

Meeting Title:	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee		Agenda Item:	
Date of Meeting:	23 July 2019			
Title of Report:	Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service Update			
Author:	Tamsin Flint, Commissioning Manager, Thanet CCG			
Executive/ Lay Sponsor:	Ailsa Ogilvie, Director of Partnerships and Membership Engagement, East Kent CCGs			
Finance sign-off				
This paper is for: <i>(please X as applicable)</i>	Approval	Decision	Assurance	Information
			X	
Are any members of the meeting conflicted?	Y/N			
Is circulation restricted? <i>(please X as applicable)</i>	No	Yes		
	X			
Report summary/purpose:				
This paper is to update Kent's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) on progress made since our last report in January 2019 to deliver improvement in service performance and quality for Kent's and Medway's Wheelchair service users.				
Recommendation:				
HOSC members are asked to note this report.				
Combined impact assessments				
<i>Has the report/recommendation/proposal been impact assessed</i>				
X	Yes			
	No (state reason)			

Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service Update January 2019

Situation:

Since September 2018, the positive impact of additional funding from the eight Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) along with improved provider operational processes and increases in Millbrook Healthcare clinical and support staffing continue to deliver steady improvement in service performance and quality; the overall open referrals caseload (adults and children) continues to reduce and is ahead of the improvement plan trajectory and average waiting times are shortening.

In two key areas, however, repairs within three days and children's cases closed within 18 weeks, performance is off trajectory. The CCG is monitoring closely to understand the reasons for this slippage and the actions Millbrook Healthcare is taking to get back on track.

Complaints have reduced in number and strengthened face to face engagement with service users is helpfully highlighting where there is need for further improvement.

Whilst average waiting times are shortening some service users are still experiencing unacceptably long waiting times for wheelchair assessments and repairs and both Millbrook Healthcare and Thanet CCG continue to work hard to address this to improve experience for all service users.

Background:

Millbrook Healthcare took over the NHS-funded wheelchair contract for Kent and Medway on 1st April 2017. The contract is managed by Thanet CCG on behalf of the eight Kent and Medway CCGs.

Following contract mobilisation Millbrook Healthcare raised concerns about the caseload inherited from the previous provider. A review of the evidence by the CCG and through an independent audit made clear that the inherited backlog had impacted on the ability of Millbrook Healthcare to deliver the contract and that demand into the service was more significant than had been predicted at the time of procurement.

Phased additional funding was approved by the eight Kent and Medway CCGs in September 2018 to enable Millbrook Healthcare to clear the long waiting lists they had inherited, and that had grown during year one, and to rebalance the case mix.

Assessment:

Performance

Latest data to end of May 2019 shows evidence of continued overarching improvement with reductions in the waiting lists for both equipment and repairs. The service closed 694 referrals during May against an improvement plan trajectory of

563 and overall the service is ahead of trajectory for open episodes of care, reporting a total 1,933 open cases at end of May 2019 against a planned trajectory of 2,180.

Between the end of August 2018 and the end of May 2019, the open referrals caseload for children and adults has steadily reduced from 3369 to 1933 and the CCG is assured that Millbrook Healthcare will deliver the service improvement plan trajectory of 1904 open referrals by September 2019.

Millbrook Healthcare continues to focus on long waiters and the average waiting time has reduced further from 31.2 weeks at the end of January 2019 to 23.06 weeks at the end of May 2019.

There have been marked improvements in the repairs waiting list for those who have been waiting for a wheelchair repair for more than ten days which has reduced from 461 in August 2018 to 36 by the end of May 2019. The overall number of open repairs (ten day and three day turn around) is 76 at the end of May 2019 compared to 266 at the end of November 2018, which is a reduction of 71 per cent in seven months.

Although there has also been improvement in the percentage of repairs completed within three working days, this is still not at the level it needs to be and is behind the improvement plan trajectory. Of the 396 repairs which were completed in May 2019 only 28 per cent were completed within three working days. Millbrook Healthcare has taken a number of actions to improve this area. A full review of the current routing system has been conducted to ensure all localities of Kent & Medway are visited by engineers within the three working days target. The service has introduced a more flexible user friendly offer of am/pm and 'first slot' appointments. The new and improved real-time software reporting system was successfully launched in January 2019 and will ensure that both sites are able to pro-actively manage and review repairs. Alongside these changes a new dedicated Kent and Medway wheelchair service website is now available which will shortly enable service users to report repairs and upload photos; this will support engineers to understand and decide how best to resolve the repairs issue prior to the appointment.

The first-fix rate for repairs has improved and has reached 100% for the first time since the start of the contract.

18 week waits children

In May 2019, there were 286 children on an incomplete episode of care, just under the improvement plan trajectory of 282. Over three quarters (76.6 per cent) of these children have been waiting for less than 18 weeks. This is a significant improvement on where we were at the beginning of the year, when slightly over half (53.2 per

cent) of children were waiting less than 18 weeks but it is behind the improvement plan trajectory which was to deliver the national 92% target by Quarter 1 2019-2020.

Slippage against this target was discussed with Millbrook Healthcare at the CCG's June Contract Management Committee meeting and since that time Millbrook Healthcare has reviewed all 77 open children's referrals over 18 weeks and as requested has reported back to the CCG. This review has brought to light that due to clerical error 10 cases which should have been closed as the episode of care had been completed had been left open. Additional staff training is in hand to avoid such errors in future. There are a further 24 cases where circumstances outside the provider's control are delaying case closure. This includes:

- Service user referred pre surgery putting progress on hold for four weeks
- Family decision making around voucher options
- Service user multiple do not attends due to ill health

The CCG is exploring this further with Millbrook Healthcare to determine whether it is appropriate to apply a clock stop in some circumstances; this would lift delivery of the target to 84% from the reported 76.6%, an improvement but still under target.

The CCG will continue to monitor this closely and has required the 92% target for children to be met within Quarter 2 2019-20.

Millbrook Healthcare has reported that all other children over 18 weeks have the appropriate next appointment scheduled.

18 week waits adults

In May 2019 1647 adults were on an incomplete episode of care, ahead of the improvement plan trajectory of 1,898. Just over half (54.5 per cent) of these adults have been waiting less than 18 weeks. This represents an improvement on performance at the beginning of the year when at end of January 2019 just over a third (37.7 per cent) had been waiting less than 18 weeks. There is not a national 18 week target for wheelchair services for adults but it is the CCG's aim that Millbrook Healthcare achieves a 92% target for adults as for children. The CCG is nearing completion of demand capacity modelling which will inform what level of open caseload will enable this and the budgetary implications.

Service user engagement

Three service user Engagement Events were held in April and May 2019 which have provided an excellent opportunity for Millbrook Healthcare staff and commissioners to hear directly from service users about their experiences and listen to suggestions that can inform further improvements in the service. More than 60 people who use NHS-funded wheelchairs took part and initial feedback from the events has been positive, with the majority feeding back they had found them informative sessions where they have gained a better understanding of the service and Millbrook Healthcare's plans to improve. There was a lot of useful feedback from the events, with service users saying they wanted Millbrook Healthcare to review the complaints

process, improve how the service communicates with them and explain better the process for issuing new wheelchairs.

Millbrook Healthcare's next step is to recruit a service improvement board and working groups involving service users that will play a pivotal role in making sure we continue to get things right.

Personal wheelchair budgets

Work is in progress with service user input to progress personal wheelchair budgets with a project plan in place for delivery from November 2019; a commissioning intentions letter will be issued shortly.

Quality, Safety and Improvement

East Kent CCGs' Quality, Safety and Improvement Team have worked closely over a number of months with Millbrook Healthcare to address quality concerns. The following is a snapshot of some of the improvements in quality that have been observed:

Service user experience

Millbrook Healthcare has been capturing service user feedback to provide a real time 'temperature check' of people's reported experience of the service. The overarching satisfaction survey score was overwhelmingly positive with feedback being received from service users and carers at all touch points within the service.

Feedback cards go out with repair visits and tablets were used in clinic, with service users also being given the option of completing a feedback card after the appointment if preferred. The survey is optional and 125 responses had been received between April and June 2019; these will continue to be reviewed by the CCG on an ongoing basis.

Safeguarding

Work is underway to make it easier to raise safeguarding alerts, particularly for field staff. A threshold toolkit has been developed as a result of the new safeguarding policy to improve and increase awareness amongst staff and a refresh of safeguarding training is also underway.

Governance

In June 2019 a separate quality focused contract management meeting took place, where Millbrook Healthcare set out their quality assurance and accountability structures and procedures. The CCG were assured that staffing levels within the clinical and customer service teams have stabilised and that an appropriate governance structure was in place, both in terms of committees and staffing structure. It has been noted that significant improvements have been observed at a

local level that coincide with the commencement of employment to a number of key roles.

Incidents

Incident reporting, although low in number, is at the higher end compared to other wheelchair services nationally. A number of incident learning events have taken place, sharing learning across the organisation and encouraging changing practice. An improved reporting culture has subsequently been observed and there has been a jump in incident reporting following learning events.

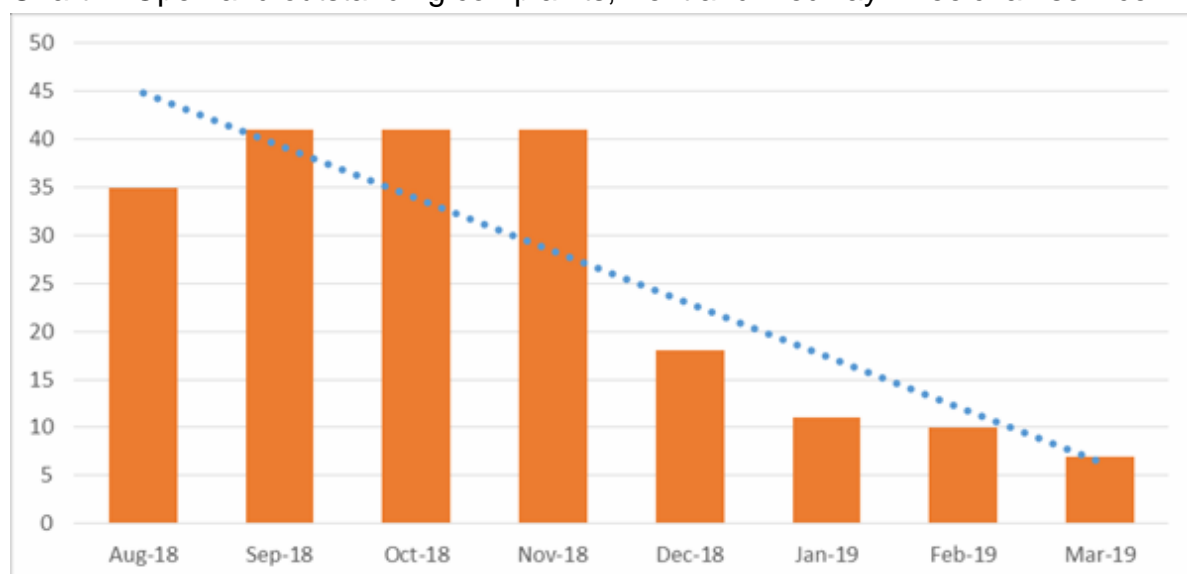
Complaints review

From the start of the contract in April 2017, there has been a high level of complaints reported. The majority of initial complaints related to issues around the inherited backlog and higher than expected activity levels that were impacting on effective delivery of the service.

A complaints review has been undertaken with CCG and Millbrook Healthcare quality colleagues working together to look at how the handling of complaints can be improved including responding to complaints within agreed timescales. In particular the team has been focusing on how lessons are learnt and how these can help drive further improvements in the service.

The service received a total of 102 complaints in the 12 months to 31 March 2019. This was a marginal increase of 8% on the previous year when 94 were reported. The chart below (chart 1) provides an overview of how the outstanding complaints have reduced in recent months.

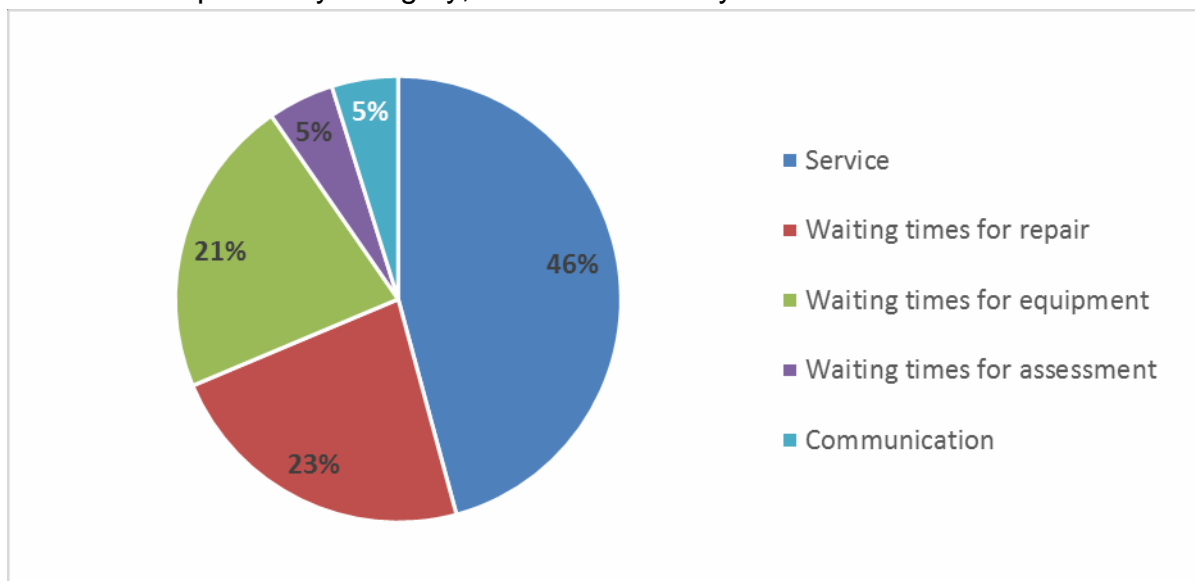
Chart 1: Open and outstanding complaints, Kent and Medway wheelchair service



A further reduction in complaints has been demonstrated since the beginning of this financial year with only two complaints received in April 2019 and a single complaint in May 2019.

The single largest complaint category reported in 2018/19 related to waiting times, totaling 41 separate complaints. This total can be broken down further into waiting times for assessment, equipment and repair. The second largest category related to service with 38 separate complaints received in 2018/19. The pie chart below (chart 2) provides an overview of the top five complaint categories reported in 2018/19.

Chart 2: Complaints by category, Kent and Medway wheelchair service



Millbrook Healthcare has been implementing a range of activities in order to improve the quality and timeliness of resolving complaints, developing the team and embedding learning in order to prevent issues from reoccurring. Some of the steps taken include:

- Centralising the customer service team at the Ashford site. The customer services team now seeks resolutions for informal complaints quickly rather than escalating unnecessarily through a formal complaints route, which had been happening in the past. The local management team now has ownership of the complaints process which includes an escalation process to the Customer Service Supervisor and to the Operations Manager.
- There is a greater emphasis on training with a focus on developing customer service skills. Training in this area for staff across the organisation will also include modules in managing conflict and challenging behaviour. The updated and additional training modules will be rolled out across the organisation during Q3 2019-20.
- A full and thorough complaints policy review was conducted towards the end of 2018 with an updated policy going live in 2019. The revised policy has

been aligned to NHS Complaints Regulations as well as Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) good complaint handling guidelines. The draft policy was also shared with a number of NHS commissioners for feedback as part of ongoing joint working.

- A real-time software reporting system, Millflow, was updated in January 2019 which not only meets national reporting requirements to the NHS Digital complaints collection tool but has the added benefit of having more efficient recording and reporting of data which helps improve the quality of information being captured.
- There is ongoing work around improving awareness of what the service can and cannot provide under the eligibility criteria to help better manage expectations of service stakeholders.
- A complaints competency audit has been developed for use across all services. This toolkit has been developed to review the fundamentals of the complaints process and audit staff knowledge and awareness of the complaints process and their roles and responsibilities within it. The audit tool is to be rolled out across all services during Q3 2019-20 with outcomes and recommendations to be reviewed as part of contract quality reporting.
- There is current focus on addressing the impact that DNA/UTA (Did not attend/Unable to attend) have on the service's ability to maintain clinic utilisation. With 121 DNA/UTA occurring in May 2019. These are lost opportunities to either begin the prescription process or handover equipment, an area that Millbrook Healthcare is actively looking to improve and have seen a reduction in June 2019 to 72.

Whilst there is no denying that the complaints process had previously not worked in the best interests of service users, relatives and carers, efforts made in the last year have seen marked improvements in the timeliness of responses and a greater deal of engagement on a local level in terms of maintaining local resolution.

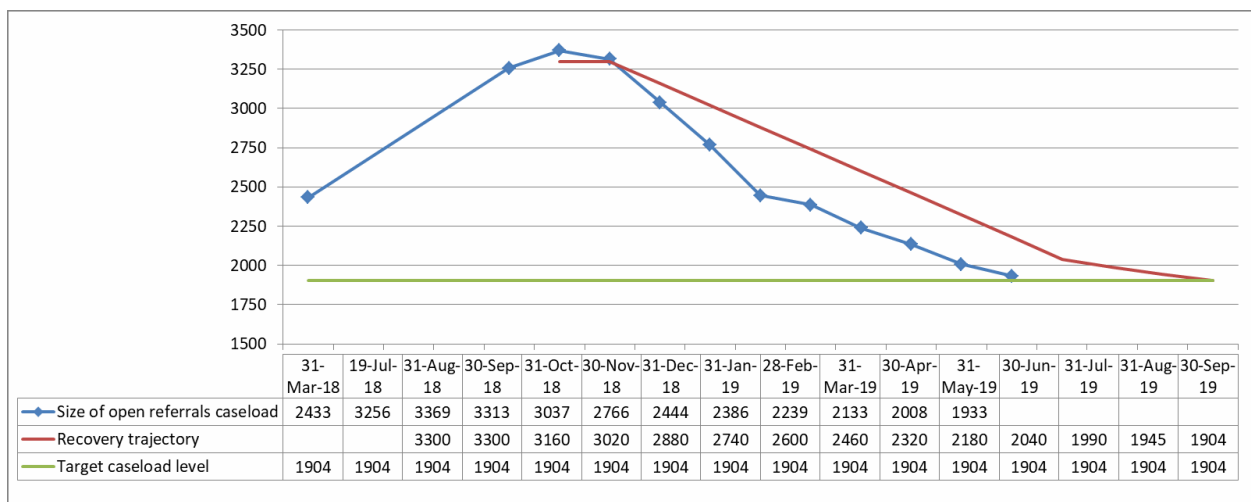
Recommendation:

Overall progress is being made and there continue to be clear signs of steady improvement for those who have been waiting a long time for assessment and repairs. That said, there has been slippage against the improvement trajectory in two key areas and hence there is ongoing work to get these areas back on track. Thanet CCG will continue to monitor this closely through contract management meetings to support Millbrook Healthcare's delivery of the improvement plan and their provision of an excellent service for all service users.

Appendix I: Kent and Medway’s Wheelchair Service Improvement Plan Performance Summary

Waiting List Size

The graph below shows the increase in the waiting list size since the start of the contract and then the reduction from September. These figures include new referrals.

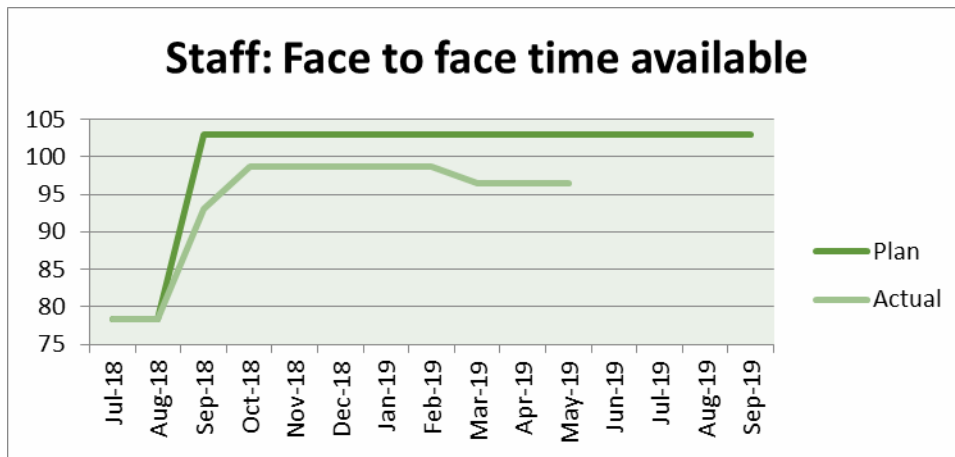


Waiting Times

The average length of waiting time for open referrals across Kent and Medway has decreased from 30.7 weeks in November 2018 to 23.1 weeks in May 2019. For children this has decreased from 26.1 weeks in November 2018 to 15.2 weeks in May 2019. We continue to monitor and review waiting times.

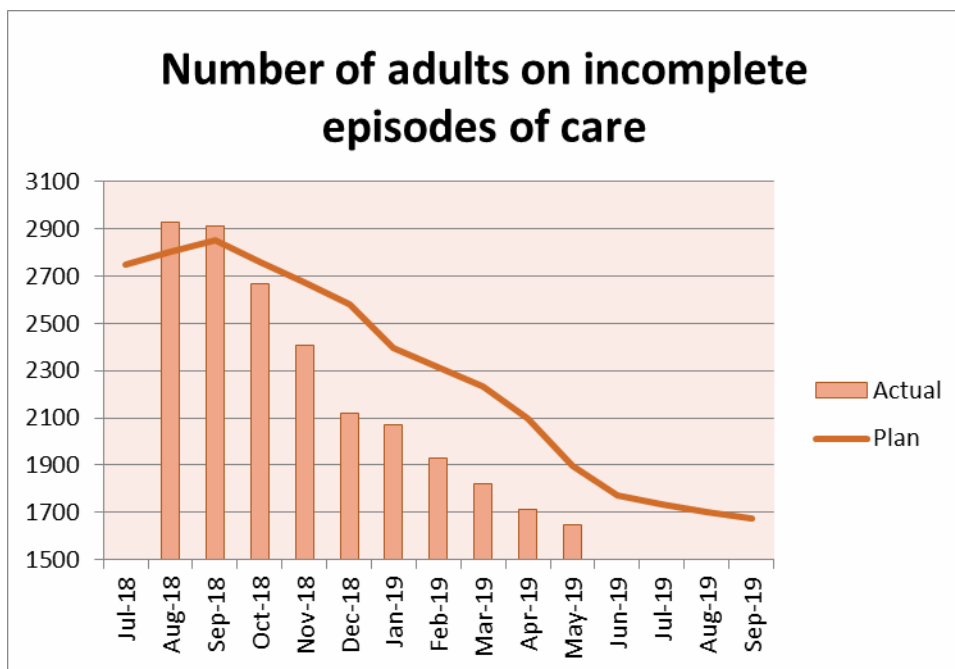
Staff

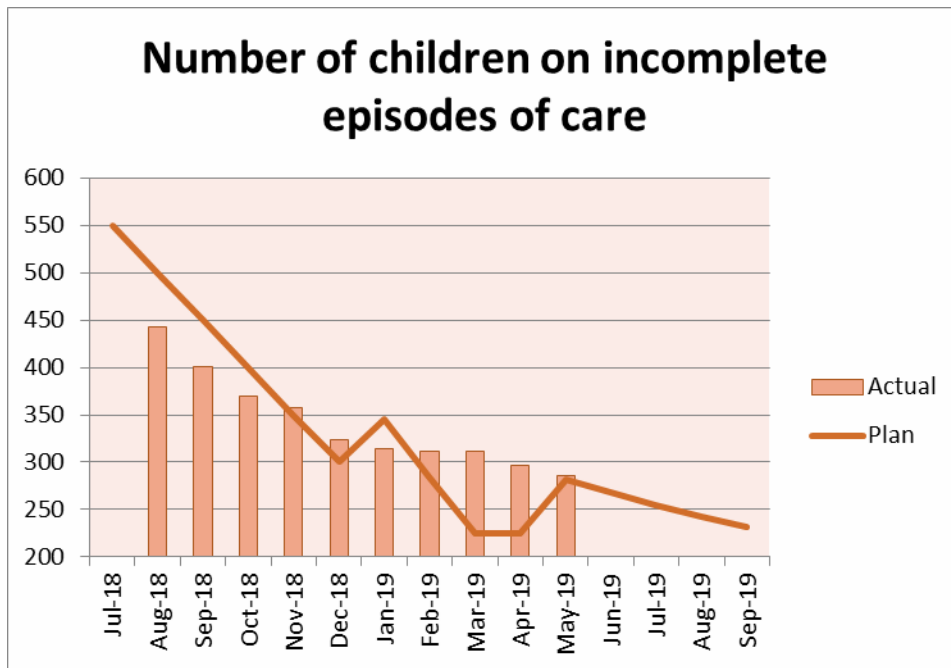
Millbrook Healthcare has now filled all the clinical roles with the exception of continued difficulties to fill the Rehabilitation Engineer post; this staffing gap accounts for the shortfall in projected face to face time, however the support team has been significantly bolstered to help offset this.



Equipment Provision

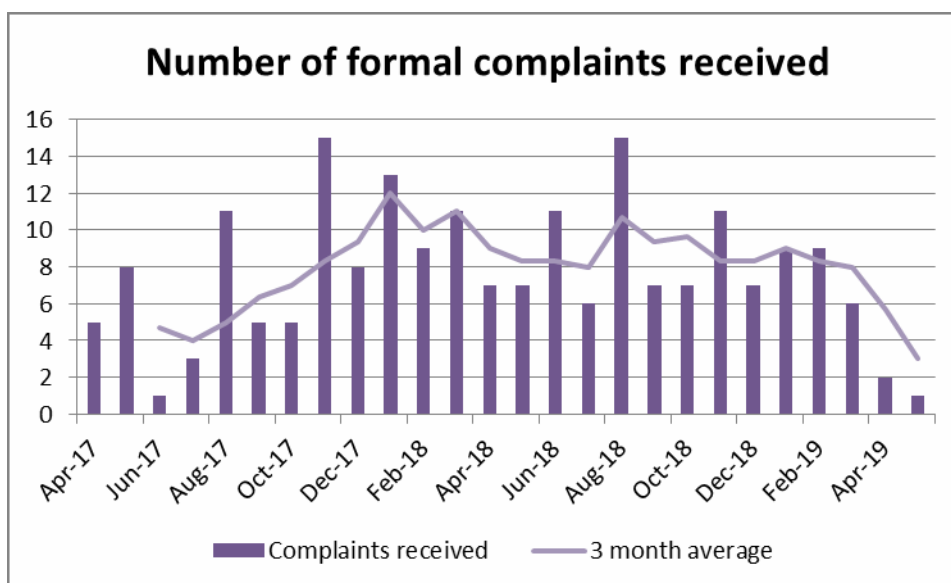
There were 1,933 open episodes of care at the end of May 2019. Overall open episodes of care continued to be ahead of trajectory.





Complaints

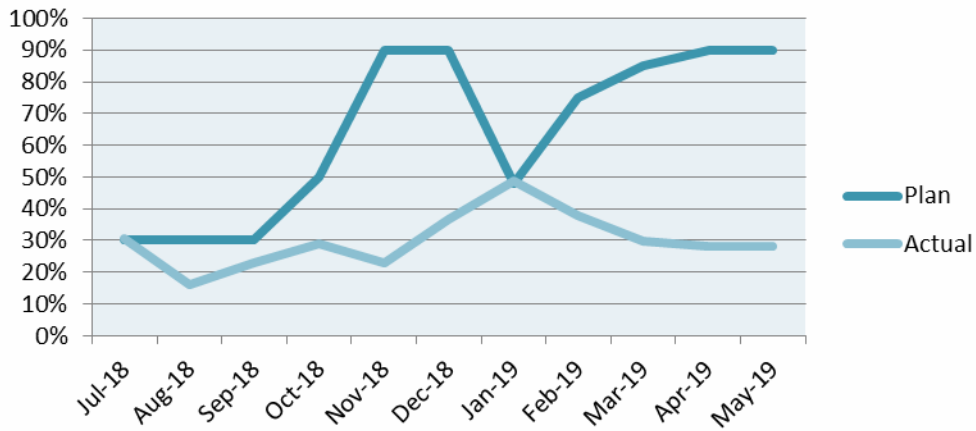
The number of complaints received has been falling gradually since August 2018 but there has been a more significant reduction in recent months.



Repairs and maintenance

The number of open repairs at the end of the month has continued to improve however response times targets are still not being met, action has been undertaken to improve response times.

Percentage of standard repairs completed within 3 days



Percentage of emergency repairs completed on time

