



Complaints about care services in Scotland, 2019/20 to 2024/25

A statistical bulletin

Published August 2025



**Keeping The Promise at
the heart of what we do**

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Executive summary

This statistical bulletin is the latest in our series on complaints about care services registered with the Care Inspectorate in Scotland. The report includes complaints received and investigated between April 2019 and March 2025, the six years over which our current complaints procedure and data collection system have been operating. The report focusses on the most recent year, from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

The statistics reflect how the Care Inspectorate actioned every complaint that it received using our risk-based assessment process to resolve complaints as quickly as possible for complainants.

Summary of main points

- We received 5,303 complaints in 2024/25, a 6% decrease on last year, the lowest for four years and a decreasing trend over the past six years (when the new digital system was introduced). The majority of this decrease is due to fewer complaints about care homes.
- We assess all complaints received to ensure that they are within the remit of the Care Inspectorate to investigate, to ensure we have sufficient information about the complaint and to ensure that the complainant wishes to proceed. If it is determined we cannot proceed, then these complaints are revoked. In 2024/25 we revoked 23% of complaints received, an increase from 22% in 2023/24.
- A total of 4,055 complaints were resolved using our four resolution pathways. In 46% of these, the information given to us by the complainant was provided to the inspector for that service to be used to inform and focus future scrutiny activity; 18% were resolved quickly by the service directly; in 14% we required the service to investigate via their own complaints procedure; 22% were deemed high risk and were investigated by the Care Inspectorate.
- We upheld 70% of the complaints where the Care Inspectorate conducted an investigation in 2024/25.
- As reported in previous years, we continue to receive and uphold more complaints about care homes for older people than for any other type of service – 69% of care homes for older people received at least one complaint, while 27% had at least one complaint upheld during 2024/25. As with previous years, specific healthcare issues such as nutrition, medication, hydration, tissue viability, continence care and inadequate care and treatment were the most frequent types of complaints upheld about care homes for older people during 2024/25.

Introduction

This statistical bulletin is the latest in our series on complaints about care services in Scotland. It presents data about complaints received and investigated over a six-year period between April 2019 and March 2025, focussing on the year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Care services operating in Scotland must be registered with the Care Inspectorate and there are currently 10,793 services on our register. The largest groups of care services in Scotland are children's daycare (for example, nurseries), childminders, care homes, care at home and housing support services.

We register, inspect and provide quality improvement support across these care services, aiming to ensure that the standard of care provided is high. Where standards fall below acceptable levels, we take enforcement action. Anyone who has concerns or is unhappy about a care service can complain directly to the Care Inspectorate. We have a complaints procedure which sets out how we handle each complaint raised with us.

External factors impacting these statistics

We introduced our current digital complaints system in March 2019. This change has improved the statistics we can present, but has disrupted longer-term trends. For this reason, we have limited the period covered by most of this report to the last six years to ensure meaningful comparisons which we can build on in future reports.

How we deal with complaints

Our complaints handling procedure is available on our website.

[How we deal with complaints about care \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com)

In summary, our complaints procedure is designed to be open, transparent, risk-based and focused on people's experiences. We aim to resolve simple matters quickly and focus our attention on more serious issues. This approach is based on complaint handling guidance from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, in its Model Complaints Handling Procedure. The aim of this model is to standardise and streamline complaints-handling procedures across all sectors. The guidance shows that complaints about a service are best resolved as close to the point of service delivery as possible. Therefore, our approach includes direct service action or investigation by the provider, where we encourage the service to resolve the complaints directly.

We use a risk assessment process that considers what else we know about the service, including findings from our regulatory activity, like inspections and intelligence logged from previous complaints, to help us decide how to proceed and what action we need to take to achieve the best outcome for people experiencing care.

Before we act on complaints, we assess them to ensure that they fall within our remit to investigate and that we have enough information to understand the substance of

the complaints raised. If the complainant has provided contact details, we clarify the substance of the complaint with them and get agreement that they wish us to proceed. If there is any reason we cannot proceed, the complaint is **revoked**, which means no further action is taken. All revoked complaints are still shared with the inspector of the service as intelligence. All complaints (including those that were revoked) are logged and included in the count of **complaints received**. We assess all complaints for any child or adult protection issues. We log and report any protection concerns to the relevant statutory body, for example, social work or Police Scotland. This means we revoke that element of the complaint.

Once we decide to proceed, there are four pathways we can take to reach a complaint resolution.

- **Intelligence:** where we record the information given to us and highlight it to the inspector for that service. This approach is only used for lower-risk complaints and/or complaints where we may not have enough information to proceed. This helps our inspectors develop a broad overview of complaints about a service, which in turn informs the timing and focus of our inspections. For example, additional intelligence from one or several complaints may result in the inspector bringing forward an inspection.
- **Direct service action:** where we contact the service and ask them to engage directly with the person making the complaint to resolve the complaint. Typically, this is used for straightforward matters where people are unsatisfied with their experiences, and we intervene quickly with a care service to achieve a positive outcome.
- **Investigation by the care provider:** where the risk assessment suggests the issue is suitable for the complaint to be investigated via the service's own complaints procedure. Where possible, we obtain consent to share the person's contact details with the service. We contact the service provider and require them to investigate and respond to the complaint, with a copy of their response sent to the Care Inspectorate.
- **Investigation by the Care Inspectorate:** where our risk assessment identifies more serious complaints, we conduct an investigation.

Digital complaints system

In March 2019, we introduced a digital complaints system, which is used to record complaints, including progress and outcomes. This recording system has resulted in improvements to the quality and definition of the data presented. As a result, we can provide a clear account of how complaints have been resolved using our pathways over the past six years.

How many complaints were received and how did we respond to them?

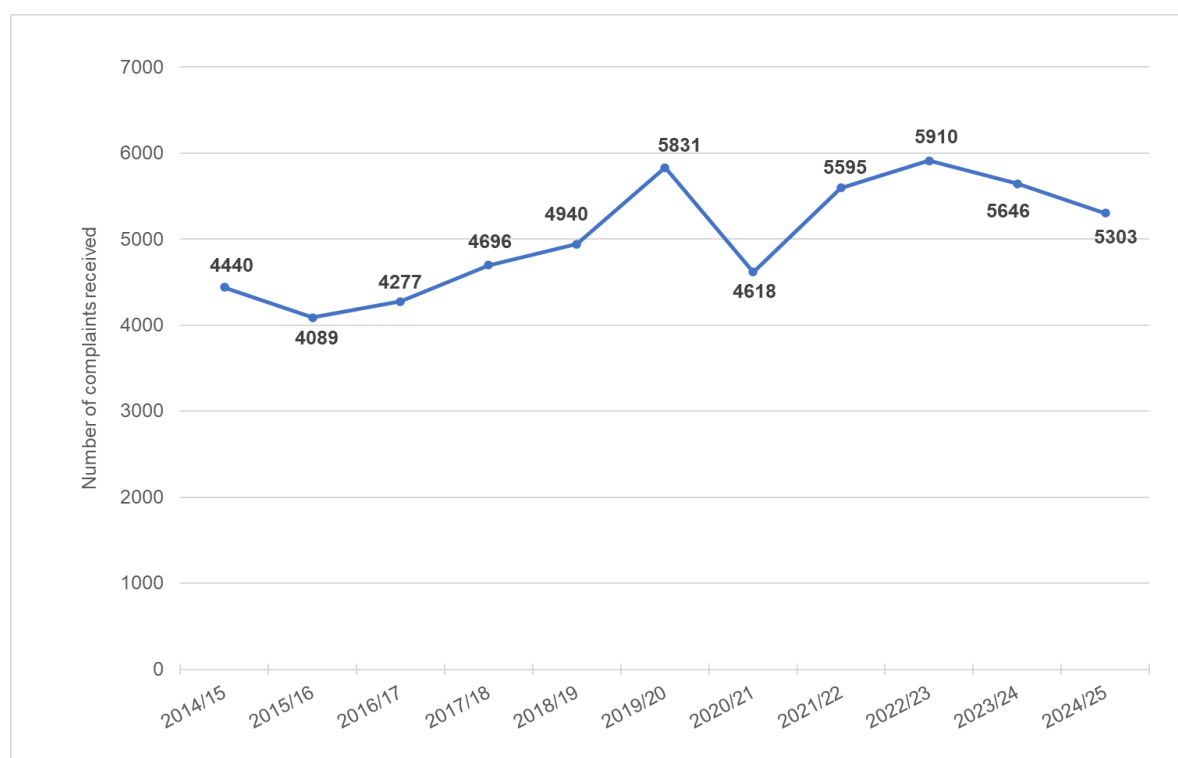
Complaints received

In 2024/25, we received 5,303 complaints about care services. This was a decrease of 343 (6%) compared with the previous year. While the longer-term trend is that the number of complaints has increased, it has been a decreasing trend over the past six years (when the new digital system was introduced). (see Figure 1).

The decrease in 2020/21 was due to the impact of the pandemic. For example, many services closed (particularly early learning and childcare services) before re-opening in 2021/22.

The 9% (-528 complaints) decrease over the last six years is mainly attributable to care homes. We received 380 (14%) fewer complaints about care homes in 2024/25 compared with 2019/20. Complaints received about care homes for older people, which accounted for over a third of complaints received in 2024/25, decreased over this period by 18%. There were also decreases across a number of other service types, including childminders, standalone support services and housing support services. A further breakdown of complaints received by care service type is provided in the Appendix (Table A).

Figure 1: Complaints received 2014/15 to 2024/25



Once we have confirmed that a complaint falls within our remit and have sufficient information to proceed, we undertake a risk assessment and determine the most appropriate resolution pathway. During 2024/25, we resolved 4,055 complaints, which can be broken down as follows:

- **Intelligence:** Use of the information given by the person making the complaint as intelligence about the service, to help inform future scrutiny activity and improvement support. For example, bringing forward a full, unannounced inspection of a service. In 2024/25, we resolved 1,868 (46% of all complaints resolved) as intelligence, a drop compared to 50% of all complaints resolved last year. Over the last six years, 52% of all complaints resolved have been resolved in this way.
- **Direct service action:** In 2024/25, 732 complaints (18% of all complaints resolved) were assessed as suitable to be resolved by the service directly and quickly, the same as last year. Over the last six years, 17% of all complaints resolved have been resolved in this way.
- **Investigation by the care provider:** In 2024/25 574 complaints (14% of all complaints resolved) were assessed as suitable for the complaint to be investigated via the service's complaints procedure, and we required the provider to investigate. This was an increase from the 11% of all complaints resolved last year. Over the last six years, 12% of all complaints resolved have been resolved in this way.
- **Investigation by the Care Inspectorate:** Where our initial assessment indicates a higher risk, we may decide that we need to conduct an investigation. In 2024/25, we completed investigations of 881 complaints (22% of all complaints resolved). This is an increase from the 20% of all complaints resolved last year. Over the last six years, 19% of all complaints resolved have been resolved in this way.

Revoked complaints

The gap between the complaints received and the complaints resolved is, in part, accounted for by complaints that are revoked, which means we take no further action. Some complaints will also have been received but may not necessarily be resolved in that year and remain unresolved by 31 March 2025.

Reasons to revoke a complaint include: the complaint not being within the remit of the Care Inspectorate to investigate, the complainant not wishing to proceed with the complaint, the complainant wishing to go through the service provider's complaints process, or criminal issues that are reported to other agencies. In the latter case, the complaint inspector will follow this up with relevant agencies and ensure the service takes action. All information from revoked complaints is shared with the lead inspector for the service as intelligence. We provide advice to complainants on the correct agency to take their complaint to, for example, the NHS or health and social care partnerships, and signpost people on how to do this.

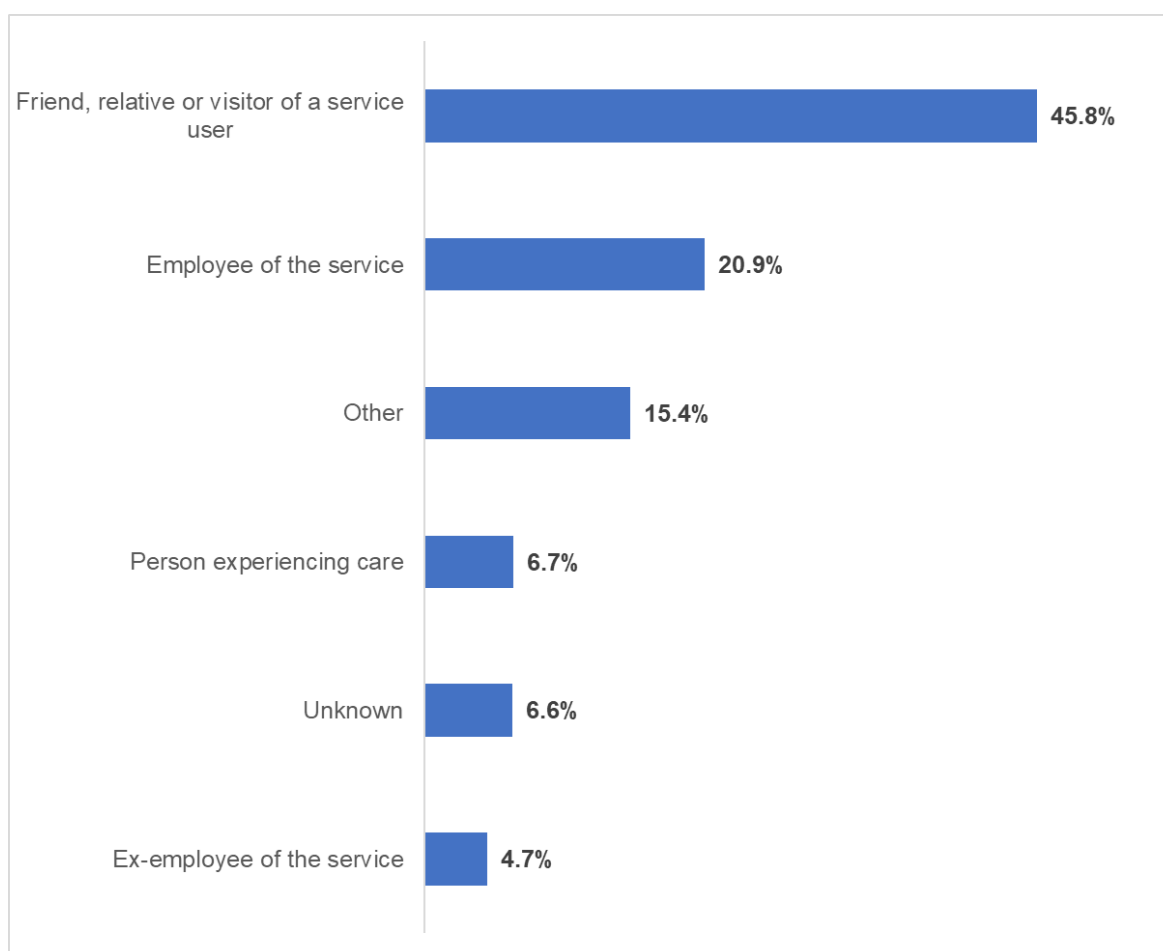
Of the 5,303 complaints received in 2024/25, by the end of the year, 1,216 were revoked (23% of all cases received, an increase from 22% last year).

Who makes complaints?

Figure 2 below shows the breakdown of all complaints received over the last six years by the relationship of the person making the complaint to the service.

Of all the complaints we received, 46% came from friends, relatives or visitors of people who experience care, with a further 26% from employees. This is made up of current employees (21%) or former employees (5%). Only 7% of complaints made came from people who experience care themselves. There has been minimal change in this over the last six years. Friends, relatives or visitors of people who experience care and employees of the service have consistently made the highest numbers of complaints. Friends, relatives and visitors continue to account for the majority of complainants, with over 50% of complaints received in 2023/24 and 49% in 2024/25. This was followed by employees of the service, who accounted for 18% in 2023/24, the same as in 2024/25.

Figure 2: Complaints received 2019/20 to 2024/25, by relationship to service



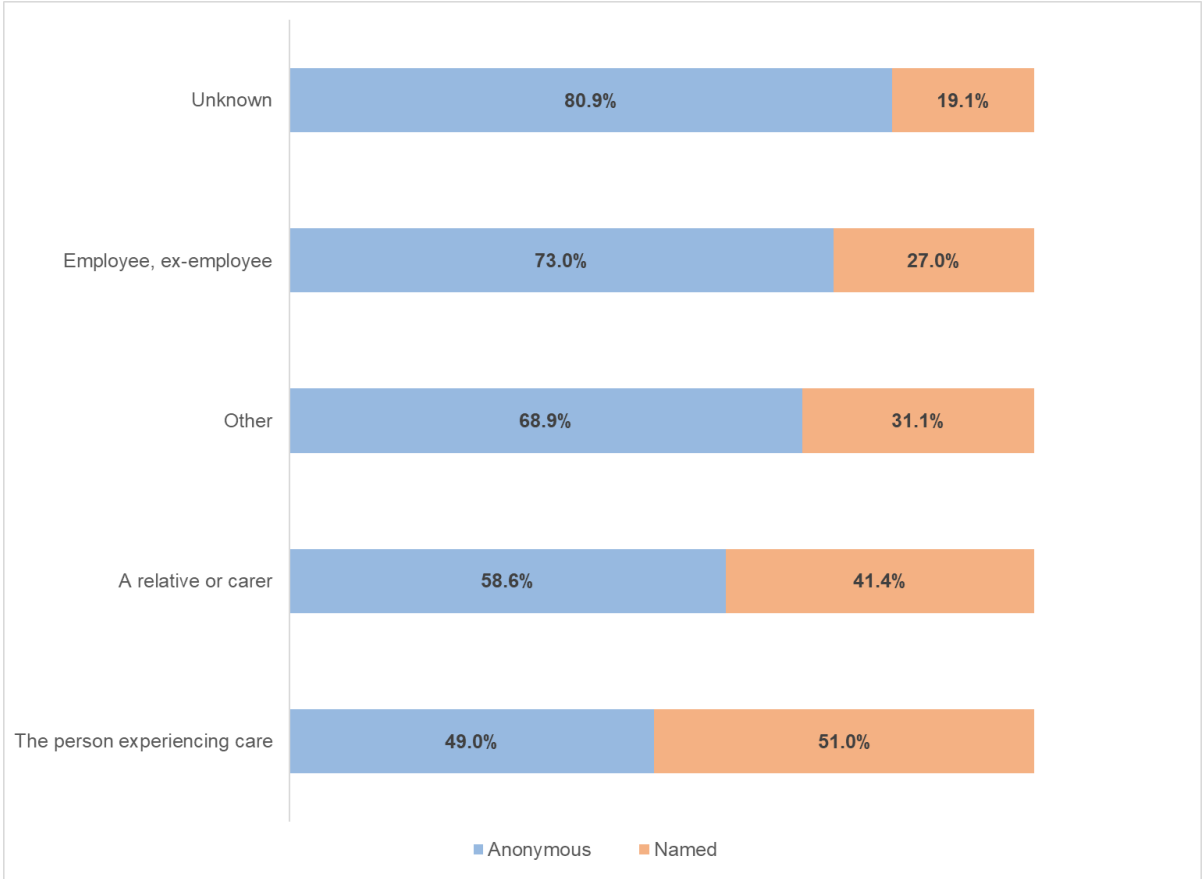
When someone makes a complaint, they can choose to remain completely anonymous. An anonymous complaint, where we cannot communicate or clarify complaints with the person raising the complaint, may limit our assessment of the complaint or any investigation we may undertake. Complainants can remain confidential, where we will not disclose their identity to the service complained against, but we can contact them if required.

The percentage of complaints received anonymously has increased since last year. 62% of all complaints received in 2024/25 compared to 61% in 2023/24. There was an increase in the proportion of employees and ex-employees wishing to remain anonymous (73% wished to remain anonymous in 2024/25 compared to 71% in 2023/24). Relatives and carers also increased, with 56% wishing to remain anonymous in 2024/25 compared to 55% the previous year. More people experiencing care wished to remain anonymous in 2024/25 (51%) than in 2023/24 (49%).

Given the difficulties in progressing anonymous complaints, we have added information to our public website to help complainants make informed decisions about whether they could progress their complaint confidentially. Additionally, during 2024/25, we put in place a process to inform service providers of all anonymous complaints submitted to us, allowing them to take responsive action to any themes identified from these. During inspections of services, we review the actions they have taken in response to all anonymous complaints received.

Figure 3 below shows the breakdown of anonymous complaints received over the last six years by the relationship of the person making the complaint to the service. Based on all the complaints received over this six-year period, the group most likely to remain anonymous was those whose relationship to the service was also unknown – 81% did not wish to be named. 73% of employees and ex-employees and 69% of ‘other’ complainant types wished to remain anonymous. In contrast, 51% of people who experienced care agreed to be named. It is important to note that in anonymous complaints, the relationship of the complainant to the service is based on the information provided by the complainant and is not verifiable by us.

Figure 3: Complaints received 2019/20 to 2024/25 that were anonymous, by relationship to service.

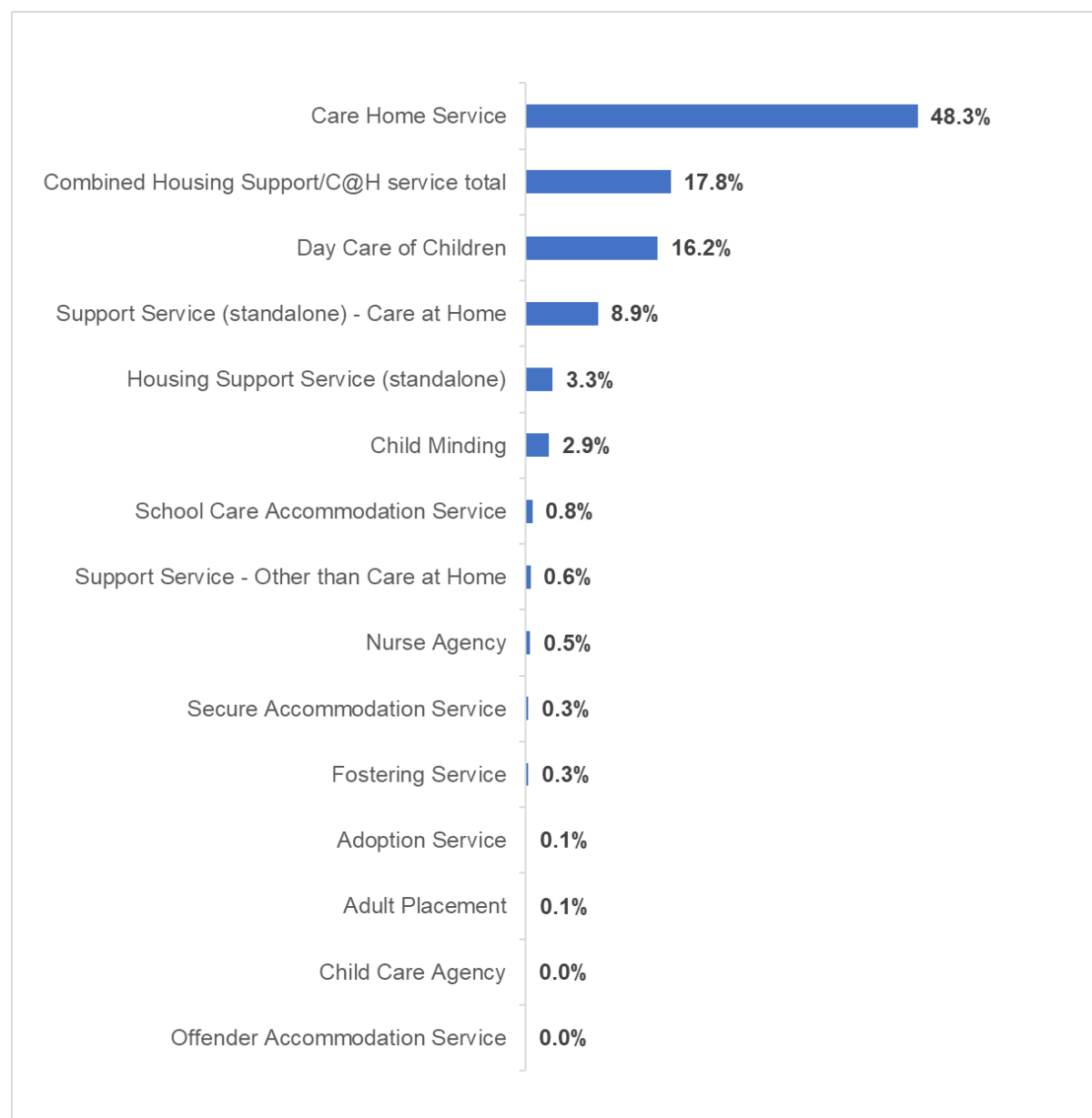


What type of care services do people complain about?

The largest number of complaints we received over the six-year period was about care homes. Although making up only 13% of the 10,793¹ registered services, care homes account for 48% of the total number of complaints received – we received a total of 15,882 complaints about care homes over the last six years.

Over the six years, 18% of the complaints received were about combined housing support and care at home services, 16% were about daycare of children services and 9% were about standalone care at home services.

Figure 4: Complaints received 2019/20-2024/25 by type of service



¹ Data source: Care Inspectorate service list register as of 31 March 2025.

What do people complain about?

When we investigate a complaint, we capture detailed information about what we investigated. Each complaint investigated can be about several different areas, each of which will be either upheld or not upheld.

In 2024/25, 33% of all areas of complaints upheld were about healthcare concerns in a service (for example, medication, nutrition or tissue viability), 12% were about wellbeing (stress/distress, developmental, emotional or social), 12% were about communication (either between staff and people experiencing care/relatives/carers or on information about the service) and 9% were about staff (such as staff levels, training or recruitment procedures). These have been a consistent top four over time. There is a more detailed list of areas of complaint in the Appendix (Table B and Table C).

Figure 5: All service types, by area of complaint for investigations conducted in 2024/25

Note: each overall complaint can have several areas of complaint – this table only includes those areas that were upheld.

Summary area of complaint	Number of areas of complaint upheld	% of all upheld areas of complaint
Healthcare	647	32.7%
Communication	242	12.2%
Wellbeing	237	12.0%
Staff	182	9.2%
Policies and procedures	161	8.1%
Choice	104	5.3%
Record keeping	97	4.9%
Environment	80	4.0%
Protection of people	75	3.8%
Food	47	2.4%
Privacy and dignity	45	2.3%
Property	28	1.4%
Access	12	0.6%
User participation	10	0.5%
Conditions of registration	5	0.3%
Equality	4	0.2%
Finance	2	0.1%

Complaints received – children and young people

Children and young people's services include care home services for children and young people, adoption, fostering, school care accommodation and secure accommodation services. In 2024/25, we received 304 complaints about these services, the majority of which (68%) were about care homes for children and young people. This 304 received was 6% of the complaints received across all service types during the year, staying consistent over the six-year period.

The volume of complaints received about care homes for children and young people increased by 6% (12 complaints) compared to last year, while we received an additional 27 complaints (9%) across all types of service for children and young people. While complaints received about secure accommodation services doubled since last year, only four required investigation and only one of these was upheld.

Figure 6: Complaints about children and young people's services received in 2024/25

Service type	Care service type	All complaints received 2024/25	All complaints received 2023/24
Children and young people services	Care home service for children and young people	206	194
	Schoolcare accommodation service	37	40
	Fostering service	10	20
	Secure accommodation service	42	19
	Adoption service	9	4
All care service types		304	277

Of the 304 complaints received about services for children and young people in 2024/25, 23% (69) came from an employee of the service, a decrease from 30% in 2023/24. Complaints received from relatives or carers increased from 25% (69) in 2023/24 to 36% (109) in 2024/25. The number of complaints made by young people themselves remains low. Only 6% of complaints about services for children and young people came directly from a young person in 2024/25, compared to 7% in 2023/24. We are continuing to monitor and raise the profile of our complaints procedure through our work on meeting The Promise and with our young volunteers.

Complaints about care homes for older people

In total, 37% (1,969) of the 5,303 complaints we received in 2024/25 were about care homes for older people, and this is consistently the service type we receive most complaints about.

The number of complaints about care homes for older people has decreased over the last six years. Over the same period, the number of registered places in care homes has also varied; therefore to make meaningful comparisons we have presented this as the rate of complaints per 1,000 registered places.

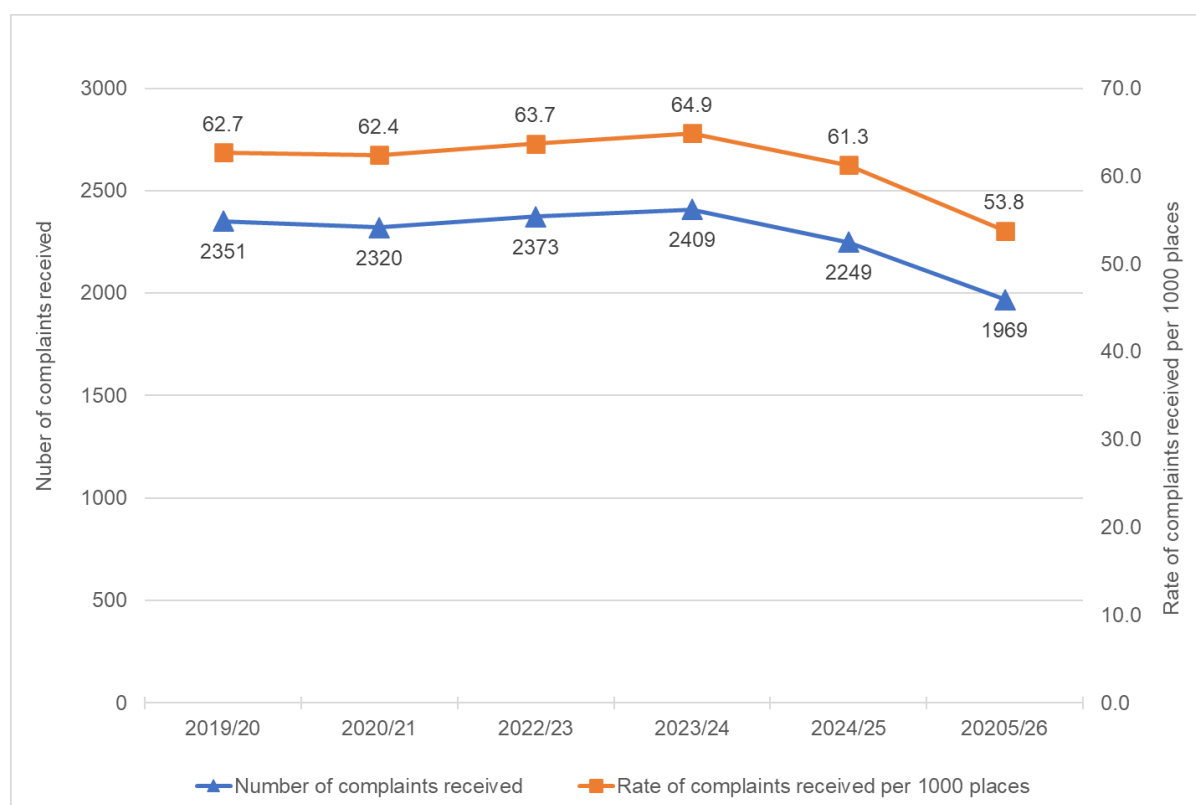
The rate of complaints received per 1,000 places in care homes for older people across Scotland was 53.8 in 2024/25. This is a decrease from 61.3 last year and is the lowest it has been over the six-year period examined in this report. (see Figure 7)

There was considerable variation in rate across geographical areas of Scotland – we have used services based in each local authority area to illustrate geographical variation.

- The local authority area with the highest rate per 1000 places in 2024/25 was Falkirk, which had a rate of 161.3, more than three times the rate across Scotland as a whole. This was due to the number of complaints received about one specific service, which accounted for 61% of complaints in the area.
- City of Edinburgh is the area with the most consistent low rates over the six-year period.
- The island areas of Scotland also tend to have low rates, although the small numbers of places mean that the rates fluctuate considerably, even if there is only a small change in the number of complaints.

A breakdown by local authority area, which includes the numbers received, is provided in the Appendix (Table D).

Figure 7: Number of complaints received about care home for older people and rate per 1000 places in Scotland 2019/20 to 2024/25



Over the year, we received at least one complaint about 69% of the 765 care homes for older people registered as of 31 March 2025.

During 2024/25, following our risk assessment process, we resolved 1,552 complaints about care homes for older people using the different pathways. This was a drop from 1,852 last year. These were as follows:

- **Intelligence:** In 2024/25, there were 770 complaints where the information given to us by the complainant was assessed and provided to the inspector for that service to be used to help inform future scrutiny activity. This was 50% of all complaints resolved – a drop from 52% last year (2023/24)
- **Direct service action:** In 2024/25, 194 complaints (12%, down from 14% last year) were able to be resolved by the service directly and quickly.
- **Investigation by the care provider:** In 2024/25, 198 complaints (13%, up from 12% last year) were suitable for the complaint to be investigated via the service's complaints procedure, and we required the provider to investigate
- **Investigation by the Care Inspectorate:** In 2024/25, 390 complaints (25%, up from 22% last year) were deemed serious enough for us to decide that we needed to conduct an investigation. A further breakdown by local authority area is provided in the Appendix (Table E).

Over the year, we conducted an investigation into at least one complaint in 33% of all care homes for older people and went on to uphold a complaint in 27%.

Of the care homes for older people that had a complaint upheld in 2024/25, 71% had one upheld complaint, 20% had two upheld complaints, and the remaining 9% had three or more upheld complaints during the year.

Most care homes for older people are operated by the private sector (77%) with the public sector providing 14% and the remaining 9% provided by voluntary organisations (Figure 8). Rates of complaints received and upheld are highest in the private sector: in 2024/25, we received at least one complaint about 75% of private sector care homes for older people and upheld a complaint about 32% of them (Figure 9).

Figure 8: Proportion of care homes for older people on 31 March 2025 – by sector

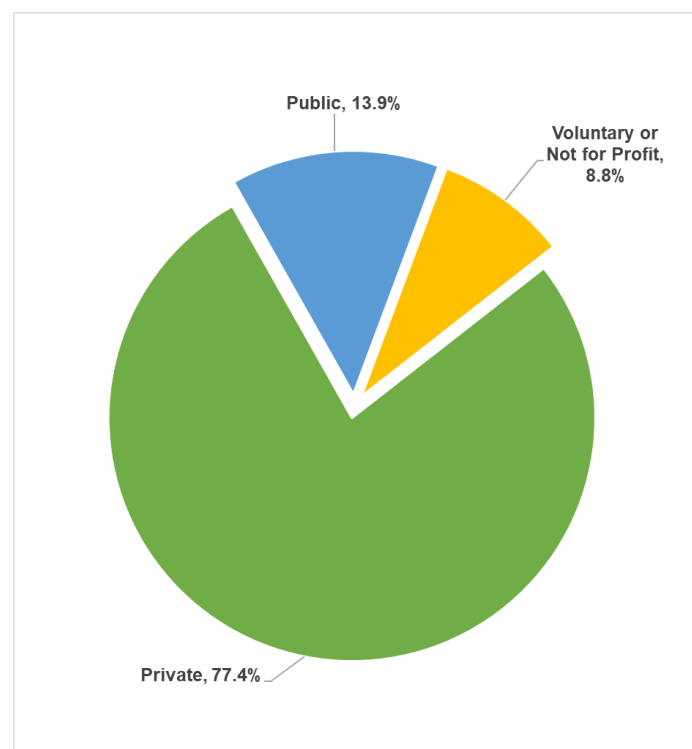
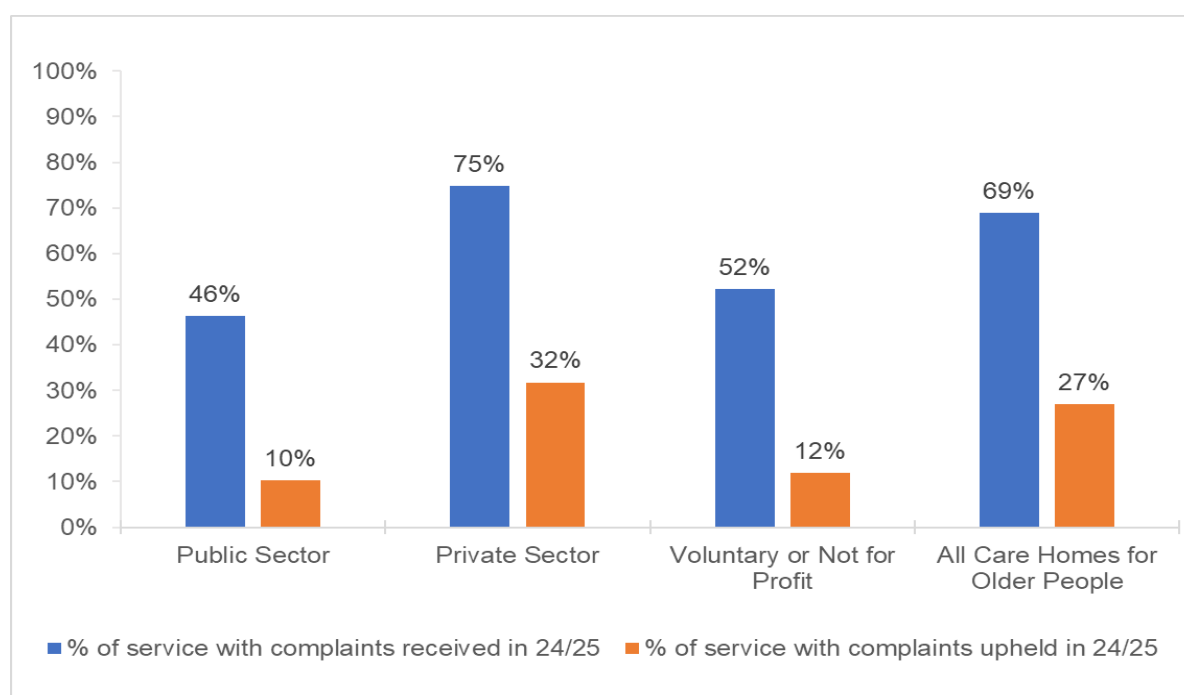


Figure 9: Care homes for older people on 31 March 2025 – % of services with a complaint received or upheld about them



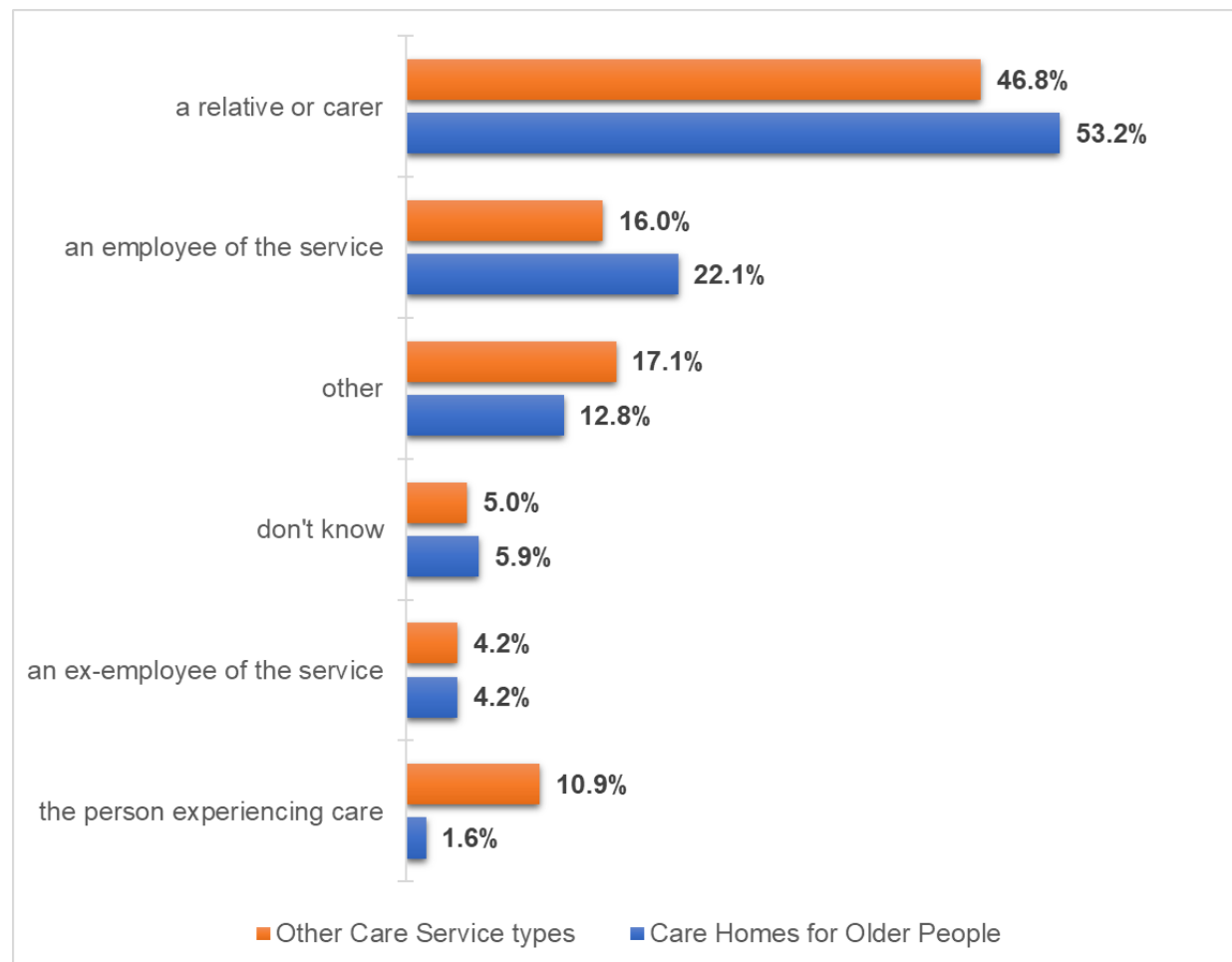
Further breakdown of areas of complaint about care homes for older people (Figure 10) shows that specific healthcare issues formed the largest group of complaints (40%). This includes complaints about nutrition, medication, tissue viability, continence care and inadequate care and treatment. This is consistently the case over time. Full details of this breakdown are in the Appendix (Table F) with a further breakdown by year (Table G).

Figure 10: Care homes for older people – by area of complaint 2024/25

Summary area of complaint	Number of areas of complaint upheld	% of all upheld areas of complaint
Healthcare	457	40.3%
Communication	123	10.8%
Staff	90	7.9%
Wellbeing	90	7.9%
Policies and procedures	69	6.1%
Environment	66	5.8%
Choice	61	5.4%
Protection of people	37	3.3%
Food	36	3.2%
Record keeping	34	3.0%
Privacy and dignity	32	2.8%
Property	24	2.1%
Access	9	0.8%
User participation	3	0.3%
Equality issues	2	0.2%
Conditions of registration	1	0.1%

In 2024/25, the majority of all complaints received about care homes for older people continued to be from relatives and carers of people living in the service: 53% compared to 47% for all other types of service (Figure 11). The proportion of complaints received from employees of the service was 6.1 percentage points higher for care homes for older people than for other service types. Only 2% of all complaints about care homes for older people were from people experiencing care, compared with almost 11% for all other types of service.

Figure 11: Complaints received 2024/25 by relationship of the person making the complaint – care homes for older people compared with all other complaints received



What we found when conducting investigations

Following our risk assessment process, we may, due to the nature and seriousness of the complaint, decide that an investigation is required. Once that investigation is complete, the inspector decides if the complaint should be upheld or not. Where we have investigated and found evidence that supports the complaint, the complaint will be upheld; otherwise the complaint will be not be upheld. It may be that one complaint contains many parts, which we call areas of complaint, each of which may be either upheld or not upheld.

When we uphold a complaint, we inform both the person making the complaint and the care service about any requirements or areas for improvement. Where a complaint is upheld and we make requirements, the complaint inspector follows this up by inspecting the service against the set requirements and produces a public inspection report.

Figure 12 below shows that in 2024/25, we upheld 70% of the investigations we conducted, which is a decrease from 73% last year. This proportion reflects, at least in part, our risk-based procedures. Complaints taken forward for investigation are those that are serious, about failings in care that have led to or are likely to lead to poor outcomes for an individual or individuals. As such, where proven, these are more likely to be upheld.

The percentage of complaints upheld varies by type of service, although percentages based on small numbers of complaints should be interpreted with caution. For those service types with more than 20 complaints investigated this year, the highest proportion of complaints upheld was about care homes for older people (79%). The next highest were all care home types (78%) and then combined housing support and care at home services (76%) (Figure 13).

Figure 12: The number of complaint investigations conducted by complaint outcome, 2019/20 – 2024/25

Complaint outcome	Year investigation conducted					
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Upheld	61%	76%	76%	76%	73%	70%
Not upheld	39%	24%	24%	24%	27%	30%

Figure 13: Percentage of complaints upheld by service type, 2024/25

Care service type	Number of complaints where investigation conducted	Number of complaints upheld	% of all complaints upheld
Adoption	0	0	
Adult placement	0	0	
Care home	438	343	78.3%
of which, care home for older people	390	308	79.0%
Childminding	34	14	41.2%
Daycare of children	170	90	52.9%
Fostering	2	2	*100.0%
Housing support (standalone service)	6	3	*50.0%
Nurse agency	2	1	*50.0%
Offender accommodation service	0	0	
School care accommodation	3	3	*100.0%
Secure accommodation	4	1	*25.0%
Support service (standalone) – care at home	75	52	69.3%
Support service (standalone) – other than care at home	2	1	*50.0%
Combined housing support and care at home service	145	110	75.9%
All care service types	881	620	70.4%

*Based on fewer than 20 investigations

Supporting improvement following complaints

Complaints give a valuable insight into how services are caring for the thousands of people who experience them every day. We realise that, for many people, making a complaint to us can be a big step and indicates that there is something not right that really matters to them.

We look carefully at all the information we receive from all complaints and decide the best way to proceed. Some issues raised with us are the responsibility of other organisations to look at, such as the Scottish Social Services Council or the Nursing and Midwifery Council. In such cases, we refer people to the appropriate organisation, ensuring we are clear why we think this is how their complaints will be best addressed.

Where we do investigate formally, the purpose is not just to establish the facts and determine whether the care provided was good enough, but also to seek to improve the quality of care provided for the person making the complaint and other people. It is essential that our investigations lead to meaningful change and improvements that provide positive outcomes for people experiencing care.

Following a complaint investigation where the complaint is upheld, our inspectors consider how we can support a service to make improvements. Depending on the seriousness of what we have found during our investigation, actions might include signposting to good practice, advising on an area for improvement, or making a requirement setting out what the service must do to improve and by when. Where requirements are given, the complaints inspector will follow this up within the given timescale, do a follow-up inspection against the requirements set, and publish an inspection report. We may re-evaluate the service as a result of an upheld complaint and might also consider whether we need to prioritise a full inspection of the service to look at any wider aspects of care.

Where the complaint identifies very serious complaints, we may issue a letter of serious concern, which we share with relevant partners such as local health and social care partnerships and directors of nursing to ensure services receive support for improvement. We may serve an improvement notice under Section 62 of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 if we are not satisfied that sufficient improvement is achieved and sustained.

A key part of our role is to work with services and providers collaboratively to support improvement. Our inspectors and quality improvement teams may spend time with care services and providers to build capacity and capability for improvement and help to make sure the experiences and outcomes for people are the best they can be.

Our assurance and quality improvement teams work in close collaboration to identify, prioritise, and respond to areas requiring improvement across care services. These areas are identified through a range of assurance activities, including inspections and complaints. By targeting the areas of greatest need, we ensure that our quality improvement interventions have the maximum possible impact.

In addition to ongoing programmes of work, we offer short-term consultancy—both internally and externally—to support early intervention and prevention.

Our [quality improvement and involvement strategy](#) sets out further detail of our programme of work.

Our quality improvement interventions include:

- Supporting providers at risk of, or during, enforcement through targeted quality improvement
- A national early learning and childcare quality improvement programme
- Care home improvement programme
- Stress and distress quality improvement programme in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland
- Our Health and Social Care Improvement Team provides targeted consultancy, averaging 65 engagements per month in aspects of health care identified through scrutiny such as pharmacy, nutrition, and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC). This work is shaped by themes emerging from inspection findings and complaint themes
- National and local targeted quality improvement collaboratives, working with groups of services to support improvement in identified areas, for example dementia care and the use of psychoactive medicines
- Get Confident with going confidential - The complaints team has been developing a campaign to encourage complainants to utilise the confidential option as opposed to being anonymous. Assessing anonymous complaints can be challenging as additional information cannot be gained or clarified. This campaign will be ongoing and is using social media platforms and poster displays within services.
- Project Reach - Following an analysis of complaint trends over a number of years, we identified a key opportunity to support the development of better complaints handling within the care home sector. From this, the complaints team developed an intervention to work alongside three national care home providers. The aim of this was to use an appreciative enquiry methodology to help co-create better complaints handling processes aligned to direct service action and investigation by the provider. From this, we aim to support the development of more robust complaints policies, and the application of these, helping to increase our confidence when complaints are managed in these ways

- Core Assurance - The complaints team continue to trial undertaking a broader view of the service when investigating a complaint. This is known as a core assurance inspection. When the complaints team complete this, they publish a public report outlining their findings
- Childminder inspections - The complaints team has initiated a test of change to complete a focused inspection within childminding services when a complaint investigation is required. This will enable the complaints team to review elements of care and support beyond the scope of the complaint, allowing us to provide greater public assurance on how well these services are operating.

Conclusion

This report has presented a range of statistical information from complaints about care services over the past six years. The statistics show the number of complaints received and how they have been resolved using our risk-based assessment process.

Our focus in all areas of our work, including complaints, is on improving the quality of care and outcomes for people who experience care services. We do this by resolving complaints quickly and by using all the intelligence we gather to focus our inspections as well as the wider scrutiny, assurance and improvement support work we carry out across all care services.

Summary of main points

- We received 5,303 complaints in 2024/25, a 6% decrease on last year, the lowest for four years and a decreasing trend over the past six years (when the new digital system was introduced). The majority of this is due to a decrease in complaints about care homes.
- We resolved a total of 4,055 complaints during 2024/25:
 - In 46%, the information given to us by the complainant was provided to the inspector for that service to be used to inform and focus future scrutiny activity and improvement support.
 - 18% were resolved by the service directly and quickly.
 - 14% were investigated through the service's own complaints procedure where we required the provider to investigate.
 - 22% were assessed as serious enough for us to decide that we needed to conduct an investigation.
- We upheld the majority of the complaints we investigated – 70% of investigations were upheld in 2024/25.
- As reported in previous years, we continue to receive and uphold more complaints about care homes for older people than for any other type of service – 69% of care homes for older people received at least one complaint while 27% had at least one complaint upheld during 2024/25. As with previous years, specific healthcare issues such as nutrition, medication, hydration, tissue viability, continence care and inadequate care and treatment were the most frequent types of complaints upheld about care homes for older people during 2024/25.

Appendix: Complaints about care services in Scotland, 2019/20 to 2024/25– Detailed tables

Table A: Complaints received by service type, 2019/20 to 2024/25

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		6-year total		% change comparing 2019/20 to 2024/25
Care service type	No. of complnt. received	% of complnt. received	No. of complnt. received	% of complnt. received	No. of complnt. received	% of complnt. received	No. of complnt. received	% of complnt. received	No. of complnt. received	% of complnt. received	No. of complnt. received	% of complnt. received	No. of complnt. received	% of complnt. received	
Adoption	3	0.1%	2	0.0%	1	0.0%	9	0.2%	4	0.1%	9	0.2%	28	0.1%	200.0%
Adult placement	3	0.1%	3	0.1%	2	0.0%	3	0.1%	5	0.1%	4	0.1%	20	0.1%	33.3%
Care home service	2718	46.6%	2629	56.9%	2747	49.1%	2814	47.6%	2636	46.7%	2338	44.1%	15882	48.3%	-14.0%
Child care agency	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.0%	0.0%
Childminding	244	4.2%	126	2.7%	142	2.5%	145	2.5%	146	2.6%	138	2.6%	941	2.9%	-43.4%
Daycare of children	850	14.6%	426	9.2%	857	15.3%	1084	18.3%	1076	19.1%	1049	19.8%	5342	16.2%	23.4%
Fostering	26	0.4%	10	0.2%	15	0.3%	13	0.2%	20	0.4%	10	0.2%	94	0.3%	-61.5%
Housing support (standalone)	266	4.6%	171	3.7%	152	2.7%	177	3.0%	162	2.9%	149	2.8%	1077	3.3%	-44.0%
Nurse agency	26	0.4%	29	0.6%	21	0.4%	31	0.5%	26	0.5%	33	0.6%	166	0.5%	26.9%
Offender accommodation	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
School care accommodation	67	1.1%	34	0.7%	27	0.5%	55	0.9%	40	0.7%	37	0.7%	260	0.8%	-44.8%
Secure accommodation	11	0.2%	9	0.2%	13	0.2%	19	0.3%	19	0.3%	42	0.8%	113	0.3%	281.8%
Support service (standalone) - care at home	509	8.7%	468	10.1%	598	10.7%	545	9.2%	435	7.7%	364	6.9%	2919	8.9%	-28.5%
Support service (standalone) – other than care at home	58	1.0%	10	0.2%	31	0.6%	30	0.5%	35	0.6%	26	0.5%	190	0.6%	-55.2%
Combined housing support and care at home service	1050	18.0%	700	15.2%	989	17.7%	985	16.7%	1041	18.4%	1104	20.8%	5869	17.8%	5.1%
All care service types	5831	100.0%	4618	100.0%	5595	100.0%	5910	100.0%	5646	100.0%	5303	100.0%	32903	100.0%	-9.1%

Table B: All service types by area of complaint, complaints upheld in 2024/25

Each complaint can have many areas, each of which has a separate outcome recorded. This table includes only those areas where the outcome was upheld.

Area of complaint	Detailed area of complaint	No. of upheld areas of complaint	% of all upheld areas of complaint
Healthcare	Healthcare > Inadequate healthcare or healthcare treatment	222	11.2%
	Healthcare > Medication issues	117	5.9%
	Healthcare > Continence care	67	3.4%
	Healthcare > Other	62	3.1%
	Healthcare > Nutrition	47	2.4%
	Healthcare > Hydration	37	1.9%
	Healthcare > Tissue viability	33	1.7%
	Healthcare > Infection control issues	21	1.1%
	Healthcare > Oral health	16	0.8%
	Healthcare > Palliative care	13	0.7%
	Healthcare > Clinical governance	6	0.3%
	Healthcare > Mental health care	6	0.3%
Wellbeing	Wellbeing > Other	122	6.2%
	Wellbeing > Emotional	49	2.5%
	Wellbeing > Social	28	1.4%
	Wellbeing > Developmental	20	1.0%
	Wellbeing > Behaviour	10	0.5%
	Wellbeing > Visiting	8	0.4%
Communication	Communication > Between staff and service users/relatives/carers	217	11.0%
	Communication > Other	13	0.7%
	Communication > Information about the service	10	0.5%
	Communication > Language difficulties	2	0.1%
Staff	Staff > Levels	69	3.5%
	Staff > Training / qualifications	66	3.3%
	Staff > Other	23	1.2%
	Staff > Other fitness issues	18	0.9%
	Staff > Recruitment procedures (including disclosure checks)	5	0.3%
	Staff > Registration with professional bodies	1	0.1%
Policies and Procedures	Policies and procedures > Complaints procedure	112	5.7%
	Policies and procedures > Other	49	2.5%
Choice	Choice > Care and treatment	53	2.7%
	Choice > Activities	21	1.1%
	Choice > Dignity and privacy	20	1.0%
	Choice > Other	9	0.5%
	Choice > Service not meeting religious, cultural, faith or social needs	1	0.1%

Table B: All service types by area of complaint, complaints upheld in 2024/25 (cont.)

Area of complaint	Detailed area of complaint	No. of upheld areas of complaint	% of all upheld areas of complaint
Protection of people	Protection of people > Adults	52	2.6%
	Protection of people > Children	12	0.6%
	Protection of people > Policies and procedures	7	0.4%
	Protection of people > Restraint	3	0.2%
	Protection of people > Other	1	0.1%
Record keeping	Record keeping > Personal plans/ agreements	66	3.3%
	Record keeping > Other	31	1.6%
Property	Property > Loss of/missing	16	0.8%
	Property > Care of	10	0.5%
	Property > Other	2	0.1%
Privacy and dignity	Privacy and dignity > Privacy and dignity	45	2.3%
Environment	Environment > Fitness of premises / environment	36	1.8%
	Environment > Inadequate facilities	21	1.1%
	Environment > Other	15	0.8%
	Environment > Security	8	0.4%
Food	Food > Other	17	0.9%
	Food > Quality	13	0.7%
	Food > Choice	10	0.5%
	Food > Availability	7	0.4%
User participation	User participation > Other	10	0.5%
Conditions of registration	Conditions of registration > Other	3	0.2%
	Conditions of registration > Exceeding capacity	2	0.1%
Financial issues	Financial issues > Financial issues	2	0.1%
Access	Access > To other services e.g. advocacy/health	10	0.5%
	Access > Other	2	0.1%
Equality issues	Equality issues > Equality issues	4	0.2%

Table C: Number and % of complaint investigations that were upheld, by area of complaint and type of care service 2024/25.

	Care home service		Childminding		Daycare of children		Fostering service		Housing support service (standalone)		Nurse Agency		School care accommodation service		Secure accommodation service		Support service (standalone) - care at home		Support service (standalone) – other than care at home		Combined housing support/care at home service	
Detailed area of complaint	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Healthcare > Inadequate healthcare or healthcare treatment	167	8.4%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	15	0.8%		0.0%	38	1.9%
Healthcare > Medication issues	61	3.1%		0.0%	4	0.2%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	17	0.9%		0.0%	33	1.7%
Healthcare > Continence care	44	2.2%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	8	0.4%		0.0%	13	0.7%
Healthcare > Other	47	2.4%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	3	0.2%		0.0%	10	0.5%
Healthcare > Nutrition	41	2.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%	4	0.2%
Healthcare > Hydration	34	1.7%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	2	0.1%
Healthcare > Tissue viability	27	1.4%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%	4	0.2%
Healthcare > Infection control issues	11	0.6%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	4	0.2%		0.0%	4	0.2%
Healthcare > Oral health	16	0.8%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Healthcare > Palliative care	13	0.7%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Healthcare > Clinical governance	6	0.3%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Healthcare > Mental health care	4	0.2%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%
Wellbeing > Other	57	2.9%	3	0.2%	33	1.7%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	10	0.5%		0.0%		0.0%
Wellbeing > Emotional	18	0.9%	3	0.2%	21	1.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%
Wellbeing > Social	23	1.2%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	17	0.9%
Wellbeing > Developmental	11	0.6%	2	0.1%	4	0.2%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%		0.0%	5	0.3%
Wellbeing > Behaviour	7	0.4%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	5	0.3%
Wellbeing > Visiting		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	4	0.2%		0.0%		0.0%

Table C: Number and % of complaint investigations that were upheld, by area of complaint and type of care service 2024/25.

	Care home service		Childminding		Daycare of children		Fostering service		Housing support service (standalone)		Nurse Agency		School care accommodation service		Secure accommodation service		Support service (standalone) - care at home		Support service (standalone) – other than care at home		Combined housing support/care at home service	
Detailed area of complaint	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Communication > Between staff and service users/relatives/carers	114	5.8%	3	0.2%	29	1.5%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	22	1.1%		0.0%	45	2.3%
Communication > Other	11	0.6%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Communication > Information about the service	4	0.2%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	4	0.2%
Communication > Language difficulties	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%
Staff > Levels	51	2.6%		0.0%	7	0.4%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	10	0.5%
Staff > Training / qualifications	39	2.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	7	0.4%		0.0%	18	0.9%
Staff > Other fitness issues	9	0.5%	1	0.1%	6	0.3%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%
Staff > Other	3	0.2%	1	0.1%	6	0.3%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	4	0.2%		0.0%	9	0.5%
Staff > Recruitment procedures (including disclosure checks)	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	3	0.2%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Staff > Registration with professional bodies		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Policies and procedures > Complaints procedure	54	2.7%		0.0%	5	0.3%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	16	0.8%		0.0%	36	1.8%
Policies and procedures > Other	19	1.0%	4	0.2%	13	0.7%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	3	0.2%		0.0%	8	0.4%
Environment > Fitness of premises / environment	33	1.7%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Environment > Inadequate facilities	20	1.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Environment > Other	10	0.5%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	3	0.2%
Environment > Security	4	0.2%		0.0%	3	0.2%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%
Record keeping > Personal plans/ agreements	27	1.4%	2	0.1%	6	0.3%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	8	0.4%		0.0%	21	1.1%
Record keeping > Other	12	0.6%	1	0.1%	10	0.5%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	4	0.2%		0.0%	2	0.1%

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Detailed area of complaint	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Choice > Care and treatment	28	1.4%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	5	0.3%		0.0%	20	1.0%
Choice > Activities	18	0.9%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	3	0.2%
Choice > Dignity and privacy	12	0.6%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	3	0.2%		0.0%	5	0.3%
Choice > Other	4	0.2%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	4	0.2%
Choice > Service not meeting religious, cultural, faith or social needs	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Protection of people > Adults	36	1.8%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	14	0.7%
Protection of people > Children	4	0.2%		0.0%	3	0.2%	3	0.2%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Protection of people > Policies and procedures	5	0.3%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Protection of people > Restraint	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Protection of people > Other	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Food > Other	10	0.5%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	5	0.3%
Food > Quality	11	0.6%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Food > Choice	9	0.5%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Food > Availability	7	0.4%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Privacy and dignity > Privacy and dignity	33	1.7%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	5	0.3%		0.0%	5	0.3%
Property > Loss of/missing	14	0.7%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%
Property > Care of	10	0.5%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Property > Other	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%

Table C: Number and % of complaint investigations that were upheld, by area of complaint and type of care service 2024/25.

	Care home service		Childminding		Daycare of children		Fostering service		Housing support service (standalone)		Nurse Agency		School care accommodation service		Secure accommodation service		Support service (standalone) - care at home		Support service (standalone) – other than care at home		Combined housing support/care at home service	
Detailed area of complaint	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Access > To other services e.g. advocacy/health	8	0.4%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Access > Other	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%
User participation > Other	4	0.2%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%	4	0.2%
Conditions of registration > Other	2	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Conditions of registration > Exceeding capacity		0.0%	2	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Equality issues > Equality issues	2	0.1%		0.0%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Financial issues > Financial issues		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%

Table D: Rate (per 1000 registered places in care homes for older people) and number of complaints received about care homes for older people, by local authority area. 2019/20 to 2024/25

Note: Local authority areas where fewer than six complaints were received have been suppressed to maintain anonymity.

	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23			2023/24			2024/25		
Local Authority area	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places
Aberdeen City	66	1344	49.1	81	1336	60.6	79	1316	60.0	68	1400	48.6	70	1372	51.0	54	1371	39.4
Aberdeenshire	75	1748	42.9	68	1683	40.4	92	1672	55.0	119	1660	71.7	100	1611	62.1	61	1556	39.2
Angus	80	1070	74.8	98	1068	91.8	86	1067	80.6	98	1051	93.2	89	1049	84.8	88	1018	86.4
Argyll & Bute	54	502	107.6	32	503	63.6	29	564	51.4	23	523	44.0	43	515	83.5	30	515	58.3
City of Edinburgh	169	3171	53.3	149	3079	48.4	142	3042	46.7	133	3005	44.3	84	3000	28.0	74	2856	25.9
Clackmannanshire	12	282	42.6	21	282	74.5	21	282	74.5	8	282	28.4	20	282	70.9	19	280	67.9
Dumfries & Galloway	73	1050	69.5	108	1050	102.9	96	1005	95.5	92	1038	88.6	111	1040	106.7	73	1041	70.1
Dundee City	54	1046	51.6	68	1028	66.1	48	1005	47.8	85	1005	84.6	60	948	63.3	59	948	62.2
East Ayrshire	65	887	73.3	67	880	76.1	52	880	59.1	48	851	56.4	52	851	61.1	54	850	63.5
East Dunbartonshire	82	895	91.6	90	840	107.1	66	840	78.6	101	920	109.8	47	920	51.1	28	923	30.3
East Lothian	41	671	61.1	31	724	42.8	22	711	30.9	43	781	55.1	81	761	106.4	35	782	44.8
East Renfrewshire	46	735	62.6	37	769	48.1	44	603	73.0	41	603	68.0	37	670	55.2	28	670	41.8
Falkirk	52	953	54.6	58	962	60.3	82	962	85.2	65	962	67.6	100	957	104.5	154	955	161.3
Fife	228	2990	76.3	162	2950	54.9	259	2950	87.8	219	2945	74.4	190	2980	63.8	170	3069	55.4
Glasgow City	254	4178	60.8	270	4150	65.1	236	4123	57.2	211	4016	52.5	234	3935	59.5	245	4024	60.9
Highland	92	1782	51.6	97	1774	54.7	91	1858	49.0	93	1777	52.3	82	1670	49.1	105	1644	63.9
Inverclyde	38	735	51.7	44	688	64.0	45	688	65.4	45	688	65.4	28	683	41.0	24	683	35.1
Midlothian	39	555	70.3	41	523	78.4	46	523	88.0	43	523	82.2	38	523	72.7	12	512	23.4
Moray	48	584	82.2	36	584	61.6	21	584	36.0	35	588	59.5	36	587	61.3	25	586	42.7
Na h-Eileanan Siar	9	214	42.1	5	214	23.4	<5	214	-	11	214	51.4	<5	210	-	<5	210	-
North Ayrshire	61	1002	60.9	52	942	55.2	69	954	72.3	64	939	68.2	67	894	74.9	66	906	72.8

Table D: Rate (per 1000 registered places in care homes for older people) and number of complaints received about care homes for older people, by local authority area. 2019/20 to 2024/25 (cont.)

	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23			2023/24			2024/25		
Local Authority area	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places	No. of complaint received	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint received per 1000 places
North Lanarkshire	95	1718	55.3	98	1719	57.0	120	1719	69.8	110	1697	64.8	80	1656	48.3	72	1655	43.5
Orkney Islands	<5	110	-		109	0.0	<5	109	-	<5	109	-	<5	109	-	<5	109	-
Perth & Kinross	73	1330	54.9	70	1329	52.7	96	1375	69.8	92	1339	68.7	89	1339	66.5	71	1396	50.9
Renfrewshire	82	1387	59.1	98	1407	69.7	83	1462	56.8	106	1462	72.5	117	1422	82.3	125	1422	87.9
Scottish Borders	63	739	85.3	68	746	91.2	54	747	72.3	60	748	80.2	64	746	85.8	34	746	45.6
Shetland Islands	<5	149	-		149	0.0	<5	149	-	<5	149	-	<5	149	-		149	0.0
South Ayrshire	108	1111	97.2	77	1107	69.6	65	1155	56.3	79	1204	65.6	76	1201	63.3	55	1197	45.9
South Lanarkshire	165	2525	65.3	164	2521	65.1	184	2483	74.1	162	2482	65.3	130	2390	54.4	104	2306	45.1
Stirling	39	546	71.4	35	546	64.1	24	625	38.4	15	607	24.7	28	672	41.7	24	674	35.6
West Dunbartonshire	31	647	47.9	40	665	60.2	27	665	40.6	48	648	74.1	43	648	66.4	43	622	69.1
West Lothian	55	861	63.9	55	861	63.9	86	920	93.5	89	920	96.7	43	920	46.7	31	956	32.4

Table E: Rate (per 1000 registered places in care homes for older people) and number of complaint investigations completed by the Care Inspectorate for care homes for older people, by local authority area. 2019/20 to 2024/25

Note: Local authority areas where fewer than six complaint investigations have been completed have been suppressed to maintain anonymity.

	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23			2023/24			2024/25		
Local Authority area	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places
Aberdeen City	17	1344	12.6	8	1336	6.0	11	1316	8.4	17	1400	12.1	13	1372	9.5	12	1371	8.8
Aberdeenshire	8	1748	4.6	<5	1683	-	6	1672	3.6	12	1660	7.2	22	1611	13.7	11	1556	7.1
Angus	19	1070	17.8	7	1068	6.6	20	1067	18.7	16	1051	15.2	18	1049	17.2	19	1018	18.7
Argyll & Bute	8	502	15.9	<5	503	2.0	5	564	8.9	<5	523	-	<5	515	-	<5	515	7.8
City of Edinburgh	39	3171	12.3	10	3079	3.2	16	3042	5.3	27	3005	9.0	22	3000	7.3	19	2856	6.7
Clackmannanshire	<5	282	-		282	0.0	<5	282	-	<5	282	-	<5	282	-	<5	280	-
Dumfries & Galloway	17	1050	16.2	<5	1050	-	11	1005	10.9	6	1038	5.8	9	1040	8.7	12	1041	11.5
Dundee City	10	1046	9.6	9	1028	8.8	12	1005	11.9	17	1005	16.9	19	948	20.0	19	948	20.0
East Ayrshire	10	887	11.3	<5	880	-	<5	880	-	9	851	10.6	10	851	11.8	7	850	8.2
East Dunbartonshire	16	895	17.9	<5	840	-	9	840	10.7	9	920	9.8	9	920	9.8	7	923	7.6
East Lothian	5	671	7.5	<5	724	-	5	711	7.0	6	781	7.7	15	761	19.7	9	782	11.5
East Renfrewshire	9	735	12.2	<5	769	-	<5	603	-	<5	603	-	<5	670	-	6	670	9.0
Falkirk	6	953	6.3	<5	962	-	11	962	11.4	12	962	12.5	15	957	15.7	22	955	23.0
Fife	59	2990	19.7	13	2950	4.4	26	2950	8.8	50	2945	17.0	42	2980	14.1	44	3069	14.3
Glasgow City	38	4178	9.1	23	4150	5.5	30	4123	7.3	36	4016	9.0	35	3935	8.9	37	4024	9.2
Highland	18	1782	10.1	7	1774	3.9	8	1858	4.3	11	1777	6.2	<5	1670	-	23	1644	14.0
Inverclyde	13	735	17.7	<5	688	-	5	688	7.3	6	688	8.7	<5	683	-	7	683	10.2
Midlothian	10	555	18.0	7	523	13.4	8	523	15.3	7	523	13.4	7	523	13.4	<5	512	-
Moray	13	584	22.3	<5	584	-	<5	584	-	5	588	8.5	7	587	11.9	<5	586	-
Na h-Eileanan Siar	<5	214	-	<5	214	-	<5	214	-	<5	214	-		210	0.0		210	0.0

Table E: Rate (per 1000 registered places in care homes for older people) and number of complaint investigations completed by the Care Inspectorate for care homes for older people, by local authority area. 2019/20 to 2024/25 (cont.)

	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23			2023/24			2024/25		
Local Authority area	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places	No. of complaint investgate complete	No. of registered places available	Rate of complaint investgate complete per 1000 places
North Ayrshire	10	1002	10.0		942	0.0	11	954	11.5	14	939	14.9	8	894	8.9	9	906	9.9
North Lanarkshire	11	1718	6.4	11	1719	6.4	16	1719	9.3	20	1697	11.8	18	1656	10.9	21	1655	12.7
Orkney Islands		110	0.0	<5	109	-		109	0.0		109	0.0		109	0.0		109	0.0
Perth & Kinross	12	1330	9.0	7	1329	5.3	14	1375	10.2	11	1339	8.2	28	1339	20.9	18	1396	12.9
Renfrewshire	6	1387	4.3	7	1407	5.0	9	1462	6.2	11	1462	7.5	15	1422	10.5	16	1422	11.3
Scottish Borders	10	739	13.5	5	746	6.7	<5	747	-	6	748	8.0	10	746	13.4	7	746	9.4
Shetland Islands		149	0.0		149	0.0		149	0.0		149	0.0	<5	149	-		149	0.0
South Ayrshire	27	1111	24.3	<5	1107	-	8	1155	6.9	9	1204	7.5	18	1201	15.0	11	1197	9.2
South Lanarkshire	30	2525	11.9	7	2521	2.8	36	2483	14.5	26	2482	10.5	27	2390	11.3	17	2306	7.4
Stirling	9	546	16.5	<5	546	-	<5	625	-	5	607	8.2	5	672	7.4	6	674	8.9
West Dunbartonshire	6	647	9.3	<5	665	-	<5	665	-	11	648	17.0	7	648	10.8	8	622	12.9
West Lothian	9	861	10.5	<5	861	-	17	920	18.5	14	920	15.2	9	920	9.8	7	956	7.3

Table F: Care homes for older people, complaints upheld in 2024/25 by area of complaint

Note: each overall complaint can have several areas - this table only includes those areas that were upheld.

Area of complaint	Detailed area of complaint	No. of upheld complaints	% of upheld complaints
Healthcare	Healthcare > Inadequate healthcare or healthcare treatment	163	14.4%
	Healthcare > Medication issues	59	5.2%
	Healthcare > Other	45	4.0%
	Healthcare > Continence care	43	3.8%
	Healthcare > Nutrition	40	3.5%
	Healthcare > Hydration	33	2.9%
	Healthcare > Tissue viability	26	2.3%
	Healthcare > Oral health	15	1.3%
	Healthcare > Palliative care	13	1.1%
	Healthcare > Infection control issues	10	0.9%
	Healthcare > Clinical governance	6	0.5%
	Healthcare > Mental health care	4	0.4%
Communication	Communication > Between staff and service users/relatives/carers	108	9.5%
	Communication > Other	11	1.0%
	Communication > Information about the service	3	0.3%
	Communication > Language difficulties	1	0.1%
Wellbeing	Wellbeing > Other	51	4.5%
	Wellbeing > Social	23	2.0%
	Wellbeing > Emotional	13	1.1%
	Wellbeing > Behaviour	3	0.3%
Staff	Staff > Levels	46	4.1%
	Staff > Training / qualifications	34	3.0%
	Staff > Other fitness issues	7	0.6%
	Staff > Other	2	0.2%
	Staff > Recruitment procedures (including disclosure checks)	1	0.1%
Property	Property > Loss of/missing	14	1.2%
	Property > Care of	10	0.9%
Choice	Choice > Care and treatment	28	2.5%
	Choice > Activities	18	1.6%
	Choice > Dignity and privacy	11	1.0%
	Choice > Other	3	0.3%
	Choice > Service not meeting religious, cultural, faith or social needs	1	0.1%
Protection of people	Protection of people > Adults	31	2.7%
	Protection of people > Policies and procedures	4	0.4%
	Protection of people > Restraint	1	0.1%
	Protection of people > Other	1	0.1%

Table F: Care homes for older people, complaints upheld in 2024/25 by area of complaint (cont.)

Area of complaint	Detailed area of complaint	No. of upheld complaints	% of upheld complaints
Policies and procedures	Policies and procedures > Complaints procedure	52	4.6%
	Policies and procedures > Other	17	1.5%
Privacy and dignity	Privacy and dignity > Privacy and dignity	32	2.8%
Environment	Environment > Fitness of premises / environment	32	2.8%
	Environment > Inadequate facilities	20	1.8%
	Environment > Other	10	0.9%
	Environment > Security	4	0.4%
Food	Food > Quality	11	1.0%
	Food > Other	9	0.8%
	Food > Choice	9	0.8%
	Food > Availability	7	0.6%
Record keeping	Record keeping > Personal plans/ agreements	24	2.1%
	Record keeping > Other	10	0.9%
User participation	User participation > Other	3	0.3%
Access	Access > To other services e.g. advocacy/health	8	0.7%
	Access > Other	1	0.1%
Equality issues	Equality issues > Equality issues	2	0.2%
Conditions of registration	Conditions of registration > Other	1	0.1%

Table G: Care homes for older people, complaints upheld by detailed area of complaint, 2019/20 to 2024/25

Detailed area of complaint	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Access > Other		2	3	4	4	1
Access > To other services e.g. advocacy/health	2		1	9	8	8
Choice > Activities	9	7	6	18	23	18
Choice > Care and treatment	26	14	23	45	44	28
Choice > Dignity and privacy	8	6	9	14	7	11
Choice > Other		2	1	8	3	3
Choice > Service not meeting religious, cultural, faith or social needs		1		3	1	1
Communication > Between staff and service users/relatives/carers	61	55	111	129	129	108
Communication > Information about the service		2	3	1	2	3
Communication > Language difficulties	1		1	1	1	1
Communication > Other	9	4	6	5	12	11
Conditions of registration > Other				3	1	1
Environment > Fitness of premises / environment	21	3	16	26	20	32
Environment > Inadequate facilities	11	1	3	13	13	20
Environment > Other	12	1	6	12	11	10
Environment > Security	1			4	6	4
Equality issues > Equality issues					1	2
Financial issues > Financial issues		2	1	1		
Food > Availability	1	1	5	2	5	7
Food > Choice	3	1	1	7	7	9
Food > Other	4	3	5	15	10	9
Food > Quality	5		3	5	8	11
Healthcare > Clinical governance	2	3	4	4	4	6
Healthcare > Continence care	23	10	17	33	52	43
Healthcare > Hydration	15	9	20	36	37	33
Healthcare > Inadequate healthcare or healthcare treatment	76	35	104	185	214	163
Healthcare > Infection control issues	6	7	17	14	14	10
Healthcare > Medication issues	35	13	25	55	73	59
Healthcare > Mental health care	4		2	1	7	4
Healthcare > Nutrition	20	18	26	43	54	40
Healthcare > Oral health	4	7	9	12	11	15
Healthcare > Other	25	20	30	47	45	45
Healthcare > Palliative care	3	3	7	12	17	13
Healthcare > Tissue viability	18	10	22	37	47	26
Policies and procedures > Complaints procedure	19	14	12	38	41	52
Policies and procedures > Other	9	4	15	10	19	17
Privacy and dignity > Privacy and dignity	14	8	24	31	20	32

Table G: Care homes for older people, complaints upheld by detailed area of complaint, 2019/20 to 2024/25 (cont.)

Detailed area of complaint	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Property > Care of	7	3	15	15	7	10
Property > Loss of/missing		6	28	25	34	14
Property > Other		1	4	2	4	
Protection of people > Adults	23	11	31	54	36	31
Protection of people > Other	2	1	1	2	3	1
Protection of people > Policies and procedures	2	1		2		4
Protection of people > Restraint					2	1
Record keeping > Other	7	5	5	3	11	10
Record keeping > Personal plans/ agreements	13	4	9	22	32	24
Staff > Levels	52	19	24	42	48	46
Staff > Other	7	2	3	9	6	2
Staff > Other fitness issues	3	4	4	5	5	7
Staff > Recruitment procedures (including disclosure checks)	3	1	1		2	1
Staff > Registration with professional bodies	1			1		
Staff > Training / qualifications	13	9	11	34	47	34
Staff > Unfit to work with vulnerable people			1			
User participation > In managing/developing the service		2		1		
User participation > Other	3	2	6	1	5	3
Wellbeing > Behaviour	4	1	6	2	3	3
Wellbeing > Developmental	1					
Wellbeing > Emotional	4	2	9	13	17	13
Wellbeing > Other	58	28	51	51	62	51
Wellbeing > Social	6	1	6	9	15	23
Wellbeing > Visiting			17	5	3	10

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