

# **PALS CORE NATIONAL STANDARDS AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK**

**Assessing performance against  
National Core Standards for PALS**

## DH INFORMATION READER BOX

<b>Policy</b>	Estates
HR / Workforce Management	Performance
Planning	IM & T
Clinical	Finance
	Partnership Working

<b>Document Purpose</b>	Best Practice Guidance
<b>ROCR Ref:</b>	<b>Gateway Ref:</b> 1757
<b>Title</b>	PALS EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: Assessing performance against National Core Standards for PALS
<b>Author</b>	Department of Health/PALS National Development Group
<b>Publication Date</b>	30 Jul 2003
<b>Target Audience</b>	SHA PPI Leads and PALS Managers
<b>Circulation List</b>	
<b>Description</b>	These standards are issued by the DH and set out the minimum service which should be delivered by PALS. The standards enable PALS to assess performance and benchmark against the standards in order to develop the service provided in a way that is consistent with other PALS nationally.
<b>Cross Ref</b>	N/A
<b>Superseded Docs</b>	Supporting the Implementation of PALS: A Resource Pack
<b>Action Required</b>	To use the standards to measure performance and develop service provided
<b>Timing</b>	N/A
<b>Contact Details</b>	Karen Inns Patient and Public Involvement 5CO5 QH LS2 7UE 0113 254 6109 Karen.Inns@doh.gsi.gov.uk
<b>For Recipients Use</b>	

# Contents

<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 2: Planning your evaluation</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Section 3: Collecting local information</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Section 4: Assessing performance against the National Core Standards for PALS</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Section 5: Assessing performance against other measures</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Section 6: Planning to consult other stakeholders</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Section 7: Writing your report</b>	<b>37</b>
 <b>APPENDICES</b>	
<b>Appendix 1 - Harrogate Health Care NHS (Acute) Trust</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Appendix 2 - South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Appendix 3 - London PALS pathfinder sites</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Appendix 4 - University College London Hospitals NHS Trust</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Appendix 5 - Wakefield West Primary Care NHS Trust</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Appendix 6 - Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust</b>	<b>78</b>

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

## The core functions of PALS

The core functions of PALS are to<sup>1</sup>:

- Be identifiable and accessible to patients, their carers, friends and families
- Provide on the spot help in every Trust with the power to negotiate immediate solutions or speedy resolution of problems.
- Act as a gateway to appropriate independent advice and advocacy support from local and national sources.
- Provide accurate information to patients, carers and families, about the Trust's services, and about other health related issues
- Act as a catalyst for change and improvement by providing the Trust with information and feedback on problems arising and gaps in services.
- Operate within a local network with other PALS in their area and work across organisational boundaries
- Support staff at all levels within the Trust to develop a responsive culture

## National Core Standards for PALS

National Core Standards are issued by the Department of Health and set out the minimum service to be delivered by PALS. **The standards included in this evaluation framework replace those published in 2002 and** build on and strengthen the original standards. Please note that the standards have been incorporated into the enclosed evaluation framework. This framework outlines supporting mechanisms and types of evidence that would show that your service is meeting a particular standard. Note that these are best practice examples of actions you could take or evidence you could gather to show you are meeting a standard. They are not requirements. Please use these revised standards forthwith.

**You are encouraged to use the attached evaluation framework.** This will enable you to assess your performance and benchmark against the revised standards and to plan to develop the service you provide in a way that is consistent with other PALS nationally.

Please contact your SHA PPI Lead if you have any questions about either the revised standards or evaluation framework

---

<sup>1</sup> Supporting the implementation of Patient Advice and Liaison Services: A resource pack. Department of Health, 2002.

PALS is a new and developing service. Therefore these standards will need to be reviewed over time to take account of any changes as the service matures and develops.

## What is evaluation?

Evaluation is about making an assessment – measuring how well a project or activity is doing against a set of criteria. It usually means that those working in the service being evaluated have time to stop and reflect, and to learn from their achievements and disappointments<sup>2</sup>.

Evaluation means more than assessing whether PALS has complied with its core functions. Evaluation means making a judgement of the project's effectiveness (i.e. have the original objectives been met) and efficiency (i.e. how well resources are being deployed). It therefore entails looking at outcomes as well as at activities, at relevance as well as numbers, at what could have been done as well as what was done. To evaluate PALS successfully much greater emphasis will need to be placed on qualitative indicators – the invisible aspects of prevention, relationships, trends of referrals, client satisfaction and impact on policies and practice in the service system<sup>3</sup>.

## This evaluation framework

This evaluation framework is provided as a resource to help PALS assess their performance against the National Core Standards. It should allow PALS to demonstrate that they are providing a good service and having an impact – and to identify where there are areas for improvement.

By sharing a single evaluation framework, there is scope for PALS to compare their performance with others working in similar organisations and with similar resources. But great care needs to be taken in comparing PALS services to ensure that only 'like is compared with like'.

It is important to remember that this framework encompasses an evaluation of the PALS service as a whole. It is not an assessment of individual members of PALS staff – even if the PALS is a single handed service.

---

<sup>2</sup> Evaluator's Handbook (Program Evaluation Kit (2nd Ed.)) [Joan L. Herman](#), [Lynn Lyons Morris](#), [Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon](#), 1988.

<sup>3</sup> Supporting the implementation of Patient Advice and Liaison Services: A resource pack. Department of Health, 2002.

## How to use the framework

The framework is divided into a number of sections to help you carry out your evaluation. It provides ideas and suggestions as to how you might want to go about this. After this introductory section there are a further six sections which should help you to:

- Plan your evaluation
- Collect information about your local context and the use of your service
- Assess your performance against the PALS National Core Standards
- Assess your performance against other measures e.g. local standards
- Plan how to consult other stakeholders about PALS performance
- Plan and write up your report of your evaluation

It is advisable to assess your performance against all of the National Core Standards, even if there are some that you know you cannot meet. It is important to find out why a standard is not being met and whether this is linked to the service or some other factor. Identifying the barriers to success is crucial to finding ways to improve the service.

Examples of previous PALS evaluations are described throughout this framework as well as in the Appendices. These examples provide ideas as to how you can involve other stakeholders in planning and implementing the project and how you might analyse your findings. Further information on methods and contact details for individual PALS are also provided.

## **SECTION 2: PLANNING YOUR EVALUATION**

The following is a checklist of questions to think about before you start. By being clear about what you want to achieve, you can ensure that the right people are involved all the way through and that the project will meet your needs.

### **Why do you want to evaluate your PALS service?**

What is the purpose of your evaluation? Be clear about your aims from the beginning. For example, do you want to:

- Assess the performance of PALS to improve the service and/or inform staff development?
- Assess the quality of PALS to check whether resources are being used effectively?
- Assess the impact of PALS across a Trust or region?

Ensure that everyone involved in planning the evaluation has discussed and agreed a set of aims.

### **Who will be involved in planning the evaluation?**

Think about establishing a steering group to oversee the evaluation. This will ensure that the key concerns of various stakeholders are addressed. The group could also help with communicating the results and taking any necessary action. Think about who will make decisions about changes and who will implement them and make sure these people are engaged in the project from the start.

Think about whether you want to involve:

- Users of PALS
- PALS staff
- Trust managers
- Members of the Trust Board
- Strategic Health Authority managers
- Community members/patient groups

### **Who will carry out the evaluation?**

Do PALS staff have the capacity to carry out an evaluation on top of their normal workload? Is it important that the evaluation is completely independent? What budget do you have for the evaluation?

Depending on the resources available any of the following people could carry out the evaluation:

- PALS teams - through self-assessment or via peer-review with other PALS
- External agencies such as university departments
- Other teams within a Trust such as a Quality/Audit team
- Patient groups (in the future the Patients' Forum)

## **What will you do with the results?**

Think about how you are going to use the results of the evaluation. For example, do you want to:

- encourage Trust managers and/or PALS to take action to improve the service?
- promote the PALS service to patients, Trust staff and/or the general public?
- share 'good practice' with other PALS?
- provide feedback to people who have been consulted as part of the evaluation?

Decide who you want to influence from the start. You can then ensure that you collect the information that you know they will be interested in. Ensure that the relevant stakeholders are prepared to receive the results.

## **When should you carry out an evaluation?**

*Think about timing.* If your service is still in the early stages of development, a full-scale evaluation is unlikely to be helpful. You may want to wait until your service has been up and running for at least a year before carrying out an evaluation. However, it may well be useful to collect baseline data early on to help you look at the development of the service.

*Think about frequency.* Your managers, the PCT or Strategic Health Authority may require you to measure performance against standards on a frequent basis (every three or six months). If this is the case, we suggest you use parts A, C and D of the framework in section 3. Small-scale evaluations might be useful once a year to see where immediate improvements can be made to the service. More in-depth and investigative evaluations may only be necessary once every 3-5 years.

*Think about context.* Could the evaluation be used to satisfy any other assessments of the service e.g. CHI reviews? When would a formal report be needed for the Trust Board or the Strategic Health Authority?

*Think about resources.* How long will the evaluation take and what staff time will be required? What budget is available?



# Summary

Record your conclusions here.

<b>Why do you want to evaluate your PALS service?</b>
<b>Who will be involved in planning the evaluation?</b>
<b>Who will carry out the evaluation?</b>
<b>What will you do with the results?</b>
<b>What is the budget and timescale for your evaluation?</b>

## **SECTION 3: COLLECTING LOCAL INFORMATION**

Information about the local context will be important for interpreting the results of your evaluation. It will also be essential for meaningful comparisons of PALS to be made – ensuring only like is compared with like.

### **What information should be collected about the local context?**

Other PALS evaluations have looked at:

- When the service began and length of time in operation
- The development of the PALS service, including the resources made available
- Staffing levels
- Type of service provided e.g. telephone or walk-in service
- Accommodation
- Geographical location of the service within organisation e.g. is the PALS office in a hospital reception?
- Type of Trust
- Community served by the Trust

### **What information should be collected about the use of PALS?**

Other PALS evaluations have looked at the:

- Number of contacts/enquiries on a monthly basis and changes over time
- Source of contacts – patients or Trust staff and trends in referrals to PALS
- Who is using PALS – ethnicity, age, gender etc.
- Types of enquiry - information, liaison, referral or support through complaints
- Source of problems - clinical division, specialty or ward/department
- Signposting to other organisations
- Percentage of enquiries effectively dealt with and resolved
- Contribution of PALS staff to patient and public involvement (PPI) activities

Think about what information you need to collect about your local context and use of the service to meet your specific aims and objectives.

## How to use the local information you collect

There are a number of ways in which you can analyse the information collected about your local situation, depending on the aims of your evaluation. You may want to demonstrate that demand for the service is increasing; you may want to argue for more resources by demonstrating unmet demand; you may want to show support for the service among local stakeholders or to demonstrate that a wide range of the local community is using the service. Some PALS may wish to demonstrate that the service is having an impact on complaints. Examples of how other PALS have used local data are described below.

### **Example 1: University College London Hospitals NHS Trust**

Analysis of the number of cases handled by PALS on a monthly basis showed a continuous increase in the workload of the service. It also showed that the majority of enquirers were referred to the PALS service by Trust staff. Once staff had used the service, they continued to refer patients on a regular basis. This indicated that Trust staff found the service to be supportive of them as well as of patients.

*Further details of this evaluation are provided in Appendix 4.*

### **Example 2: South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust**

Analysis of PALS record of activities was used to describe:

- How many contacts were made to PALS on a quarterly basis
- Who raised the issue – to identify where there might be gaps in local outreach
- What activities were undertaken by PALS in response to enquiries
- How many issues were dealt with in full or resolved - as a measure of PALS achievement

*Further details of this evaluation are provided in Appendix 2.*

### **Example 3: Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust**

An analysis of local data was used to show that the service had rapidly expanded in its first few months and that PALS had had a significant impact on the number of formal complaints received by the Trust. The contacts with PALS were analysed by department or specialty and common issues raised by patients were identified e.g. lack of information as to when results can be expected.

*Further details of this evaluation are provided in the Appendix 6.*

## SECTION 4: ASSESSING PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE NATIONAL CORE STANDARDS FOR PALS

### How should you complete this assessment against the National Core Standards?

You are asked to assess your performance separately under each standard. They are listed one per page. There are then four parts to each assessment:

**Part A:** Outlines the **supporting mechanisms** and **types of evidence that would** show that your service is meeting a particular standard. Note that these are examples of actions you could take or evidence you could gather to show you are meeting a standard. They are not requirements.

You may know of other evidence relating to your performance and you should include this if you wish.

**Part B:** Asks you to **consult other stakeholders** (e.g. patients and Trust staff) to obtain their views on your performance against the standard. Some suggestions are given as to whom you might consult. You may have other views about who you want to consult locally.

Some suggestions as to how you might consult other stakeholders are provided in the examples of PALS evaluations in the Appendices.

**Part C:** Asks you to **analyse the evidence** to assess whether you are meeting the standard. If you are meeting the standard, you are asked to consider what impact this has had. If you are not meeting the standard, you are asked to identify what further action is required.

**Part D:** Asks you to decide on a **final rating** of your performance against the standard. This rating is based on the traffic light system:

Red	Urgent attention needed
Amber	Some work needed
Green	Doing well

The rating scale may help you to think about where to concentrate your efforts to improve the service. However, it is entirely optional. The report and action plan are the most important parts of the evaluation.

A final **key areas for action** section enables you to record the most relevant and important areas for improvement that you have identified as a result of completing the assessment.

For a **quick evaluation** – only complete parts (A), (C) and (D).

For a more **in depth evaluation** involving a range of stakeholders - complete all four parts (A) – (D).

In the core section of this framework, all the pages relating to the assessment of your performance against the national core standards are headed in green. *Please note these pages are not worksheets. You are not expected to write the information on each page but to record the information elsewhere.*

# STANDARD 1

## The PALS service is identifiable and accessible to the community served by the Trust

---

### (A) What has been done to meet this standard?

#### *Supporting mechanisms*

- Needs assessment undertaken to identify effective access methods to meet local needs
- Action plan to prioritise and develop access methods
- Communication and training strategy developed to promote PALS across the Trust

#### *Types of evidence*

- Range of methods of access available e.g. in person, outreach, interpreting and translated materials etc...
- Action plans developed for PALS training and publicity across the Trust
- Feedback from service user surveys-strengths and gaps identified for further service development

#### *Additional evidence (optional)*

---

### (B) What do other stakeholders think about PALS performance against this standard?

*For example are Trust staff aware of the services PALS offers? Have users of PALS found it easy to access the service?*

For suggestions on how to consult other stakeholders see Section 6 and the Appendices.

---

---

**(C) Conclusions**

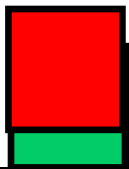
Has the standard been met?

What difference has this made?

*For example, has PALS been able to reach groups that have not been reached by the Trust before?  
Has the number of enquires increased following action to promote the service?*

Is further action needed to meet this standard? If so, what action is required? By whom?

Could the service be improved in this area? If so, how? By whom?



---

**(D) Final rating**

**Urgent attention needed**

**Some work needed**

**Doing well**

---

---



## STANDARD 2

### **PALS will be seamless across health and social care**

---

#### **(A) What has been done to meet this standard?**

##### *Supporting mechanisms*

- Information sharing agreements in place across and within organisations
- Service procedures shared across organisations

##### *Types of evidence*

- Joint PALS/customer care training across health and social care
- PALS accessible from health and social care services/venues
- Feedback from service users - appropriate referrals partnership working between health and social care agencies to resolve service user issues
- Evidence of learning from anonymised service user cases involving health and social care issues
- Networks developed with PALS/social care across local networks/SHA area

##### *Additional evidence (optional)*

---

#### **(B) What do other stakeholders think about PALS performance against this standard?**

*For example, do users of PALS feel they have been signposted or referred to other organisations appropriately? Are staff in other local organisations satisfied with referral protocols?*

For suggestions on how to consult other stakeholders see Section 6 and the Appendices.

---

**(C) Conclusions**

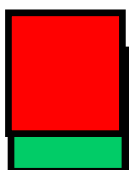
Has the standard been met?

What difference has this made?

*For example, has working with another organisation enabled a patient's query/concern to be dealt with, when it would not otherwise have been possible?*

Is further action needed to meet this standard? If so, what action is required? By whom?

Could the service be improved in this area? If so, how? By whom?



---

**(D) Final rating**

**Urgent attention needed**

**Some work needed**

**Doing well**

## STANDARD 3

### **PALS will be sensitive and provide a confidential service that meets individual needs**

---

#### **(A) What has been done to meet this standard?**

##### *Supporting mechanisms*

- PALS provides a confidential service
- Information is shared appropriately across and within organisations to resolve individual service user issues
- PALS service procedures take into account the individual needs of service users in the services it provides and develops

##### *Types of evidence*

- Confidentiality integral part of job descriptions/PALS service procedures
- Information sharing agreements in place within and across organisations that address confidentiality/Caldicott
- Service user feedback/surveys - evidence of learning/service development from feedback
- PALS training addresses confidentiality/customer care
- Individual issues resolved within agreed service procedure frameworks or referred appropriately for further action e.g. ICAS, trust, patient forums etc

##### *Additional evidence (optional)*

---

#### **(B) What do other stakeholders think about PALS performance against this standard?**

*For example, what have users of PALS understood about the confidentiality of service? Are users satisfied that the service is confidential? Do Trust staff believe the service to be confidential?*

For suggestions on how to consult other stakeholders see Section 6 and the Appendices.

---

---

---

**(C) Conclusions**

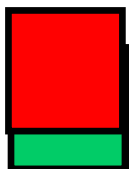
Has the standard been met?

What difference has this made?

*For example, have people approached PALS who may not have otherwise voiced their concerns?*

Is further action needed to meet this standard? If so, what action is required? By whom?

Could the service be improved in this area? If so, how? By whom?



---

**(D) Final rating**

**Urgent attention needed**

**Some work needed**

**Doing well**

## STANDARD 4

### **PALS will have systems that make their findings known as part of routine monitoring in order to facilitate change**

---

#### **(A) What has been done to meet this standard?**

##### *Supporting mechanisms*

- Communication and reporting procedures/clinical governance systems in place within and across appropriate organisations to illustrate PALS findings
- PALS undertakes regular impact assessment of its service

##### *Types of evidence*

- Outcomes of impact assessment incorporated into regular reporting mechanisms made available to Trust board, patient forums, service users, public, OSC's, SHA-performance management systems
- Evidence of learning/service development as a result of PALS reporting - resulting action plans, examples of service change, case studies
- Evidence of feedback given to service users, public-patient prospectus, PCT newsletters/incorporated in PCT communication strategy

##### *Additional evidence (optional)*

---

#### **(B) What do other stakeholders think about PALS performance against this standard?**

*For example, do members of the Trust Board/Patient Forums believe themselves to be fully informed of the work of PALS? Do PALS staff believe their findings are reaching the right audience? Have changes been made to services or the environment based on PALS work?*

For suggestions on how to consult other stakeholders see Section 6 and the Appendices.

---

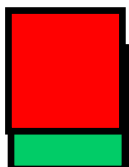
**(C) Conclusions**

Has the standard been met?

What difference has this made? *For example, has there been an impact on the Trust services, culture or environment? Have patients benefited from any changes made?*

Is further action needed to meet this standard? If so, what action is required? By whom?

Could the service be improved in this area? If so, how? By whom?



---

**(D) Final rating**

**Urgent attention needed**

**Some work needed**

**Doing well**

## STANDARD 5

### **PALS enables people to access information about Trust services and information about health and social care issues**

---

#### **(A) What has been done to meet this standard?**

##### *Supporting mechanisms*

- Mechanisms are in place to enable PALS to access current appropriate information from within the trust as well as from other agencies

##### *Types of evidence*

- Service user feedback
- PALS data systems and procedures facilitate broad access to a range of health and social care information on behalf of service users

##### *Additional evidence (optional)*

---

#### **(B) What do other stakeholders think about PALS performance against this standard?**

*You may have obtained feedback from users as part of the evidence collected in part (A). Do users of PALS feel they have been signposted to appropriate and up to date information?*

For suggestions on how to consult other stakeholders see Section 6 and the Appendices.

---

---

**(C) Conclusions**

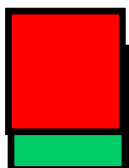
Has the standard been met?

What difference has this made?

*For example, have changes been made to the Trust's patient information or information produced by other organisations? Has out of date information been removed from circulation?*

Is further action needed to meet this standard? If so, what action is required? By whom?

Could the service be improved in this area? If so, how? By whom?



---

**(D) Final rating**

**Urgent attention needed**

**Some work needed**

**Doing well**



---

---

## STANDARD 6

### **PALS plays a key role in bringing about culture change in the NHS, placing patients at the heart of service planning and delivery**

---

#### **(A) What has been done to meet this standard?**

##### *Supporting mechanisms*

- Communication and reporting systems in place within and across appropriate organisations to illustrate PALS findings and subsequent changes in service delivery

##### *Types of evidence*

- PALS acts as a signpost for people wishing to become more involved in the Trust's patient and public involvement initiatives
- Evidence of learning/service development actual or planned as a result of PALS reporting-resulting action plans
- Examples of service change, case studies incorporating service user feedback
- Outcomes/recommendations resulting from trust boards
- Learning incorporated into PALS staff induction training and PALS service development
- Support/training needs of PALS staff identified, plans to address these in place

##### *Additional evidence (optional)*

---

#### **(B) What do other stakeholders think about PALS performance against this standard?**

*For example, are Trust staff aware of this function of PALS and have they asked for appropriate PALS input? Have they been satisfied with the support from PALS?*

For suggestions on how to consult other stakeholders see Section 6 and the Appendices.

---

---

### (C) Conclusions

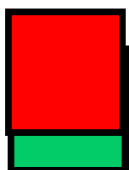
Has the standard been met?

What difference has this made?

*For example has the Trust become more patient centred? If so, how?*

Is further action needed to meet this standard? If so, what action is required? By whom?

Could the service be improved in this area? If so, how? By whom?



---

### (D) Final rating

**Urgent attention needed**

**Some work needed**

**Doing well**

---

## STANDARD 7

### **PALS will actively seek the views of service users, carers and the public to ensure effective services**

---

#### **(A) What has been done to meet this standard?**

##### *Supporting mechanisms*

- Trust patient and public involvement strategy in place

##### *Types of evidence*

- PALS service user survey system in place
- PALS procedures incorporate methods to involve patients, carers and the public in service monitoring, planning and development
- Action plans in place/being developed to involve service users in PALS delivery and development
- Service user feedback used to develop PALS service

##### *Additional evidence (optional)*

---

#### **(B) What do other stakeholders think about PALS performance against this standard?**

*For example do users of PALS feel they have been able to influence the way the service has developed?*

For suggestions on how to consult other stakeholders see Section 6 and the Appendices.

---

---

**(C) Conclusions**

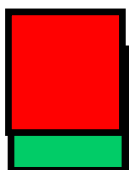
Has the standard been met?

What difference has this made?

*For example, have there been changes in the way PALS is run, because of input from users of the service? How has this improved the service?*

Is further action needed to meet this standard? If so, what action is required? By whom?

Could the service be improved in this area? If so, how? By whom?



---

**(D) Final rating**

**Urgent attention needed**

**Some work needed**

**Doing well**

---

---

## Summary Sheet

Standard	Rating of performance against this standard		
	Red	Amber	Green
1. The PALS service is identifiable and accessible to the community served by the Trust			
2. PALS will be seamless across health and social care			
3. PALS will be sensitive and provide a confidential service that meets individual needs			
4. PALS will have systems that make their findings known as part of routine monitoring in order to facilitate change			
5. PALS enables people to access information about Trust services, and information about health and social care issues			
6. PALS plays a key role in bringing about culture change in the NHS placing patients at the heart of service planning and delivery			
7. PALS will actively seek the views of service users, carers and the public to ensure effective services			

## KEY AREAS FOR ACTION

**What three key areas for action have arisen from this assessment?**

It may help to identify your key areas for action by selecting the standards where the extent to which you meet the standard is low and your ability to improve in this area is high.

**KEY AREA 1**

**KEY AREA 2**

**KEY AREA 3**

---

## SECTION 5: ASSESSING PERFORMANCE AGAINST OTHER MEASURES

You may also wish to assess your performance against locally defined aims, principles or standards. For example, some PALS defined local aims and standards in their business plan when they first established the service; others are still developing standards around processes and service delivery.

If you are going to assess performance against locally agreed standards, you will need to think through how you will measure your performance against them. Ensure that local stakeholders endorse the measure you are using. Some examples of how PALS have already done this are given below.

### **Example 1: University College London Hospitals NHS Trust**

The PALS service set itself a standard of giving an initial response to all enquirers within 24 hours. The PALS manager was able to refer to records of contacts to assess whether the service had met this standard.

*Further details of this evaluation are provided in Appendix 4.*

### **Example 2: South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust**

Early in the development of its PALS, the Trust consulted key local stakeholders to produce a document called *PALS: Values and Standards for Good Practice*, which became the philosophy for the service. The principles in this document formed the framework for their subsequent evaluation.

*Further details of this evaluation are provided in Appendix 2.*

### **Example 3: Wakefield West Primary Care NHS Trust**

The PALS established standards at an early stage to shape the activities of the service. These related to the time taken to respond to a patient, when an enquiry was made in person at a GP's practice, or at the PALS Headquarters. They detailed how the hub and spoke model would work and the role of district nurses and health visitors in referring patients to PALS. They also defined a procedure for dealing with email inquiries. Performance against these standards formed part of their subsequent evaluation.

*Further details of this evaluation are provided in Appendix 5.*



# SECTION 6: PLANNING TO CONSULT OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

## Introduction

Many people involved in leading a PALS evaluation will already have experience of choosing the best method to gain information from stakeholders - designing questionnaires, interview schedules and so on. However, if you don't already have this kind of experience, you may find it useful to read this section. It provides a brief guide to the range of methods you can use to obtain stakeholder feedback. You could also seek advice and help from the Clinical Audit or Clinical Effectiveness team in your Trust. The Trust R&D manager (if you have one) may also offer advice or help.

## What methods should I use to gain feedback from people?

There are a variety of methods you can use to gain feedback from people (whether service users, staff or other stakeholders). The most common of these are:

- Questionnaires – these can be sent by post, carried out over the phone or in person, or distributed through a clinic or ward
- Focus groups
- Interviews

Diaries, critical incident technique and patient 'shadowing' are also used, but these are probably less appropriate for use in a PALS evaluation. You can read more about these methods on the NHS Modernisation Agency website – see the end of this section for the address and more information.

The method or methods you choose will depend on the kind of information you want to gather and the resources you have available (time, skills and money).

Each of the most common methods is described briefly below.

### **Questionnaires**

Questionnaires have been used in many PALS evaluations. They need not take long to complete, they are relatively easy to analyse, and they can generate good quality quantitative data (i.e. data about numbers). However, questionnaires are not always easy to design, so it's good to get advice from someone with experience.

Questionnaires can give you information about the views of a wide range of people, but the amount of information you receive will be fairly narrow, and will be dictated by the questions you ask – so they will not tell you about the aspects of the PALS service that are most important to people, unless you ask this question directly.

Most questionnaires contain mainly 'closed' questions (that is, questions with a limited range of answers, such as yes or no, or good or poor). 'Open' questions, which ask respondents to write about their views, are less frequent. They are harder

to analyse and can make a survey time-consuming to complete – this may affect your response rate. So think about using a small number of open questions (for example, ‘do you have any other comments?’) to ensure respondents are able to comment on all the issues that are important to them.

If you are sending surveys out by post, it’s helpful to give people an addressed envelope in which to return the survey. Put a stamp on it if the survey is being sent to anyone outside the Trust. Response rates to surveys are typically not high – around 30% is an often quoted figure.

### **Focus groups**

A focus group typically brings together 8-12 people to talk about a particular subject. Before the focus group, you need to select a list of about six topics, and turn them into questions (for example, how did you find out about the PALS service?). In addition to a facilitator, it is useful to have an observer present. A focus group usually runs for between one and two hours.

The main benefits of a focus group are that participants have a chance to share their views, and to comment on each others’ views. They are quicker and cheaper than doing a series of interviews (see below), and they can be set up fairly easily. Focus groups can give you a wide range of information from a small group of people. However, a focus group may be dominated by one or two people, and it tends to be made up of individuals who are available and prepared to give up their time. This means that they may not be suitable if you want to reach a wide range of people. The quality of information gained from a focus group depends largely on the skills of the facilitator, so if you haven’t run a group before, it may be better to approach someone else to do this.

### **Interviews**

There are three types of interviews – informal interviews, which are precisely that; semi-structured interviews and structured interviews. In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer works out in advance the areas she/he wants to cover, but can vary the order and the wording used. In a structured interview, the interviewer asks fixed questions in a set order – so it’s like using a self-completion questionnaire, but carrying it out in person.

Interviews don’t require a lot of preparation. Semi-structured interviews can give you detailed information, enabling you to identify the issues which are important to respondents. But they can be very time consuming to carry out and to analyse.

Some researchers use focus groups and/or interviews to find out what issues are important to people, and then design questionnaires to test this on a wider range of people.

## **Who do I need to contact to get ‘representative’ feedback?**

If you are seeking the views of patients or staff, you need to ensure that, if possible, the people you contact are ‘representative’ of the larger population. For example, if you want to know what nurses in the Trust think of the PALS service, you need to seek the views of nurses at a range of levels and in a range of departments. If you want to know what patients think of the PALS service, you’ll need to think about whether you can ensure that the people you contact reflect the population served by the Trust in terms of age, gender, social class and ethnicity. This is not an easy task, so seek advice, and if you are not able to do this, do not claim that your sample is ‘representative’.

Most PALS evaluations have contacted a range of staff and/or people who have used PALS services. They have not sought to have a representative sample, and have been clear about this in their reports.

If you are seeking the views of people who have used PALS services, as a minimum try to avoid selecting the people with whom you have regular contact.

## **Getting approval to seek feedback**

If you intend to seek the views of patients, carers, service users or NHS staff about PALS, you’ll need to obtain ethical approval before you start. Your Local Research Ethics Committee (LREC) can give you this approval – you’ll need to outline the aims of your project, the people whose views you are seeking (e.g. patients, staff etc) and your method (e.g. questionnaire, focus group etc). There is usually an application form for you to complete. LRECs will want to check details about confidentiality, data protection and anonymity, as well as checking that your project will not be harmful to patients, carers or staff. Contact your LREC to get advice about what they need to know from you. Note that obtaining ethical approval can sometimes take a while, so allow plenty of time for this.

You also need to keep in mind the requirements of the Data Protection Act. Information you have collected on a database about users of PALS cannot be passed to anyone outside the Trust, and may not be used for purposes other than those which were explained to the PALS user. So you can’t pass names and contact details of PALS users to an external evaluator, for example, unless they have an honorary contract as Trust employees. If you are employing an external evaluator, you may need to send out questionnaires on their behalf. Seek advice from Clinical Audit or IT staff and from the Trust Caldicott Guardian before you set out on an evaluation.

You should also ensure that respondents cannot be identified, and that you keep responses separate from contact details.

## Additional sources of information

This section is not meant to be an exhaustive guide to seeking feedback. If you haven't done this kind of work before, do read up about it. Useful websites include:

[www.doh.gov.uk/acutesurvey/inpatientsurveys.pdf](http://www.doh.gov.uk/acutesurvey/inpatientsurveys.pdf)

This document was put together by the Picker Institute Europe to assist people using the National Patient's Survey. It has good general information on:

- Conducting a postal survey
- Resources needed
- The advantages and disadvantages of different methods used for gaining feedback from people
- Sample sizes and sampling methods
- Data Protection issues
- Timescales
- Listening to the views of people who do not speak English

This information is of relevance to those working outside acute Trusts as well as those working within them.

[www.modern.nhs.uk/improvementguides/patients](http://www.modern.nhs.uk/improvementguides/patients)

The NHS Modernisation Agency website has short, useful guides on critical incident technique, focus groups, patient shadowing, patient diaries, and discovery interviews. There is also a section on suggested reading.

[www.corec.org.uk](http://www.corec.org.uk)

The Central Office for Research Ethics Committees (COREC) website gives contact details for your Local Research Ethics Committee, as well as outlining the kind of projects that need ethical approval, and how to obtain it.

[www.conres.co.uk](http://www.conres.co.uk)

Consumers in NHS Research promotes the active involvement of patients, carers, service users and others in research – including evaluations. They have produced guidelines on involving service users in meetings (within their publication Involving Consumers in Research in the NHS: Briefing Notes for Researchers), which could be helpful if you are planning to run focus groups. You can download this publication free of charge from the website.

## Useful books include

Robson, C Small Scale Evaluation London Sage Publications 2000

Krueger, R Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research London Sage Publications 1994

Both of these books are available from the King's Fund Library in London – anyone can use this reference library free of charge, wherever they are based. For more information, see [www.kingsfund.org.uk/eLibrary/html/](http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/eLibrary/html/)

## SECTION 7: WRITING YOUR REPORT

Your report should be written with your target audience in mind to emphasise the issues that are going to be most relevant to them.

As a guide, it might be helpful to structure your report as follows:

- an introduction
- the aims of the evaluation and why it was commissioned
- a brief description of your PALS service – how it is structured, what resources are available and how it is being used
- a section on your performance against national core standards – where standards are exceeded, where they are being met and where more work needs to be done to meet the standard.
- a summary of your conclusions – emphasising the positive aspects of the evaluation. You should describe where you think the service is performing well, make recommendations for the three key areas for action to improve the service and identify who needs to take action. Remember it may be just as important to assess where there are barriers to PALS having an impact as to where PALS is making a difference.
- the name of the lead on evaluation and the date of writing the report

# **APPENDICES**

## **PALS' EXPERIENCES OF EVALUATION**

In Appendices 1-6, six examples of previous PALS evaluations are described in more detail. There is a one page summary of each example that outlines why the evaluation was carried out, when it was done, who did it, how they did it and what they found out. Details of the methods used to involve and consult other stakeholders are also provided. If you want to find out more about any of these examples, you can contact the member of staff who was involved. Their name and email address is provided.

## **Appendix 1: Harrogate Health Care NHS (Acute) Trust**

**Why did they evaluate PALS?** To measure the degree of user satisfaction.

**When did they do it?** September – October 2002, six months after the PALS service was started.

**Who carried out the evaluation?** The Department of Clinical Effectiveness in the Trust.

**How did they do it?** Questionnaires were given to service users – 48 out of 75 returned.

### **What did they conclude?**

- ⇒ PALS was very much appreciated by users of the service.
- ⇒ PALS fulfilled a need for rapid investigation and response to patients concerns.
- ⇒ Lack of communication of information to patients was identified as a problem area.
- ⇒ PALS co-ordinator was praised for her sympathetic listening skills and communication with staff and users.

**Contact:** **Rosemary Petty, PALS Co-ordinator**  
**Email:** Rosemary.Petty@HHC-TR.Northy.nhs.uk

**The questionnaire given to service users is over the page.**

**Harrogate Health Care NHS (Acute) Trust**  
**Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) Questionnaire**

The PALS service provides confidential, on the spot advice and support, helping you to sort out any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available from the NHS. We would be grateful if you could complete the following questionnaire. Your comments will be used to ensure that the PALS service is responsive to all your needs.

Please contact the PALS Co-ordinator for further information.

---

**Please tick the group that represents your age:**

18-30

31-44

45-65

65+

**Are you:**

The Patient

A Relative or friend of a Patient

Hospital Staff

**How did you become aware of the PALS service?**

The Hospital staff

Local Press

PALS Leaflet

Hospital Display Board

Word of Mouth

Other (Please state)

---

**How did you contact the PALS Co-ordinator?**

By Telephone

By Referral Slip

In Person

**Did you find it easy to contact the PALS Co-ordinator?**

Yes

No

**How long did it take for your issues / concerns to be resolved by the PALS Co-ordinator?**

Please Comment



**How re-assured did you feel after your discussions with the PALS Co-ordinator?**

Very re-assured                      Fairly Re-assured                      Not re-assured                      Not sure

Please Comment

**Did you feel that the PALS Co-ordinator listened to your concerns and issues?**

Yes                       No                       Not sure

Please Comment

**How easy to understand was the explanation given to you by the PALS Co-ordinator?**

Very easy to understand                       Fairly easy to understand  
 Some parts easy/some not                       Not sure

Please Comment

**Would you use the PALS service for any future issues / concerns?**

Definitely                      Maybe                      Not sure

**If the PALS service did not exist, would you have made a complaint?**

Yes

No

Not sure

Please Comment

**Please provide any further comments.**

Thank

Thank you.

## Appendix 2: South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust

<b>Why did they evaluate PALS?</b>	To review the pathfinder PALS established in May 2001, one year after the service began.
<b>When did they do it?</b>	May – July 2002
<b>Who carried out the evaluation?</b>	<p>The PALS Project Board commissioned the Quality, Evaluation and Development Department of the Trust to review the service for service users, carers and staff.</p> <p>The Project Board consists of a wide range of local stakeholders who meet every two months and provide overall steering, direction and accountability for PALS.</p>
<b>How did they do it?</b>	<p>The evaluation was based on work carried out by the University of Northumbria at Newcastle<sup>4</sup> as well as a set of locally agreed values and standards. It involved reviewing data from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a report on the progress and development of the service written by the PALS manager</li><li>• the database of PALS enquiries</li><li>• a questionnaire survey of service users – 84 out of 465 returned</li><li>• a focus group with 12 ex- and current service users and carers</li><li>• semi-structured interviews with the PALS team</li><li>• a questionnaire survey of the PALS Project Board – 4 out of 17 returned</li><li>• a questionnaire survey of Trust staff – 50 out of 200 returned</li></ul>
<b>What did they conclude?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ The service was widely known and viewed positively by everyone who had heard of it.</li><li>⇒ Service users, clients and carers thought PALS was a good service and had made a difference.</li><li>⇒ The team felt that they had provided a flexible and dynamic service that would respond to change and could continue to improve over time. They agreed outreach was the main area to concentrate on in the future.</li><li>⇒ There was no clear view of how PALS had made an impact on other Trust services, but it was felt it had the potential to do so, as the service became more entrenched in Trust structures.</li></ul>
<b>Contact:</b>	<p><b>Phil Walters</b> <b>Email:</b> phil.walters@swyt.nhs.uk</p>

---

<sup>4</sup><http://cbe.unn.ac.uk/PALS/intro.htm>

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

**Service Users' and Carers' Feedback Survey**

*The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), is a service for people who use or come into contact with the mental health and learning disability services provided in Wakefield and Pontefract areas. Our PALS is based at Fieldhead, and has been running for almost one year.*

*Please take a few minutes to give us YOUR views on PALS. We are committed to responding to your views so that we can improve our PALS, and help shape new PALS in other health services. All the information you give us will be anonymous. Thank you.*

---

Please tick ONE box only unless specified

1. Are you a service user or client of mental health/learning disability services in Wakefield and Pontefract, or a carer?  
 Service user / client  
 Carer *(a carer is a person who gives a considerable amount of help to a relative or friend who is ill, disabled, elderly or who has a mental health/learning disability problem and could not cope without their help).*
  
  2. Did you know about PALS at Fieldhead?  
*(Please remember that the shop and café are NOT PALS)*  
Yes  No  *Please go to Q11*
  
  3. How did you hear about PALS? *(Please tick ALL that apply)*  
 Word of mouth  Saw a poster  
 Saw a leaflet  Member of staff told me  
 Other ways *(Please tell us below)*
- 

Please turn over

4. If you have used PALS, please tell us how *(Please tick ALL that apply)*

- I haven't used PALS *(Please go to Q11)*
- I have 'dropped in' to the PALS office at Fieldhead
- I have phoned PALS
- I have picked up leaflets and written information
- Other ways *(Please tell us below)*

.....

5. What has been the main reason that you have used PALS? *(Please tick one)*

- For information e.g. leaflets, books, local support groups
- To gain access to the Richmond Fellowship Advocacy Service
- For general health information
- For help with how to make a complaint
- For help to resolve a concern about your care
- Another reason *(Please tell us below)*

.....

Or would you rather not say?

6. Are you generally happy with the way PALS has helped you?

Yes  No

7. Would you recommend PALS to other service users or carers that you know?

Yes  No

8. Can you think of up to 3 things about PALS that you liked?

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

9. Can you think of up to 3 things about PALS that you would like to see changed?

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

10. Based on your experience of PALS, please give your opinion of the following statements about PALS.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
Anyone can use PALS						
PALS staff support service users, clients and carers to speak for themselves and do not impose their own views						
PALS is quite an informal service						
PALS respects service users', clients' and carers' privacy and dignity						
PALS does not make judgements about service users, clients and carers						
PALS tries to resolve the issues raised by service users, clients and carers quickly and efficiently						
PALS gives feedback when promised						
PALS is a confidential service						
PALS only takes an issue forward when the service user, client or carer wants them to						
PALS helps service users, clients and carers to get involved in groups or projects to improve mental health/ learning disability services						
PALS helps service users, clients and carers to get involved in mental health and learning disability-related groups or projects						

11. Please add any further comments you would like to make about PALS.

.....  
 .....

Thank you for giving us your views. Please seal this questionnaire in the envelope provided and give to .....(name of linkworker)OR post to the QED department, Fieldhead in the pre-paid envelope provided, by 14<sup>th</sup> June 2002. (you do not need a stamp).

**South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust**  
**Patient Advice and Liaison Service**

**Evaluation of PALS**

**PALS Focus Group Proforma**

Groups: Service Users' Forum, Carers' Mental Health Advisory Group

*Introductions and brief summary of purpose of focus group.*

1. Please tell me how long this group has been going... and which came first – the PALS service or this group (SUF/CMAG)?

2. What sort of influence has your group had on the way PALS has been developed?

Prompts – were the ideas for PALS discussed here? Were your suggestions incorporated in to PALS as it was set up?

3. What are the links between your group and PALS?

Prompts – who sits on both groups? How do you find out what happens with the development of the PALS service?

4. What are people's impressions of the way PALS works with users and carers?

*Prompts - Good/bad/OK?*

5. How much do you think PALS has an impact on the Trust, in terms of Giving users and carers a voice?

Helping users and carers to access better care?

Helping users and carers to access better information about mental health services?

Facilitating the complaints process?

Increasing awareness amongst staff of the importance of users' and carers' views?

6. Do you think on the whole PALS meets the needs and demands of the users and carers?

*Prompts - Why and how?*

7. What would you want changed about PALS in the future?

*Thank you and brief description of what happens next, data anonymity etc*

**South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust  
Patient Advice and Liaison Service**

**Evaluation of PALS**

**PALS Interview Proforma**

About the development of PALS and the PALS Board

1. What do you think about the overall standard of leadership and direction of the PALS project
2. Please give me an example of the important things that PALS leadership does which has contributed to PALS development
3. What do you consider to be the most important function of the PALS Board?
4. Do you think the PALS Board has achieved this function?  
(scale from... never - all the time)
5. Do you think the Board has appropriate representation?  
(Comments)
6. Do you think the PALS Boards has the appropriate links with other strategic elements of Wakefield and Pontefract Community Health NHS Trust management – such as the Mental Health Service Board, Trust Board?  
Comments
7. What changes could be made to the PALS Board to further improve its role?

PALS Standards and philosophy

8. Do you feel PALS is loyal to its values and standards for good practice  
(Philosophy statement) - show copy to refresh memory
9. Is easy or difficult to follow this philosophy?
10. What are the difficult areas?
11. How might these be resolved?

What impact has PALS had?

12. In your opinion, has PALS had an impact on the Trust, in terms of
  - Giving users and carers a voice?
  - Helping users and carers to access better care?
  - Helping users and carers to access better information about mental health services?
  - Facilitating the complaints process?
  - Increasing awareness amongst staff of the importance of users' and carers' views?



### PALS processes

13. Is PALS flexible to change? Any examples of this?
14. What is communication like between PALS and the rest of the Trust?
15. Do you think PALS is a fast or slow service? Why?

### Users and carers who access PALS

16. Do you think you meet the needs and demands of the users and carers who access PALS?
17. Why and how?
18. Please give me up to three  
Good things about PALS as it is now?

Areas for development and change for PALS in the future

*Thank you for your time. The information you give me will not be attributable to you as an individual but will be grouped as the responses of the PALS team.*

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

**PALS Board questionnaire**

*The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), for the whole of the area and services provided by the former Wakefield and Pontefract Community Health NHS Trust, has been in operation at Fieldhead for almost one year. The PALS service is located next to the shop and café at Fieldhead.*

*PALS is a service for people who use or come into contact with the mental health and learning disability services. We are committed to responding to service users', carers' and staff views. The information we get from your views will help to improve our PALS and shape PALS across the new Trust, and PALS in other health services.*

*As a member of the PALS Project Board, which has had a key role in the development of PALS, we would like to ask you to take a few minutes to give us your views on PALS. All the information you give us will be treated in confidence and will be anonymous. We have attached the Terms of Reference of the PALS Project Board to the end of the questionnaire as an aide-mémoire.*

---

**Please tick ONE box only unless specified**

**SECTION 1: ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF PALS**

1. Do you think the overall standard of leadership and direction of the PALS project was:
- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Excellent                | Good                     | Average                  | Below Average            | Poor                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2. Please give an example of an important way the leadership for PALS has contributed to PALS development:

.....

.....

.....

3. What do you consider to be the most important function of the PALS Board?

.....

.....

.....

4. Do you think the PALS Board has achieved this function?

Never	Occasionally	Nearly Always	All the time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Do you think the Board has appropriate representation?

Yes  No

*Please comment*

.....  
.....  
.....

6. Do you think the PALS Board has the appropriate links with other strategic elements of Wakefield and Pontefract Community Health NHS Trust management, e.g. the Mental Health Service Board and the Trust Board?

Yes  No

*Please comment*

.....  
.....  
.....

**SECTION 2: ABOUT THE FUNCTION OF THE BOARD IN THE FUTURE**

7. What changes could be made to the PALS Board to further improve its role, e.g. more meetings, less meetings, different representation, other suggestions? .

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**SECTION 3: ABOUT PALS IN GENERAL**

8. In your opinion, has PALS had an impact on the Trust, in terms of giving service users and carers a voice?

Yes  No

9. In your opinion, has PALS had an impact on the Trust, in terms of helping service users and carers to raise concerns they may have with Trust services?

Yes  No

10. In your opinion, has PALS had an impact on the Trust, in terms of helping service users and carers to access better information about mental health and learning disability services?

Yes  No

11. In your opinion, has PALS had an impact on the Trust, in terms of helping individuals access the complaints process?  
 Yes  No
12. In your opinion, has PALS had an impact on the Trust, in terms of increasing awareness amongst staff of the importance of service users' and carers' views?  
 Yes  No
13. Please list up to 3 good things about PALS as it is now?  
 a. ....  
 b. ....  
 c. ....
14. Please list up to 3 areas for development for PALS in the future?  
 a. ....  
 b. ....  
 c. ....
15. Thinking about the original plans to develop PALS, how would you rate PALS' achievements against the Board's expectations?  
 Fully achieved  Partly achieved  Not achieved

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**

***Please return it – in the internal post –  
 to the QED department, Fieldhead  
 by 31 May 2002***

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

**Staff Survey**

*The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) for the whole of the mental health and learning disabilities services in Wakefield and Pontefract, and has been in operation at Fieldhead for almost one year. The PALS service is located next to the shop and café at Fieldhead.*

*PALS is a service for people who use or come into contact with the mental health and learning disability services. We are committed to responding to service users', clients', carers' and staff views. The information we get from your views, as a member of staff, will help PALS in Wakefield and Pontefract, across the localities of the new Trust and in other health services.*

*Please take a few minutes to give us your views on PALS. All the information you give us will be treated anonymously. Thank you.*

**Please tick ONE box only unless specified**

1. Did you know about the Patient Advice and Liaison Service? *(Please remember that the shop and café are NOT PALS)*  
 Yes                       No  *(Please go to Q7)*
  
2. Have you referred anyone to PALS?  
 Yes                       No
  
3. If you have accessed PALS on behalf of a service user, client or carer, please tell us how? *(Please tick ALL that apply)*
  - I have 'dropped in' to the PALS office at Fieldhead
  - I have phoned PALS
  - I have picked up leaflets and written information for a service user/client or carer
  - Other ways *(please tell us below)*

.....

- I haven't used PALS yet *(Please go to Q7)*
  
4. How would it be easier or better for you to be able to contact PALS, to get information or help for a service user/client/carer/yourself?  
 .....  
 .....

5. Based on your experience of contact with PALS, please give your opinion of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
PALS does not make judgements about service users, clients and carers						
Anyone can use PALS						
PALS respects service users', clients' and carers' privacy and dignity						
PALS supports service users, clients and carers to speak for themselves						
PALS staff do not impose their own views on service users, clients and carers						
PALS tries to resolve the issues raised by service users, clients and carers quickly and efficiently						
PALS is quite an informal service						
PALS gives feedback when promised						
PALS only takes an issue forward when the service user, client or carer wants them to						
PALS is a confidential service						
PALS helps service users, clients and carers to get involved in mental health and learning disability-related groups or projects						

6. Would you recommend PALS to service users, clients or carers that you know?

Yes  No

7. Please add any further comments you would like to make about PALS.

.....  
 .....

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire  
 Please return it to the QED department, Fieldhead (in the internal post)  
 by 14<sup>th</sup> June 2002**

### Appendix 3: London PALS pathfinder sites

<b>Why did they evaluate PALS?</b>	To review the experiences of the 12 PALS pathfinder sites in London to inform guidance for the development and management of new PALS.
<b>When did they do it?</b>	Six months after the PALS pathfinders had been set up. Evaluation carried out between August and October 2001.
<b>Who carried out the evaluation?</b>	SILKAP Consultants - commissioned by the London Regional Office of the Department of Health. <i>Patient Advocacy and Liaison Services - A Review of the London PALS Pathfinder sites.</i> SILKAP Consultants, October 2001. NHS London Regional Office.
<b>How did they do it?</b>	Rapid appraisal method involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visits to each site</li><li>• In-depth interviews with key staff</li><li>• In-depth interviews with users</li><li>• Site observations</li></ul>

#### What did they conclude?

- ⇒ Trusts were listening to feedback and trying to handle patients' concerns
- ⇒ There was a lot of enthusiasm for PALS on the ground reflecting the commitment and calibre of the staff
- ⇒ It seemed critical that services would have to challenge the status quo to ensure they did reach vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. This had implications for resources and staff training.

The report made a number of recommendations for:

- ⇒ Training PALS staff
- ⇒ Management & structural links
- ⇒ Publicity and awareness raising
- ⇒ Data collection & monitoring
- ⇒ Evaluation
- ⇒ Improving local service delivery

**Contact:** **SILKAP consultants**  
Email: [silkap@bopenworld.com](mailto:silkap@bopenworld.com)

## ***Silkap Review Of The London Pathfinder PALS***

### **Interview Schedule for London Pathfinder PALS**

The aim is to elicit feedback about the actual experiences, lessons learnt and future priorities for the service. The Schedule is structured to cover the following areas:

- Nature and Organisation Of The Service:
- Establishment / Development Of The Service:
- Staff Recruitment, Selection And Training
- Delivery
- Management Of Service
- Data Collection
- Communication
- Links And Relationships
- Service Monitoring And Evaluation
- Service Impact And Outcomes
- Service Development And Improvement

**Please start by completing the respondents' details below:**

#### 1. Organisation and Contact Details

Name:

Organisation / Group:

Job Title:

Address:

Post Code:  Telephone:  Fax No:

Email:

Nature and Organisation Of The Service:

#### **Rationale**

1. PALS Context: (*prompts*)
  - Type of NHS Trust*
  - Population served - how identified*



- Location of service*
  - Needs being addressed by service*
2. Description of the service provided: *(prompts)*
    - Aims*
    - Objectives*
    - Principles*
    - Nos. staff*
    - Activities*
    - Availability of the services – access times - how was this identified? e.g. weekends, peak periods*
    - Access – methods*
  3. What is the organisational structure of the service?
  4. How does the PALS differ from the Trust's Complaints and Customer Services Departments?
  5. What boundaries are there to distinguish the PALS from other services?

<b>Establishment / Development Of The Service:</b>
----------------------------------------------------

6. How the service was established? *(prompts)*
  - Was it established from nothing?*
  - Was it building on an existing service / framework / existing plans*
7. Who was involved in developing the service? *(prompts)*
  - How were staff involved?*
  - How were users / patients involved?*
  - How were local communities involved?*
8. What was the initial cost of setting up the service?

<b>Staff Recruitment, Selection And Training</b>
--------------------------------------------------

9. How many staff are in the service? *(prompts)*
  - Staff role / jobs / designation / tenure*
  - Grades*
10. What are their roles / responsibilities / grades?
11. What skills and qualities were identified for PALS staff?
12. How were job descriptions developed?

13. How were staff recruited?
14. How many staff have left the service since its establishment?
15. Does the service have its full complement of staff?
16. If not, where do gaps exist?
17. How are recruitment issues being address / resolved?
18. Have you undertaken any training for staff ?
- If yes, please describe.*
  - If no, what training would you like to undertake ?*
19. Have you identified any training needs for staff ?

<u>Delivery</u>
-----------------

20. What is the patient Pathway through the PALS?
21. How are enquires from users / patients dealt with? (*prompts*)
- Taking action*
  - Providing feedback to users / the Trust*
22. What provisions are there to meet the needs of specific user groups, e.g.? (*prompts*)
- People who do not speak English*
  - People with hearing difficulties*
  - People with sight difficulties*
  - People with mobility difficulties*
  - People with learning difficulties disabilities*
  - People with Mental health Problems*
  - Older people*
  - Young people*
  - Children*
  - Women*
  - Other groups*
23. Does the service undertake any pro-active work that is not initiated by contact with users / patients?
24. How long do you normally spend on an enquiry (from initial contact to resolution)?

## Management Of Service

25. How is the service managed?

26. Who manages the services?

27. What mechanisms or structures exist for? (*prompts*)

- Managing individual members of staff (including staff support)*
- Staff feedback and discussion about the service*
- Problems solving and sharing information*

## Data Collection

28. What procedures or systems are in place for recording and monitoring enquires / cases?

29. What, if any, links are there to complaints monitoring systems / data?

30. What data is included in your routine monitoring of the service?

31. What are the common themes for assistance or support that the service receives?

32. What is the user profile of the service?

33. What IT / Computer software package/s are used? (*prompts*)

- Datex*
- AMS*
- Other*

34. Are these systems adequate for the monitoring you require / are expected to carry out?

35. What are the limitations of the system being used?

## Communication

36. How are users / patients informed about the service?

37. What information is provided about the service for? (*prompts*)

- Users / patients / community & voluntary groups*
- Members of staff*

38. What information outlets are used? (*prompts*)

- Internally*
- externally*

39. What methods / activities have been used to raise awareness about the service? (*prompts*)

- Leaflets*
- Posters*
- Presentations*
- Road show*
- Open Days*
- Other*

40. What mechanisms are there for on-going communication and feedback? (*prompts*)

- Of issues to the Trust*
- To service users*
- To staff*

41. Is there an expectation that the PALS provide feedback to the Trust on common issues emerging?

<u>Links And Relationships</u>
--------------------------------

42. What links does the service have with departments across the Trust? (*prompts*)

- Specifically links with Chief Exec.*
- Formal*
- Informal*

For example, what links exist to other relevant departments? (*prompts*)

- Complaints*
- Customer services*
- Clinical Governance / Quality Assurance*
- Performance management*
- Other*

43. What mechanisms are in place for liaison with related support services, e.g.? (*prompts*)

- Interpreting services*
- Independent advocacy organisations*
- Community groups*
- CHCs*
- CABs*
- Other*

44. What is the experience of working with / liaising with other agencies?

## Service Monitoring And Evaluation

45. How effective is the service at dealing with the problems / issues brought by users / patients?
46. How does the service deal with enquiries / cases which are which are 'inappropriate'? (*prompts*)
- signposting to other 'appropriate' services
  - referring to other 'appropriate' services
  - providing information about other services
47. Is there a formal internal monitoring and reporting mechanism?
48. Have any systems / methods been developed for measurement and / or evaluation of the service?
49. What mechanisms are in place to manage unresolved issues?
50. How are issues / enquiries managed which the service is unable to deal with ?
51. What problems / issues have arisen?

## Service Impact And Outcomes

52. What are the expected **benefits** of providing this service from the perspective of? (*prompts*)
- Users/patients*
  - Staff*
53. What are the perceived **problems** of providing this service from the perspective of? (*prompts*)
- Users/patients*
  - Staff*
54. How has the actual experience of the service measured against the service objectives?
55. What impact has the service had on the wider Trust services?
56. What tensions are there for delivering a patient centred service in relation to the Trust's own agenda?
57. How is the issue of conflict of interest resolved / dealt with by the service?
58. What impact has the service had on complaints? (*prompts*)
- Numbers*
  - Type*

59. How has the service been influenced by: (*prompts*)

- users*
- others*

60. What issues have been raised by the service which need follow-up action by the Trust?

61. How has the service influenced the wider agenda for user involvement in the Trust?

62. Do you have any evidence that staff attitudes have been influenced by the service?

63. Is the emphasis of dealing with user / patients concerns now broader than dealing with complaints?

64. What are the common failures of the service? (additional prompt / catch all from Q54.)

<b>Service Development And Improvement</b>
--------------------------------------------

65. What areas of the service do you think need to be improved or developed?

66. What constraints have there been to developing the services?

67. Has the level of support within the Trust enabled the service to develop as expected?

68. In what areas do you think greater support is required? (*prompts*)

- Management*
- Training*
- Recruitment*
- User involvement*
- Linkages / liaison across Trust*
- Follow-through*
- Other*

69. Where should this support come from? (*prompts*)

- Trust*
- LRO*
- Centre*

70. What lessons / issues have been identified since establishment of the service?

71. How have the issues been dealt with?

72. How have the lessons been applied within the service?

73. What are the key messages / lessons that you would want to pass on to any new PALS being developed?

74. What changes have you made to the service?

## ***Silkap Review Of The London Pathfinder PALS***

### **Interview Schedule for Users**

The Schedule is structured to cover, the user's experience of using the PALS. The aim is to elicit feedback about the actual experiences and views about changes or improvements that could be made.

#### General

1. Name of PALS:
2. Date of interview:
3. Time of Interview:
4. Interviewers Name:

#### Using PALS

5. Why did you contact the PALS?
6. How did you find out about the PALS?
7. How many times have you used the PALS?
8. What did you expect to get form the PALS?
9. Did the assistance you received meet your expectations? / Did the PALS help to resolve your enquiry / problem?
10. Were you happy with the way you were treated?
11. Were you happy with the way your enquiry was handled?
12. How long did it take to meet resolve your problem / deal with your concern?
13. Would you use the services again for a similar problem?
14. Would you recommend someone else to use the PALS?
15. If you had not used the PALS where would you have received assistance?
16. Have the PALS staff ever asked for you views about the service? (*prompts*)
  - When*
  - How*



17. Have you been asked to participate in the development of the service in any other way? (*prompts*)

- Participate in a user group*
- Survey*
- Steering group*
- Advisory group*
- User panel*
- Other*

18. What do you most like about the PALS? (*prompts*)

- Its location*
- How your enquiry/ issue/s is handled*
- Staff attitude towards you*
- How quickly your concern is dealt with*
- Other*

19. What do you least like about the PALS? (*prompts*)

- Its location*
- How your enquiry/ issue/s is handled*
- Staff attitude towards you*
- How quickly your concern is dealt with*
- Other*

20. Is there anything about the services you would like to see changed or improved? (*prompts*)

- Location*
- How long you have to wait to get your concern dealt with*
- The way you were treated?*
- The way your enquiry / concern was handled*

## Appendix 4: University College London Hospitals NHS Trust

**Why did they evaluate PALS?** UCLH was one of the 12 PALS pathfinder sites. Review of the service formed part of the transition from pathfinder status to fully established PALS.  
The Trust's Clinical Governance Committee also requested a review of the service to provide information to inform future decisions about the development of PALS.

**When did they do it?** January – March 2002. Service established in September 2001.  
**Who carried out the evaluation?** Led by PALS Manager. Overseen by the Patient Quality and Environment Board (a sub-committee of the Trust Clinical Governance Committee). The Camden User Involvement Network (CUIN) also reviewed the work. CUIN was formed from the Camden CHC User Involvement Working Group and has become a shadow Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health.

**How did they do it?**

- Assessed their performance against national standards
- Assessed their performance against UCLH PALS delivery standards
- Carried out client satisfaction survey – 31 out of 121 returned.
- Carried out a cost comparison between PALS and formal complaints

### What did they conclude?

- ⇒ UCLH was achieving and far exceeded the required level 1 of the eight national standards set out in the PALS Resource Pack. In many cases it was achieving the highest level of 5.
- ⇒ Over 80% of patients were happy with the way they were treated and 67% were happy with the way their query was handled.
- ⇒ PALS proved less resource intensive than the complaints process.
- ⇒ Six service improvements had been made during the evaluation period (from repainting of waiting areas to provision of volunteers in the minor trauma area) and a further nine were identified.

**Contact:** Sue Benn, PALS Manager  
Email: sue.benn@uclh.org

**University College Hospital PALS Evaluation July 2002**  
**A review of complex PALS cases**

A comparative analysis of complex PALS cases with the NHS complaints procedure.

The national complaint procedure stipulates what part of the complaints management process is carried out by particular grades of staff. The order follows the normal route of a formal complaint through the national procedure. One session is equal to 15 minutes.

**An assessment of the time and resources taken to manage a formal complaint.**

Step 1	Complaints Officer Receives complaint, entry onto database, Letter of acknowledgement sent to complainant	<i>(2 sessions)</i>
Step 2	Complaints Manager Forwarding of complaint to relevant general manager	<i>(1 session)</i>
Step 3	Operational Manager Investigation of complaint, letters or reply drafted	<i>(x sessions) where x should be equal to the number of sessions PALS would take to investigate the same complaint.</i>
Step 4	General Manager Checking draft investigation report	<i>(1 session)</i>
Step 5	Complaints Manager Final quality check	<i>(2 sessions)</i>
Step 6	Chief Executive Signing off final response	<i>(1 session)</i>

**Grades of Trust Staff**

Complaints Officer	8	=	PALS Facilitator & PALS Administrator
Complaints Manager	10	=	PALS Manager
Operational Manager	12		
General Manager	15		
Chief Executive	25		

**Cost of formal complaint**

Step 1	2 sessions	@	8	=	16
Step 2	1 session	@	10	=	10

Step 3	x sessions	@	12	=	12x
Step 4	1 session	@	15	=	15
Step 5	2 sessions	@	10	=	20
Step 6	1 session	@	25	=	25
Total	7 + x sessions			=	86 + 12x

### The PALS Process

- Step 1 PALS Administrator  
Receives complaint, entry into database, letter sent/ telephone contact to acknowledge complaint.  
*(2 sessions)*
- Step 2 PALS Facilitator  
Investigation of complaint, letters or reply drafted.  
*(x sessions plus 1 session)* where x is the number of sessions PALS took to investigate the complaint, the extra session is taken up with the PALS Manager in the final check.
- Step 3 PALS Manager  
Final check and signing off  
*(1 session)*

### Cost of PALS

Step 1	2 sessions	@	8	=	16
Step 2	x sessions	@	8	=	8x
Step 3	1 session	@	8	=	8 (PALS Facilitator)
	1 session	@	10	=	10 (PALS Manager)
Total	4 + x sessions			=	34 + 8x

**Cost of PALS** **4 + x sessions = 34 + 8x**

**Cost of Formal Complaint** **7 + x sessions = 86 + 12x**

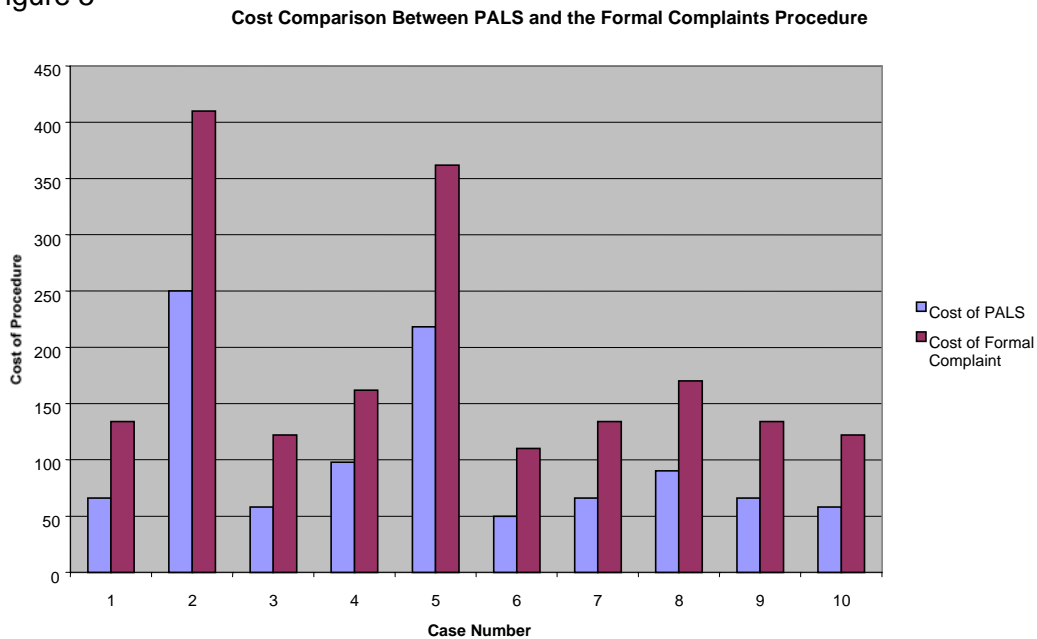
Table 1 Cost comparison between PALS and the formal complaints procedure

Case Number	X	Cost of PALS	Cost of Formal Complaint	Difference in Cost
1	4	66	134	68
2	27	250	410	160
3	3	58	122	64
4	3 +	98	162	64

	4(10)			
5	23	218	362	144
6	2	50	110	60
7	4	66	134	68
8	7	90	170	80
9	4	66	134	68
10	3	58	122	64

Case 4 required 4 extra sessions of the PALS Managers time, hence 4 sessions valued at 10 is added to the x value in case 4.

Figure 5



**Mean Cost of PALS: 102**  
**Mean Cost of Formal Complaint: 186**

**Mean Difference in Cost: 84 = 45.16%**

These figures indicate that the Patient Advisory and Liaison Service is 45.16% **more cost effective** than the formal complaints procedure. Solving complaints via PALS is more economic for the Trust. The process PALS employs involves a **three step process**, compared to a six step process for formal complaints, and does not require Chief Executive involvement. In conclusion, PALS is a less time consuming process and thus complaints can be dealt with in a more timely and less expensive way.

## Appendix 5: Wakefield West Primary Care NHS Trust

<b>Why did they evaluate PALS?</b>	To identify what was working well and areas for improvement and development.
<b>When did they do it?</b>	Six months after the service began. The PALS was set up as a pathfinder site in October 2001.
<b>Who carried out the evaluation?</b>	The Quality Evaluation and Development Department at the South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust.
<b>How did they do it?</b>	<p>To evaluate PALS from different perspectives the following data was reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a report from the PALS manager</li><li>• the record of PALS issues or enquiries</li><li>• a questionnaire survey of Health Visitors and District Nurses -14 out of 31 returned</li><li>• telephone interviews with Practice Managers – 8 out of 10 agreed to be interviewed</li><li>• a questionnaire survey of patients using primary care services – 105 out of 360 returned</li><li>• a questionnaire survey of patients who had contact with their Health Visitor or District Nurse – 27 out of 160 returned</li><li>• a questionnaire survey of PALS service users – 3 out of 10 returned</li></ul>

### What did they conclude?

- ⇒ A hub and spoke model had been successfully established
- ⇒ PALS had successfully developed links with other PALS and organisations
- ⇒ Community nurses proved key to PALS and the majority were referring patients to the service
- ⇒ Successful training of staff had been delivered – more was called for by practice staff
- ⇒ Overall awareness of PALS was low and needed to be raised

**Contact:** **Joanne Hinchcliffe, Public Involvement Co-ordinator**  
**Email:** [Joanne.Hinchcliffe@wwpct.nhs.uk](mailto:Joanne.Hinchcliffe@wwpct.nhs.uk)

**Wakefield West Primary Care Trust  
Public Involvement Questionnaire  
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), is a new service for people who use or come into contact with local health services. PALS is there to provide information on a wide range of health and related issues; give contact details of support and voluntary organisations; and to resolve concerns quickly and efficiently.

Wakefield West Primary Care Trust PALS has been in operation for almost six months through GP surgeries and health centres; individual staff such as district nurses/health visitors; and via a freephone helpline.

It is a service for you and we are committed to responding to your views.

We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to give us your views on PALS. All the information will remain anonymous and will not restrict anyone's treatment, care, or access to services.

The information we get from your response to these questions will help to develop and improve PALS in Wakefield.

Thank you for your time.

---

**Please tick ONE box unless otherwise stated**

**Q1** Were you aware of the Patient Advice and Liaison Service?  
 Yes *(Please go to Q2)*                       No *(Please go to Q6)*

**Q2** How did you find out about PALS?

- |                                                 |                                              |                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saw a poster           | <input type="checkbox"/> Picked up a leaflet | <input type="checkbox"/> My GP told me                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Visitor told me | <input type="checkbox"/> Nurse told me       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other<br><i>(please specify below)</i> |
- 

**Q3** Have you used PALS?  
 Yes *(Please go to Q3a)*                       No *(Please go to Q6)*

**Q3a** If you answered 'yes' to Q3, what did you use PALS for?

- Information about health care services
- For contact details of support/voluntary organisations
- For information about how to make a complaint
- Other *(please specify below)*

**Q3b** Where was your contact with PALS? *(Please tick all that apply)*

- At my doctor's surgery
  - From my Health Visitor
  - From my District Nurse
  - At Trust Headquarters (Thornhill St)
  - Other *(please specify)*
-



**Q4**

Please give your opinion/impression on the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5
It is easy to access the service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A good range of information is available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The staff are friendly and courteous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I received a prompt response	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The outcome was satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please comment:

.....  
.....

**Q5**

Would you use PALS again?

- Yes       No       Not sure       Not applicable

**Q6**

Would you use PALS in the future?

- Yes *(Please go to Q6a)*       No *(Please go to Q7)*

**Q6a** If you answered 'yes' to Q6, what would you use PALS for?

- To gain information about health care services
  - To gain information about support/voluntary organisations
  - To help resolve concerns about local health services
  - To gain information about how to make a complaint
  - Other *(please specify below)*
- 

**Q7** What other services would you like PALS to provide?

---

---

**Q8** Would you recommend PALS to other people?

- Yes       No       Not sure       Not applicable

Please make any further comments below

---

---

---

---

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**

*Please return it to the QED department, Fieldhead in the pre-paid envelope provided by 28<sup>th</sup> March 2002.*

If you would be interested in feedback from the questionnaire on completion of the evaluation, please fill in your details below and return this sheet with the questionnaire.

This sheet will be detached from the questionnaire, so that your views remain anonymous.

---

Please send me a copy of the findings from the Wakefield West PALS

Your name: .....

Your address: .....

.....

.....

Telephone number: .....



**District Nurse and Health Visitor Questionnaire**

**Q1** Do you carry the PALS cards?

Yes  No

**Q2** Do you carry the PALS leaflets?

Yes  No

**Q3** Do you carry the recording forms for PALS enquiries?

Yes  No

**Q4**

Please give your opinion on the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a) I am able to give patients sufficient information about accessing PALS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) I think PALS is able to help patients with their enquiries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) I think PALS is easily accessible to patients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) I refer patients to PALS when they have an enquiry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q5**

Do you have any comments you would like to make about any of the above statements?

**Q6**

---

Are there any additional ways you think patients should be able to access PALS?

**Q7**

---

Do you have any suggestions on how PALS can be developed or improved?

---

---

---

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**

**Please return it to the QED department, Fieldhead by 28<sup>th</sup> March 2002  
in the enclosed pre-paid envelope.**



**WAKEFIELD WEST PRIMARY CARE TRUST  
PATIENT ADVICE AND LIAISON SERVICE (PALS)**

**TELEPHONE SURVEY – PRACTICE MANAGERS**

**SCORE 1 = low, 5 = high**

1. Would you feel able to give patients sufficient information about accessing PALS?  
Please give a score 1-5
  
2. Do you think PALS is easily accessible for patients?  
Please give a score 1-5
  
3. Would you refer a patient to PALS if they had a query that you were unable to resolve?  
Yes/No  
Can you give any reasons for your answer?
  
4. Do you feel that PALS will empower front-line staff to deal with queries?  
Yes/No  
Can you give any reasons for your answer?
  
5. Are there any additional ways you think patients should be able to access PALS?  
Any comments?
  
6. Do you have any suggestions on how PALS can be developed or improved?  
Any comments?

## Appendix 6: Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust

<b>Why did they evaluate PALS?</b>	To examine progress against the PALS Core standards issued by the Department of Health in January 2002 (in the PALS Resource Pack).
<b>When did they do it?</b>	June 2002. The PALS began as a telephone service in April 2001 and the first full-time PALS officer came into post in August 2001.
<b>Who carried out the evaluation?</b>	Clinical Audit Department, Hull & East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust
<b>How did they do it?</b>	The evaluation relied on four main source of information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PALS activity data</li><li>• Patient views – semi-structured telephone interviews used to set the questions for a postal survey</li><li>• Staff questionnaire</li><li>• Informally obtaining the views of partner organisations – responses obtained in writing or in person</li></ul>

### What did they conclude?

- ⇒ A reception area needed to be established for one of the PALS services
- ⇒ Staff awareness of PALS needed to be raised and training for staff provided
- ⇒ Links with new partnership organisations were needed
- ⇒ PALS staff had proved open, supportive and approachable to patients and Trust staff
- ⇒ A formal system needs to be developed to record the outcomes of learning from PALS
- ⇒ The Shadow Patient Forum should consider all the recommendations made in the Evaluation Report

**Contact:** **Heather Kelly, Clinical Quality Co-ordinator**  
**Email:** [Heather.Kelly@hey.nhs.uk](mailto:Heather.Kelly@hey.nhs.uk)

Hull & East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust

**PALS EVALUATION: QUESTIONNAIRE TO PATIENTS**

The PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) was introduced in April 2001, to provide on the spot advice and support to patients, carers, family and friends when needed. The aim of this questionnaire is to find out how they found the PALS service. All responses will be confidential.

Please tick the relevant boxes:

ID NO.....

1. How did you find out about PALS?

Receptionists       Complaints Department       Other Staff   
Leaflet       Poster       Another Organisation

Other (please specify).....

2. Did you find it easy to contact the PALS Officer?

Yes       No

3. Were you made aware of the option of going through PALS or the Complaints Department

Yes       No

4. Did PALS give you the help you needed?

Yes, the issue was sorted out   
PALS did as much as possible but the issue was not sorted out   
No, I felt that PALS could have done more

4.a If your problem was not sorted out, did PALS give you advice where to go next?

Yes       No

4.b. Comments:

.....

5. Did you feel that the length of time taken to sort out your problem was acceptable?

Yes       No



6. Were you kept informed of progress by PALS?

Yes  No

If no, comments  
 please.....  
 .....  
 .....

7. How did you rate the service from PALS?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PALS staff were friendly				
PALS staff were polite				
PALS staff were professional				
PALS staff listened to me				
PALS staff gave me up to date information				

8. If contact with PALS was mainly over the telephone how did you feel about this?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I was happy with telephone contact				
I would prefer a face to face meeting				
I would prefer a home visit				

9. What did you most like about PALS?

Its accessibility       How your enquiry/issue was handled   
 PALS staff attitude towards you       How quickly your concern was dealt with

If other, please state.....

10. What did you least like about PALS?

Its accessibility       How your enquiry/issue was handled   
 PALS staff attitude towards you       How quickly your concern was dealt with

11. What hours would you like this service to be available?

24 hour telephone service  Reception cover Mon – Fri 9am to   
5pm

Reception cover evenings and weekends

Other, please state .....

12. Is there anything about PALS that you would like to see changed or improved?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

13. Would you use the PALS service again for a similar problem?

Yes  No

14. Would you recommend someone else to use the PALS service?

Yes  No

15. Were you asked if you would like to be involved in the work of the Hospital?

Yes  No

15a, If yes, have you actually been involved in any of the following:

Participate in a user group  Survey  Steering Group

Advisory group  User panel  Other

If other, please state .....

16. Any other comments:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO FILL IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PALS Staff Awareness Questionnaire**

PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) was introduced in this Trust as a Pathfinder in April 2001. All NHS Trusts should have PALS by April 2002. In order to evaluate the service, we would be grateful if you could take time to complete this questionnaire. In addition, we are conducting a Patient Satisfaction Survey, in order to obtain their views. All responses will be confidential and feedback from this survey will be available on the Trust Intranet site and in the Newsletter. ***On completion, please return in the envelope provided to: Name, (address) by (date) .***

**JOB TITLE:**

Consultant  Nurse/Service Manager  Admin & Clerical/Secretaries

Nurse  Other  If other, please state .....

1a. Are you aware of PALS? YES  NO

1b. If yes, how did you find out about the service?

Newsletter  Meetings  Presentations  Leaflet  Posters

Other .....

***If no, please contact 3065 CHH for further information***

2. Do you feel you understand the role of PALS? YES  NO

3a. Have you contacted PALS? YES  NO

**If no, please go to question 4a**

3b. If yes, please state reason:

To refer patient  Advice/information  User Group  Training

Other .....

3c. What made you decide to use PALS?

.....  
.....

**PLEASE TURN OVER**

3d. Did you have any problems accessing PALS? YES  NO

3e. If yes, please state.....

4a. Have you been involved with a PALS issue? YES  NO

***If no, please go to question 5***

4b. If yes, what was your overall experience? POSITIVE  NEGATIVE

4c. How many times have you been involved with a PALS issue? .....

5. Are you clear about the differences between PALS and complaints?  
YES  NO

6. What do you feel that PALS do well?  
.....  
.....

7a. Have you any ideas/suggestions on how to improve the service?  
YES  NO

7b. If yes, please state .....

8. Do you have a supply of PALS leaflets on your ward/department?  
YES  NO

9. Would you be interested in attending a PALS training session?  
YES  NO

10. Any other comments .....

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE