

25. We also work with Parliament's Select Committees and MPs to hold the Government and public services to account for delivering improvements.

Complaint Information and Statistics

26. While the PHSO receives complaints about both the NHS and Government bodies, the majority of complaints relate to the NHS. As explained above, the role of the PHSO in regard to NHS complaints is wide ranging, although the majority relate to clinical care.

27. The table below shows the numbers of health complaints received by PHSO:

Financial Year	Number of NHS Complaints
2011/2012	14615
2012/2013	16341
2013/2014	17964
2014/2015	19535
2015/2016	21306
2016/2017	23130
2017/2018	24616
2018/2019	22539
2019/2020	24560
2020/2021	18727
2021/2022	26907
2022/2023	26565

28. In regard to complaints within this number which relate to "neonatal care", this is slightly more complicated to report. In the reporting periods between the financial years 2011/12 – 2016/17, complaints received by PHSO were recorded in a case management system called "Visual Files". This system had no specific flag available for neonatal complaints. Due to the passage of time, much of the information recorded on the system has been deleted under the retention policy and in line with appropriate standards and practice on the disposal of information no longer required.

29. In the reporting period for the financial years 2016/17 – 2019/20, the system in place had limited capability to categorise complaints, which meant neonatal complaints were not identified separately to maternity complaints in general. Our new system has more sophisticated analysis tools to allow categorisation and identification of themes in complaints.

30. Given the above, in order to assist the Inquiry as far as possible, we reviewed how we categorise health cases and identified the terms we felt would ensure we identified all neonatal cases. Having done so, we have undertaken searches across the systems, checking the "neonatal" category but also searching within the free text field, as "neonatal" was not always a specific category open to selection. The searches we undertook were therefore for the following:

Medical Condition
Neonatal

Complaint Summary Keywords
Neonatal
neonate
babycare
premature child
premature baby
premature son
premature daughter

31. As a result of these searches, we identified 68 cases – 65 closed cases and three ongoing cases. Of these, we confirm that none involve the Countess of Chester Hospital. In order to assist the Inquiry, we have prepared a table of the 65 closed cases (Exhibit **RB/24** [INQ0014534]) a brief summary of the complaint and our decision. Where a case was not upheld, we have noted either the finding or the reason for closure, as applicable.

Countess of Chester Hospital

Complaints about the Countess of Chester Hospital (CoCH)

32. We have received no complaints about the care of babies at the COCH's neonatal unit between June 2015 and June 2016 (inclusive).