

By e mail only
Ms D Speers



28 October 2009

Dear Ms Speers

Further to your email of 19 September 2009, I write with my response to your request for the following information:

1. How many investigations have been commissioned so far in the 2009/2010 period?

Between 1 April and 30 September 2009, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) accepted 153 health cases for investigation. During this period, she also accepted 16 parliamentary cases, bringing the total number of cases accepted for investigation to 169. (Please note that these figures have not been audited and that the final audited figures for the business year will appear in the Ombudsman's annual report for 2009/10.)

2. Does the PHSO service have more than one Review Team and is a 'further assessment team' one and the same?

PHSO has one Review Team, which handles complaints about us (including our decisions, our service or our response to a request for information under the Freedom of Information or Data Protection Acts). The Review Team is distinct from Assessment Teams, which consider whether or not the Ombudsman should investigate a complaint made about bodies within the Ombudsman's remit, such as primary care trusts or strategic health authorities.

3. What is the average time for a review decision to be made?

Our service standard is to provide a substantive response to 90% of complaints about us within 16 weeks. Between 1 April 2009 and 30 September 2009, we met the service standard in 91% of complaints about us. At present, the average number of days taken to provide a substantive response is 100 days. (Again, please note that these figures have not been audited and the final, audited figures for the business year will appear in the Ombudsman's annual report for 2009/2010.)



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4. Will the PHSO assessor be the named person for providing updates on how a review is progressing?

No. Once a complaint is passed to the Review Team a member of that team will acknowledge the complaint and will provide regular updates on how the request for a review is progressing.

I have now completed my response to your information request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liz Hannan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Liz Hannan
Freedom of Information and Data Protection Manager