



Passionate
about
possibilities.

Independent Complaints Advocacy Service

Annual Report
2018-2019



*“It’s good to have someone to talk
your issue through with, when you
wish to make a complaint”*

Marie, Barnsley

About DIAL

DIAL is an information, advice and support organisation run by, and for, disabled people and carers in Barnsley. Established in 1985 from the belief that disabled people themselves are the 'experts' in understanding the needs of their peers and with a willingness to share that experience and knowledge. Since then, all our services have been developed in response to the needs and demands of our clients. We work to the social model of disability and attribute the success of our organisation to our ethos which is to:

See the person first

Today we remain an independent user-led organisation. We have built a reputation for providing high quality, professional services, whilst maintaining a friendly and down to earth approach. We work towards eliminating discrimination by raising awareness amongst the community of the abilities and rights of disabled people and by representing their views with local service planners and providers.

Our Vision is for a world that is truly inclusive

Our Mission is to support and empower disabled people, their families and carers to address poverty and social exclusion and improve their health and wellbeing

This is achieved through our aims:

- To improve access to financial inclusion of disabled people, their families and carers
- To reduce social isolation of disabled people, their families and carers
- To increase access to opportunities that reduce social exclusion for disabled people, their families and carers
- To increase the opportunities for disabled people, their families and carers to have healthy lifestyles

About the ICAS Service

The Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) is a free, independent advocacy service that can help people to make a complaint about any aspect of NHS or Social Services care or treatment, and to navigate the complex official complaints systems. This includes complaints regarding treatment and care in a private hospital or care home that is funded by the NHS.

Our model takes a person-centred approach to supporting people at different levels to meet their own determined needs by:

- Promoting self-help and enablement for those who just want information and advice to be more able to speak up for themselves
- Supporting those who want help to address their issue so that they are more in control over decisions and services that affect their lives
- Supporting those who need help to stand up and be heard
- Addressing related issues through internally referring to our other services or externally signposting thus adding value to the ICAS service

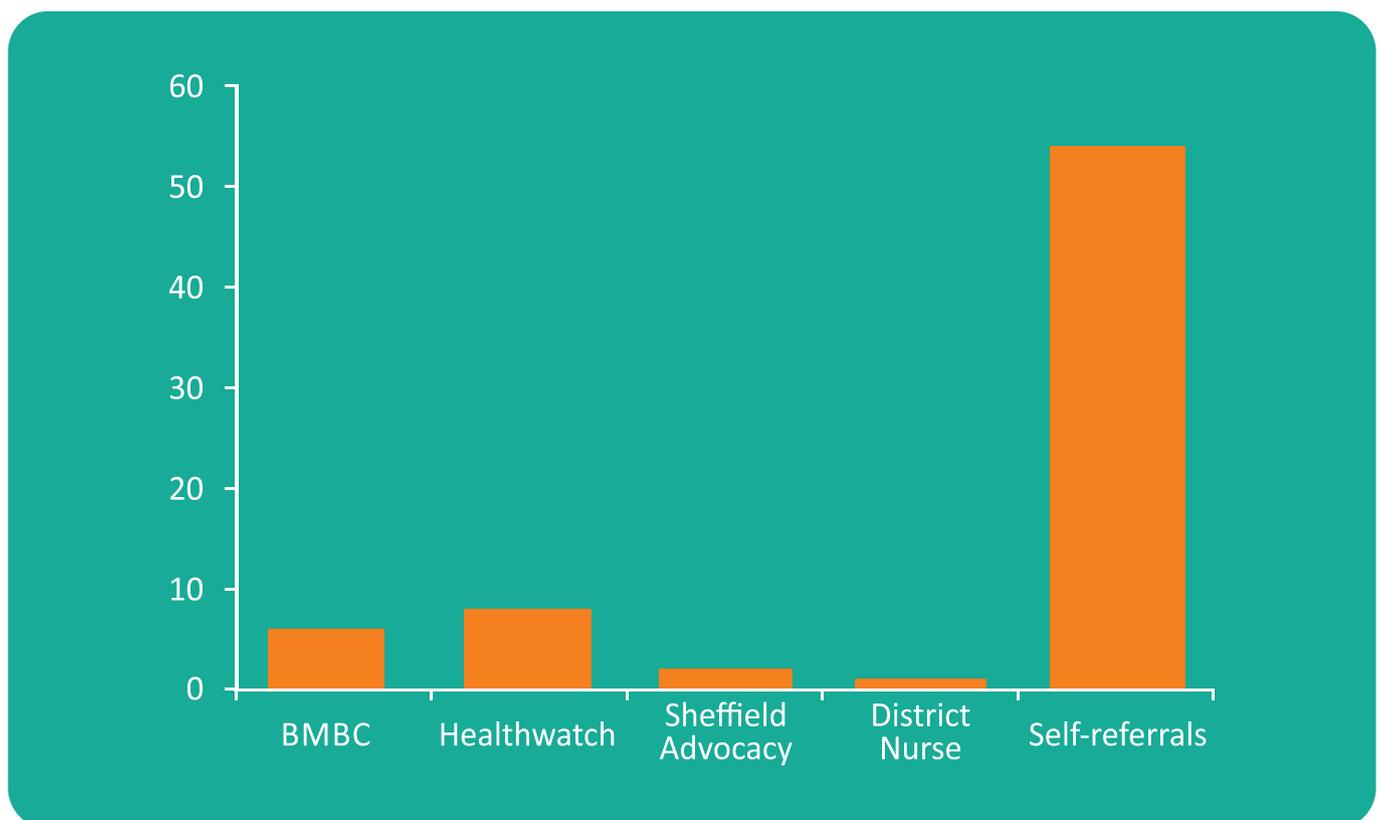
In 2018/19:

- **71** individual clients requested assistance to make an official complaint about services that they, or family members, had received.
- **37** have been closed during the period.
- **3** cases were inappropriately referred to the ICAS service and, after receiving face to face advice; one client chose not to pursue an official complaint.
- **30** cases are open and continuing through the investigation process.
- **4** of the clients who were supported had complaints involving more than one provider.

Referrals

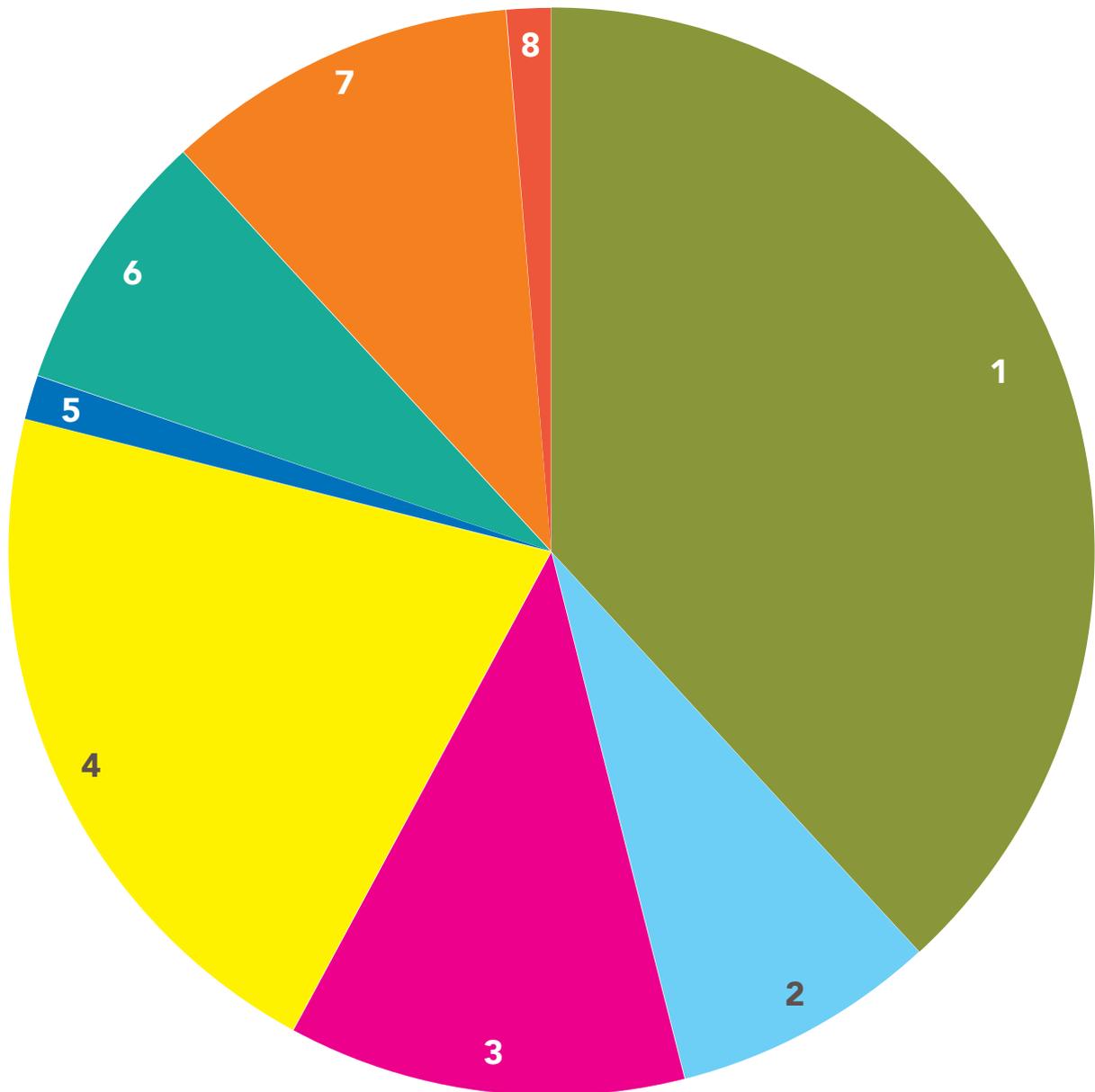
By the end of March 2019, ICAS received **71** individual referrals. Out of this number, **54** clients made self-referrals after obtaining information about ICAS from leaflets and posters in the community, from friends and family, or via the DIAL website.

Referral Routes	Qty
BMBC	6
Healthwatch	8
Sheffield Advocacy	2
District Nurse	1
Self-referrals	54



Graph showing complaint by organisation

Organisation	Qty
1. Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	29
2. Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Partnership Trust	6
3. General Practitioner	9
4. South West Yorkshire NHS Foundation Trust	16
5. NHS Medicar Transport	1
6. BMBC, Adult Social Services	6
7. BMBC, Children's Social Services/Disability Team	8
8. BMBC, Shared Lives	1



See table above for colour-coded chart segments

Monitoring and Evaluation

Of those clients who provided feedback on the ICAS provision:

- **93.3%** of clients rated the ICAS service they received as scoring 10 on a scale of 1-10 when asked how satisfied they were with this.
- **93.3%** of clients rated the ICAS service as having provided them with a positive experience in relation to resolving their complaint.
- **68%** of clients said that they now feel more confident in making a complaint independently about the NHS or Social Care.

"I was helped so much as I would not have known where to start to put a complaint together"

"Took away some of the strain of making a complaint. I was supported from start to finish"

"I felt so supported. It's good to have someone to talk it through when you wish to make a formal complaint"

ICAS Feedback Event

A total of 8 people attended our event held on 28th November 2018 at The Core in Barnsley. In attendance was a representative from Healthwatch Barnsley along with the ICAS Lead Advocate and Volunteer Advocate.

The aim of the event was to gather feedback on client experiences; and to identify any possible improvements to the ICAS provision. Clients were informed how their feedback would be used to develop the ICAS service in order to make any improvements. The Healthwatch representative outlined how both services link together to provide clients with a holistic response to their enquiries.



Plans for the Future

ICAS will be recruiting, and training, a number of new volunteer advocates during the coming months. Posts have been advertised at the time of writing this report.

ICAS plans to introduce a peer support group for current, and previous, clients. This will be based in a location in the town centre and will give clients an opportunity to share their experiences and gain mutual support from others who have had similar issues. It is planned that the volunteer advocated will be able to facilitate and support this group.

ICAS will continue to work closely with Healthwatch Barnsley to promote both services to the population of the Barnsley borough.



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