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## August 2023

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## Our findings

### Public service complaints

#### *Statistics*

This month we

- published two investigation reports
  - [202200588: Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board](#)
  - [202202065: Forth Valley NHS Board](#)
- published 18 [decision reports](#)

This month the Ombudsman's findings highlight the importance of public bodies following guidance, policies and procedures, which are often in place to protect staff and service users. [Read more about the themes and trends from our findings.](#)

## Scottish Welfare Fund reviews

### *Statistics*

During July we

- responded to 71 enquiries
- made 53 decisions
  - 22 community care grants
  - 31 crisis grants
- upheld 45% of community care grants and 10% of crisis grants
- signposted an additional 86 applicants to other sources of assistance
- received 11 calls from councils seeking advice.

### *Stakeholder engagement*

The Scottish Government's Scottish Welfare Fund review reported that there was varied awareness of the review process amongst applicants. This is naturally a concern for us, so we have planned a series of activities to raise awareness. Our engagement starts this month, with presentations being delivered at a voluntary sector forum and network meeting for welfare rights advisors.

### *Case studies*

We regularly update the [searchable directory on our website](#) with sample cases to share learning from our findings. This month we gave several councils feedback about the handling of community care grant applications. Follow the link to find out more!

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We're excited to announce our **SPSO Conference 2023: Supporting Good Complaints Handling in a Changing World** will take place on **Thursday 16 November 2023** at Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh.

For more details and how to register your interest, [visit our website](#).

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## Independent National Whistleblowing Officer (INWO)

*Speak Up Week 2023: Learning from Concerns*

Speak Up Week is back! Speak Up Week will run from **2 to 6 October 2023** and is an opportunity to engage staff about the benefits of speaking up and the difference it can make within the NHS in Scotland. The theme is '**Learning from Concerns**'.

Our INWO and Standards teams will be holding an online webinar on **24 August 2023 from 12:00 to 13:00**, for anyone who wishes to join, to share ideas about how to run the week and to respond to any concerns. To attend please email [ISE-CSA@sps.gov.scot](mailto:ISE-CSA@sps.gov.scot).



*New INWO decision: A successful resolution*

This month the INWO published a new decision. In this case, the INWO decided to discontinue an investigation on the basis that the complaint was resolved. [Read the decision summary on the INWO website.](#)

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There are only a few spots left on our August Complaints Investigation Skills course!

This trainer-led course is delivered online via Teams and is aimed at staff who investigate complaints at stage 2 of the [Model Complaints Handling Procedure](#).

[Book now for the 28 or 29 of August 2023!](#)

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For further information contact:

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