	0	0	0	0
NHS Direct	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	188	45	0	7	10	17

¹ Not all requests for an independent review result in one being held

² at 31 March

FAMILY HEALTH SERVICES (FHS)

Key facts:

In the year ended 31 March 2008:

- there were 2,674 complaints about Family Health Services – up 19% on the previous year;
- complaints about General Medical Practitioners rose by 29%;
- complaints about General Dental Practitioners fell by 11%;
- complaints about out-of-hours services fell by 27%;
- there were 74 requests for independent review - of the 2 independent reviews granted, both were still being pursued at 31 March.

Figure 6: FHS complaints by Health Region, year ended 31 March

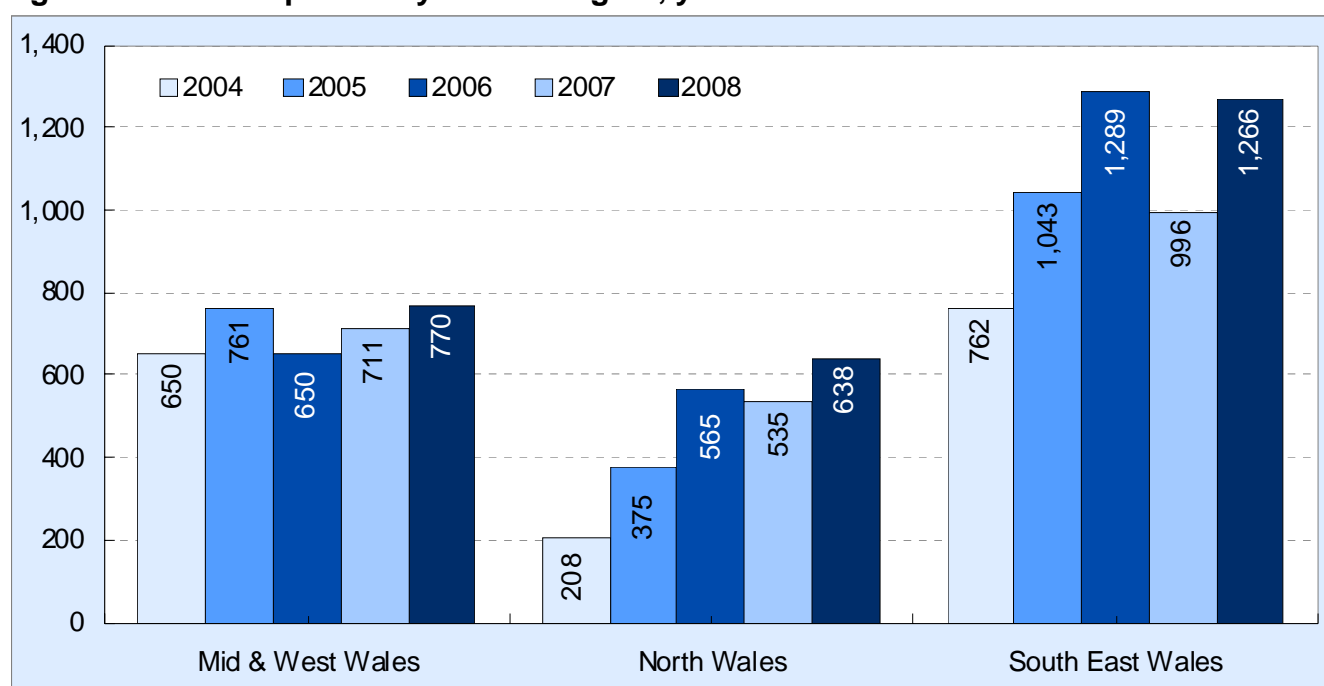


Table 8: Family Health Services, total complaints

	Year ended 31 March					% change ²
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2006-07 to 2007-08
Medical (GMPs):						
Mid & West Wales	538	554	488	490	533	9%
North Wales	151	259	371	382	522	37%
South East Wales	725	873	991	681	954	40%
Total:	1,414	1,686	1,850	1,553	2,009	29%
Dental (GDPs):						
Mid & West Wales	111	81	55	152	108	-29%
North Wales	46	64	125	93	68	-27%
South East Wales	37	70	198	151	175	16%
Total:	194	215	378	396	351	-11%
FHS administration						
Mid & West Wales	1	3	22	6	69	²
North Wales	11	2	8	11	14	²
South East Wales	0	1	19	19	44	²
Total:	12	6	49	36	127	²
LHB commissioned out-of-hours services¹						
Mid & West Wales	.	123	85	63	60	-5%
North Wales	.	50	61	49	34	-31%
South East Wales	.	99	81	145	93	-36%
Total:	.	272	227	257	187	-27%
Total complaints	1,620	1,907	2,504	2,242	2,674	19%

- less than 0.5%

. not applicable

¹ New arrangements for out-of-hours services were introduced from 1 October 2004 when Local Health Boards became responsible for commissioning such services.

² Relatively small changes in the number of complaints can generate large percentage changes.

Table 9: Family Health Services - complaints by Local Health Board, 2007-08

Local Health Board	FHS				Total	% of total
	Medical	Dental	admin	Out-of-hours services ¹		
Anglesey LHB ⁴	8	3	2	0	13	-
Blaenau Gwent LHB ²	15	2	0	0	17	1%
Bridgend LHB	0	0	0	0	0	-
Caerphilly LHB ²	22	7	2	8	39	1%
Cardiff LHB	331	83	14	20	448	17%
Carmarthenshire LHB	97	30	13	7	147	5%
Ceredigion LHB ³	58	17	2	1	78	3%
Conwy LHB ⁵	14	4	1	1	20	1%
Denbighshire LHB ⁵	5	3	1	1	10	-
Flintshire LHB	129	18	5	9	161	6%
Gwynedd LHB ⁴	5	9	2	22	38	1%
Merthyr Tydfil LHB ⁶	30	12	5	7	54	2%
Monmouthshire LHB ²	103	36	8	1	148	6%
Neath Port Talbot LHB	28	9	1	3	41	2%
Newport LHB ²	137	6	1	6	150	6%
Pembrokeshire LHB	51	12	52	5	120	4%
Powys LHB	98	5	1	19	123	5%
Rhondda Cynon Taff LHB ⁶	178	14	6	25	223	8%
Swansea LHB	201	35	0	25	261	10%
Torfaen LHB ²	39	9	4	3	55	2%
Vale of Glamorgan LHB	99	6	4	23	132	5%
Wrexham LHB	361	31	3	1	396	15%
Wales	2,009	351	127	187	2,674	100%
Subject % of total	75%	13%	5%	7%	100%	

- less than 0.5%

¹ New arrangements for out-of-hours services were introduced from 1 October 2004 when Local Health Boards became responsible for commissioning such services. Services are provided in a variety of ways but all written complaints received about the services have been included.

² Out-of-hours services provided by Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust but shown by LHB of residence for consistency purposes. When complaint involves non LHB resident, this is shown by commissioning LHB.

³ Out-of-hours services provided by Ceredigion & Mid Wales NHS Trust.

⁴ Out-of-hours service in Anglesey provided by Gwynedd LHB.

⁵ Out-of-hours service commissioned jointly by Conwy & Denbighshire LHBS but shown separately.

⁶ Out-of-hours service in Rhondda Cynon Taff and Merthyr Tydfil provided by Pontypridd & Rhondda NHS Trust; calls and triage handled separately. Complaints shown by LHB of residence for consistency purposes. When complaint involves non LHB resident, this is shown by commissioning LHB.

Table 10: Family Health Services - requests for independent review, 2007-08

	FHS				Pharmaceutical	Ophthalmic	Total
	Medical	Dental	admin	Out-of-hours			
WALES	54	13	4	1	1	1	74

¹ Not all requests for an independent review result in one being held

Of the 74 requests for an independent review, 2 were granted; at 31 March 2008, both reviews were still being pursued.

NOTES:

If you have any comments or require further information, please contact:

Mrs Deirdre Leigh, HSA, Welsh Assembly Government, Cathays Park, CARDIFF. CF10 3NQ.
Telephone: (029) 2082 5036 or e-mail: deirdre.leigh@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Details of what is collected on the complaints forms can be found on the internet at:

<http://www.wales.gov.uk/statistics>

KO41(A) Complaints about Hospital & Community Health services (for Trusts or LHBs) and
KO41(B) Complaints about Family Health Services

A copy of this statistical release can be found on the internet at:

<http://www.wales.gov.uk/statistics>

KEY QUALITY INFORMATION:

The KO41(A) return collects information about complaints relating to hospital and community health services (H&CHS), while the KO41(B) collects information about complaints relating to family health services (FHS).

New arrangements for out-of-hours services were introduced from 1 October 2004 when Local Health Boards became responsible for commissioning such services. Services are provided in a variety of ways but all written complaints received about the services have been included.