



**The Guardian
Service**
Here to listen

**Interim Report
August 2024**

Circulation:

Liz Cunnell – Chief of Staff

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**Guardian
The Guardian Service Ltd**

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1. Executive summary

The Guardian Service Limited began providing the Freedom to Speak Up Service for East of England Ambulance Trust (EEAST) on 5th August 2024.

The efforts by the Trust to help promote the roll out of The Guardian Service has been positive and collaborative. Due to recently going live with the service, the Guardians have spent considerable amounts of time meeting with leaders and staff of all levels, both in person and virtually.

We would usually provide a 6 monthly and annual report however due to EEAST running a quarterly public board paper, this report will give an overview of the first month.

A total of 13 cases have currently been recorded in August, most of which have been escalated to the Trust. All escalated cases have been responded to within the agreed RAG protocol.

Staff chose to contact the Guardian service due to fear of reprisal, or that they had previously raised the concern themselves and felt they had not been listened to.

Within the future 6 monthly and annual report, we will offer recommendations, to address themes that arise from concerns raised, with a comprehensive over-view which the Trust is asked to consider.

2. Background to Freedom to Speak Up

Following the Francis Inquiry¹ 2013 and 2015, the NHS launched 'Freedom to Speak Up' (FTSU). The aim of this initiative was to foster an open and responsive environment and culture throughout the NHS enabling staff to feel confident to speak up when things go or may go wrong; a key element to ensure a safe and effective working environment.

3. The Guardian Service

The Guardian Service Limited (GSL) is an independent and confidential staff liaison service. It was established in 2013 by the National NHS Patient Champion in response to The Francis Report. The Guardian Service provides staff with an independent, confidential 24/7 service to raise concerns, worries or risks in their workplace. It covers patient care and safety, whistleblowing, bullying, harassment, and work grievances. We work closely with the National Guardian Office (NGO) and attend the FTSU workshops, regional network meetings and FTSU conferences. The Guardian Service is advertised throughout EEAST as an independent organisation. This encourages staff to speak up freely and without fear of reprisal. Freedom to Speak Up is part of the well led agenda of the CQC inspection regime. The Guardian Service supports EEAST's Board to promote and comply with the NGO national reporting requirements.

The Guardian Service Ltd (GSL) was implemented in EEAST on the 5th August 2024.

Communication and marketing have been achieved by meeting with senior staff members, joining team meetings, site visits, the Intranet and the distribution of flyers and posters across the

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-of-the-mid-staffordshire-nhs-foundation-trust-public-inquiry>

organisation. All new staff will become aware of the Guardian Service when undertaking the organisational induction programme.

4. Access and Independence

Being available and responsive to staff are key factors in the operation of the service. Many staff members, when speaking to a Guardian, have emphasised that they would be more likely to Speak Up and contact The Guardian Service due to the service being external to the Trust.

5. Categorisation of Calls and Agreed Escalation Timescales

The following timescales have been agreed and form part of the Service Level Agreement.

Call Type	Description	Agreed Escalation Timescales
Red	Includes patient and staff safety, safeguarding, danger to an individual including self-harm.	Response required within 12 hours
Amber	Includes bullying, harassment, and staff safety.	Response required within 48 hours
Green	General grievances e.g. a change in work conditions.	Response required within 72 hours
White	No discernible risk to organisation.	No organisational response required

For this date period, all escalated cases were responded to within the agreed RAG protocols.

Open cases are continually monitored and regular contact is maintained by the Guardian with members of staff who have raised a concern to establish where ongoing support continues to be required. This can be via follow up phone calls and/or face to face meetings with staff who are in a situation where they feel they cannot escalate an issue for fear of reprisal. Guardians will also maintain contact until the situation is resolved or the staff member is satisfied that no further action is required. Where there is a particular complex case, setbacks or avoidable delays in the progress of cases that have been escalated, these would be raised with the organisational lead for the Guardian Service at regular monthly meetings.

Escalated cases are cases which are referred to an appropriate manager, at the request of the employee, to ensure that appropriate action can be taken. As not all employees want their manager to know they have contacted the GSL, they either progress the matter themselves or take no further action. There are circumstances where cases are escalated at a later date by the Guardian. A staff member may take time to consider options and decide a course of action that is right for them. A Guardian will keep a case open and continue to support staff in such cases. In a few situations contact with the Guardian is not maintained by the staff member.

6. Purpose of the paper

The purpose of this paper is to brief EEAST on the first 4 weeks of working in partnership with The GSL.

The Guardians are aware of the vast geographical area that EEAST covers and have spent the month of August visiting staff at various locations to conduct briefings. The Guardians have attended Leadership forums, attended Emergency Operations Centre's and have connected with many Sectors via virtual meetings. Guardians have attended 'ride alongs' to gain further understand of operational staff. The commissioning phase included meetings with Senior Leaders from The GSL & EEAST, which includes collaborating with marketing and introductions with the Chair and NED's.

The report follows the guidance from the NGO on the content FTSU Guardians should include when reporting to their Board which include: Assessment of cases, Action taken to improve speaking-up culture and Recommendations.

Title	GUARDIAN ACTIVITY REPORT
Guardians	Kimberley Gillingham & Danielle Marshall
Period	AUG - 2024
Trust	The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Think before you print. Protect our environment.

Cases

New cases this month	13
Cases closed this month	2
Open cases year to date	11
Closed cases year to date	2
Total cases year to date	13

RAG status

	Open Cases This Month	Total Cases This Year
Red	0	0
Amber	7	7
Green	3	5
White	1	1
	<u>11</u>	<u>13</u>

Outcomes

	This Month	This Year
Written / Verbal	2	2
Chose not to pursue	0	0
No further contact	0	0
	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

Themes

	Primary only		All themes inc. primary	
	Month	Year	Month	Year
Patient safety / quality	0	0	0	0
Worker safety or wellbeing	0	0	0	0
Bullying or harassment	4	4	4	4

Other inappropriate behaviour or attitudes

Behaviour / relationship	2	2	3	3
Discrimination and inequality	0	0	0	0
Management issue	3	3	3	3

Additional Themes

System and Process	3	3	3	3
Other	1	1	1	1

Totals 13 13 14 14

Activity / Visits

	This Month	This Year
Promotion	7	7
Site briefing	3	3
Online briefing	2	2
Site meeting	2	2
Online meeting	3	3

Case-related activity

	This Month	This Year
Email	13	13
Telephone	20	20
Face to face	2	2

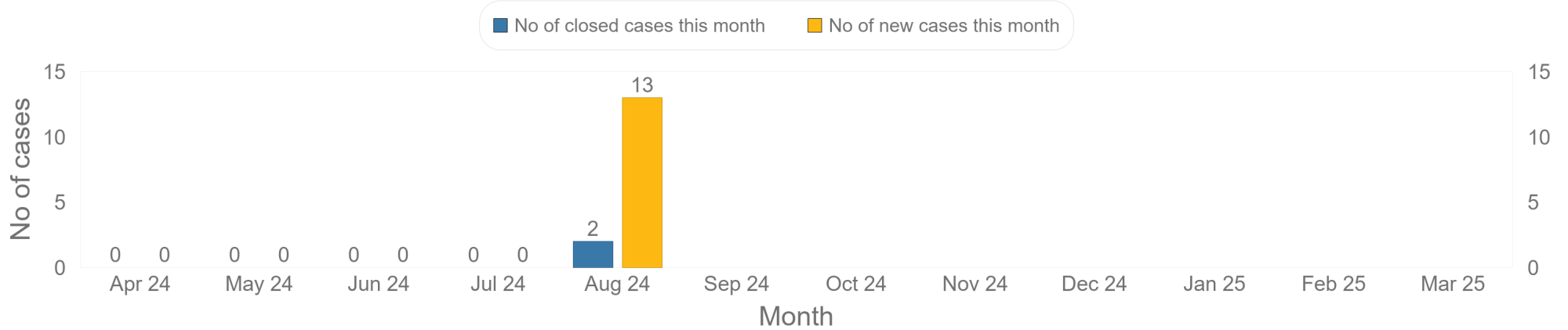
Cases raised anonymously

This Month	This Year
2	2

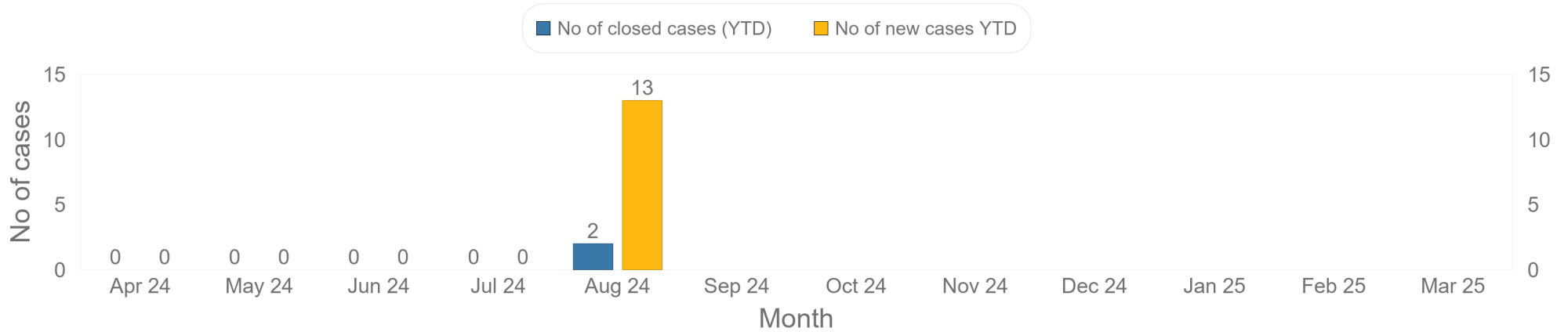
Detriment

This Month	This Year
0	0

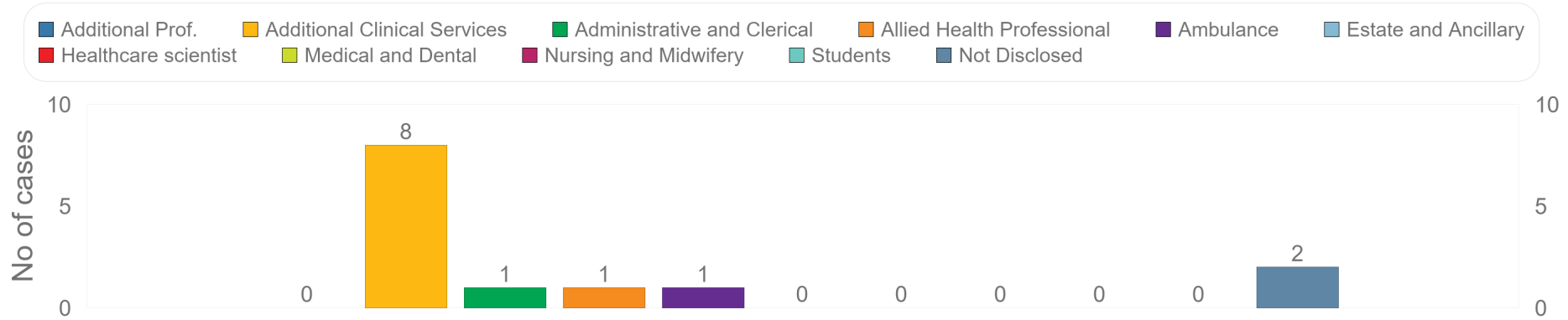
Case Activity By Month



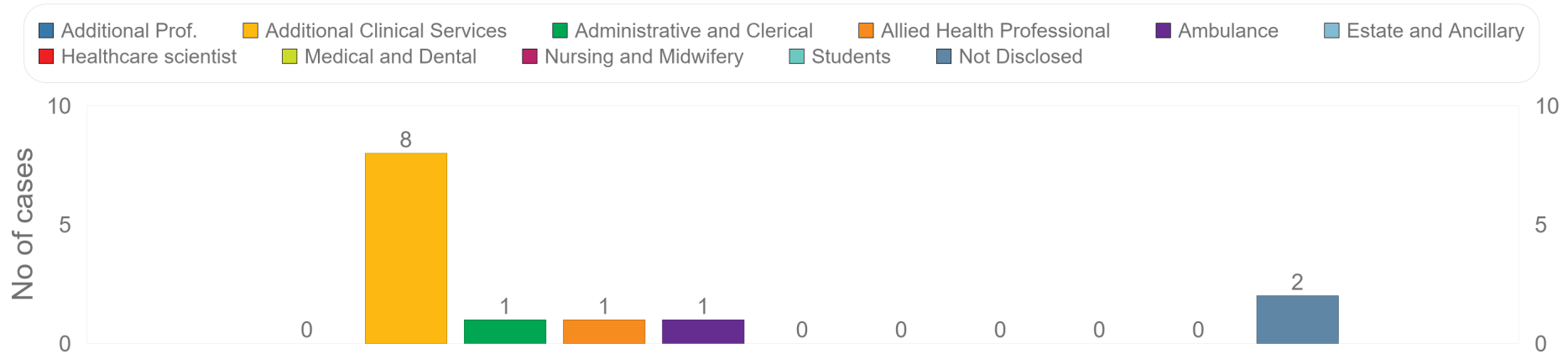
Cases Year To Date



Cases by Job Group This Month



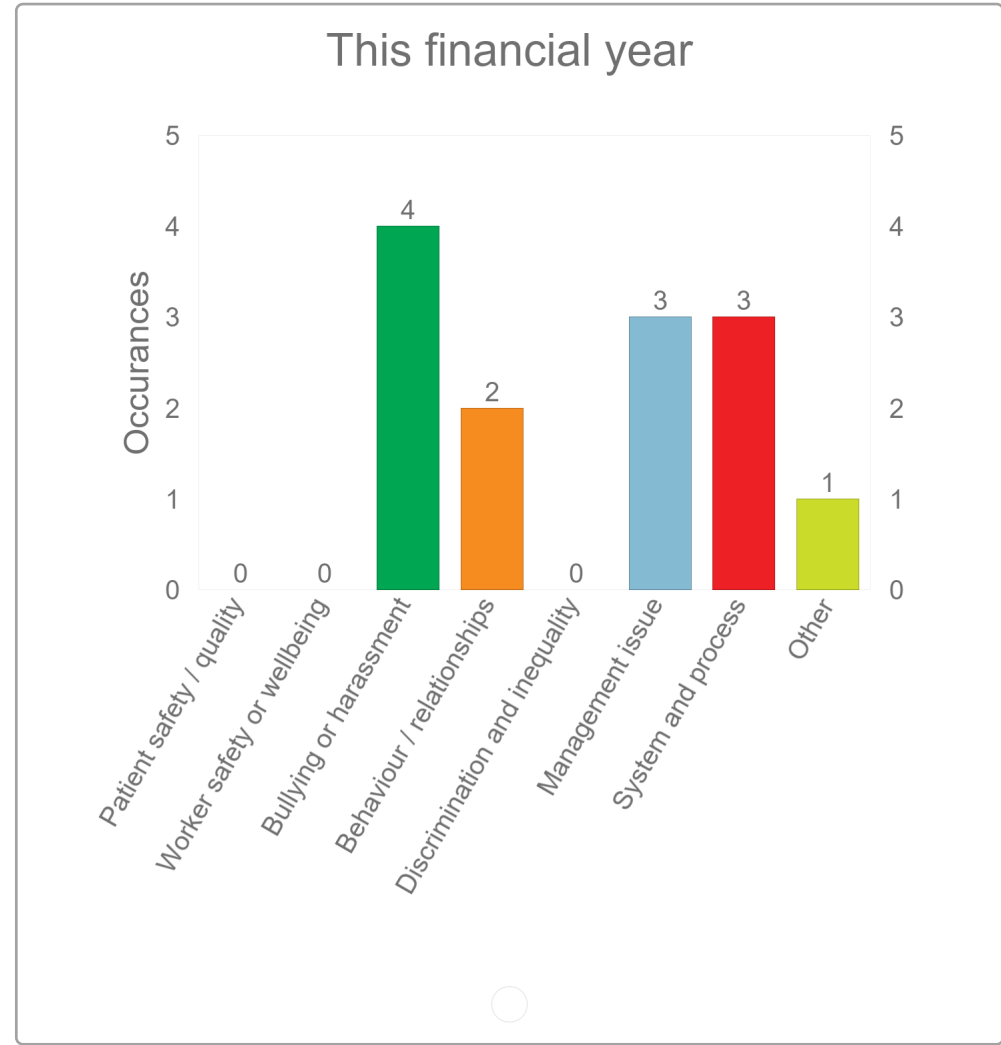
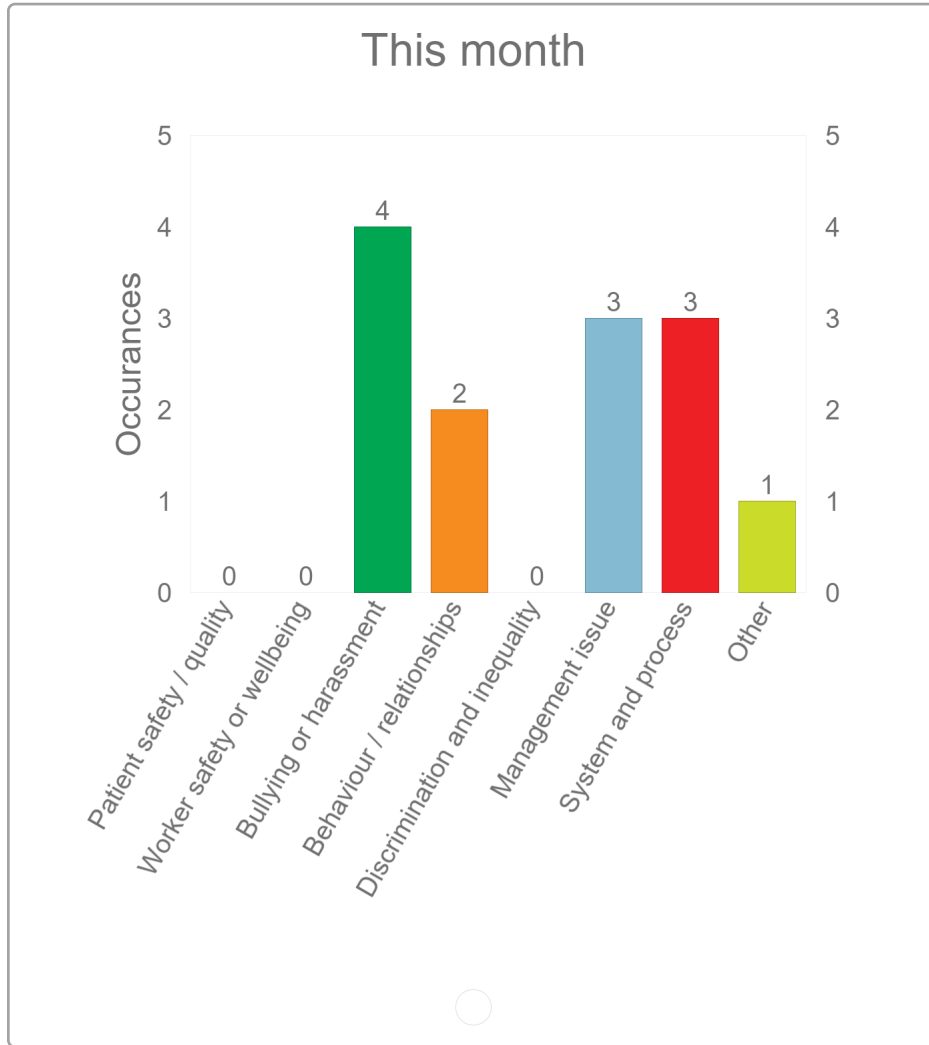
Cases by Job Group YTD



Case Status by Job Group

Case No	Start Month	Open	Closed	Additional Prof. Scientific Technical	Additional Clinical Services	Administrative and Clerical	Allied Health Professional	Ambulance	Estates and Ancillary	Healthcare Scientist	Medical and Dental	Nursing and Midwifery	Students	Not Disclosed
EEAST-24-01	Aug	✓			✓									
EEAST-24-02	Aug	✓			✓									
EEAST-24-03	Aug	✓												✓
EEAST-24-04	Aug	✓				✓								
EEAST-24-05	Aug	✓			✓									
EEAST-24-06	Aug		✓				✓							
EEAST-24-07	Aug	✓			✓									
EEAST-24-08	Aug	✓												✓
EEAST-24-09	Aug	✓			✓									
EEAST-24-10	Aug	✓			✓									
EEAST-24-11	Aug	✓			✓									
EEAST-24-12	Aug		✓		✓									
EEAST-24-13	Aug	✓						✓						
Totals		11	2		8	1	1	1						2

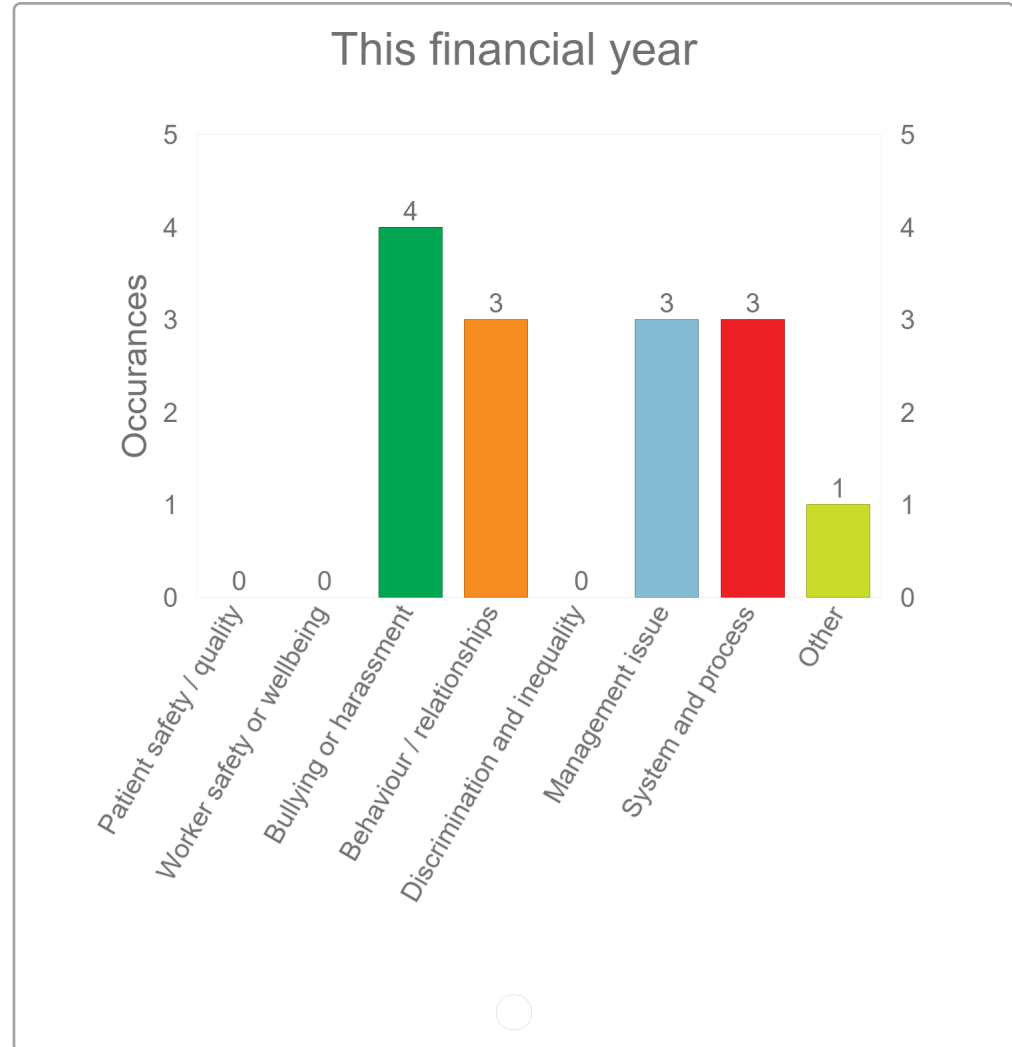
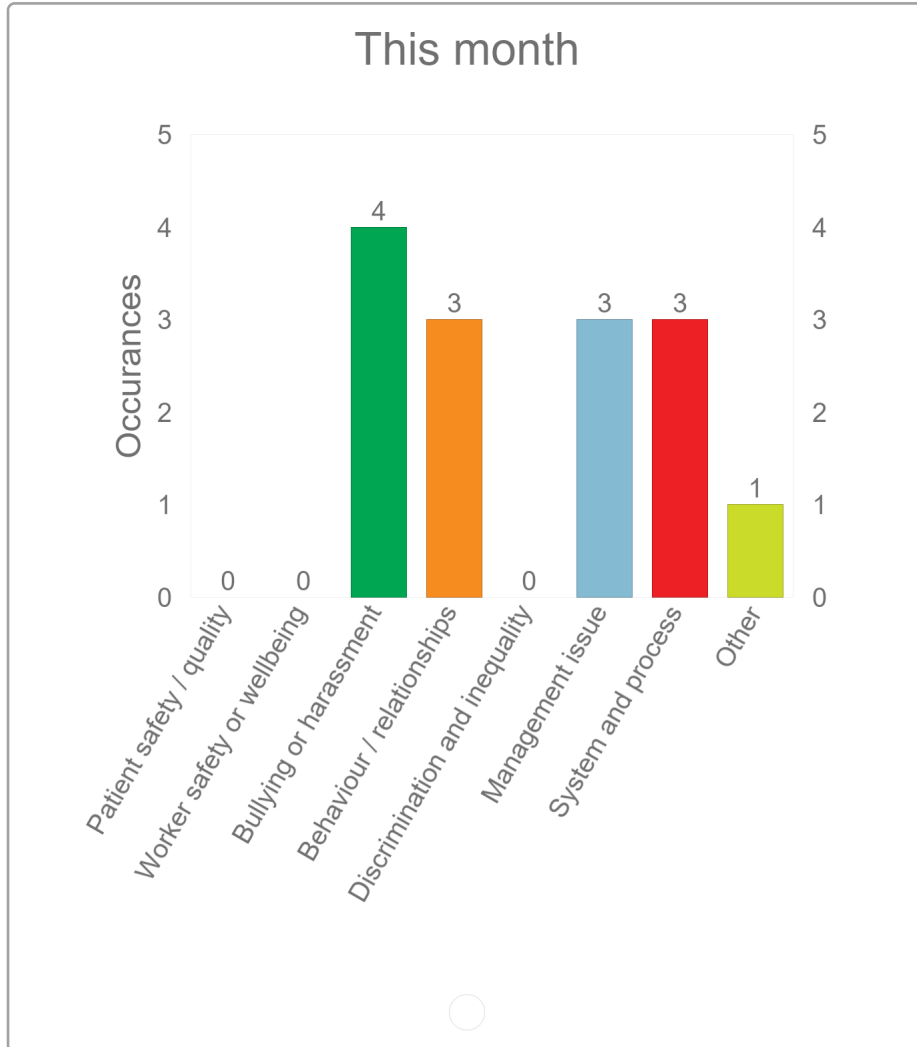
Primary Themes



Cases by Primary Theme

Case Number	Start Month	Open	Closed	Patient Safety / Quality	Management Concerns	System & Process	Bullying & Harrassment	Discrimination /Inequality	Behaviour / Relationship	Worker Safety	Other	Other Detail
EEAST-24-01	Aug	✓							✓			
EEAST-24-02	Aug	✓				✓						
EEAST-24-03	Aug	✓					✓					
EEAST-24-04	Aug	✓			✓							
EEAST-24-05	Aug	✓				✓						
EEAST-24-06	Aug		✓		✓							
EEAST-24-07	Aug	✓			✓							
EEAST-24-08	Aug	✓							✓			
EEAST-24-09	Aug	✓					✓					
EEAST-24-10	Aug	✓				✓						
EEAST-24-11	Aug	✓					✓					
EEAST-24-12	Aug		✓								✓	Mental health
EEAST-24-13	Aug	✓					✓					
Totals		11	2		3	3	4		2		1	

Multi-theme Occurences



Cases by Multi-Theme

✓ = Primary theme

Case Number	Start Month	Open	Closed	Patient safety / quality	Worker safety or wellbeing	Bullying or harrassment	Behaviour / relationship	Discrimination & inequality	Management Issue	System & Process	Other	Other Detail
EEAST-24-01	Aug	✓					✓					
EEAST-24-02	Aug	✓								✓		
EEAST-24-03	Aug	✓				✓						
EEAST-24-04	Aug	✓							✓			
EEAST-24-05	Aug	✓								✓		
EEAST-24-06	Aug		✓						✓			
EEAST-24-07	Aug	✓							✓			
EEAST-24-08	Aug	✓					✓					
EEAST-24-09	Aug	✓				✓						
EEAST-24-10	Aug	✓								✓		
EEAST-24-11	Aug	✓				✓						
EEAST-24-12	Aug		✓								✓	Mental health
EEAST-24-13	Aug	✓				✓	✓					
Totals		11	2	0	0	4	3	0	3	3	1	

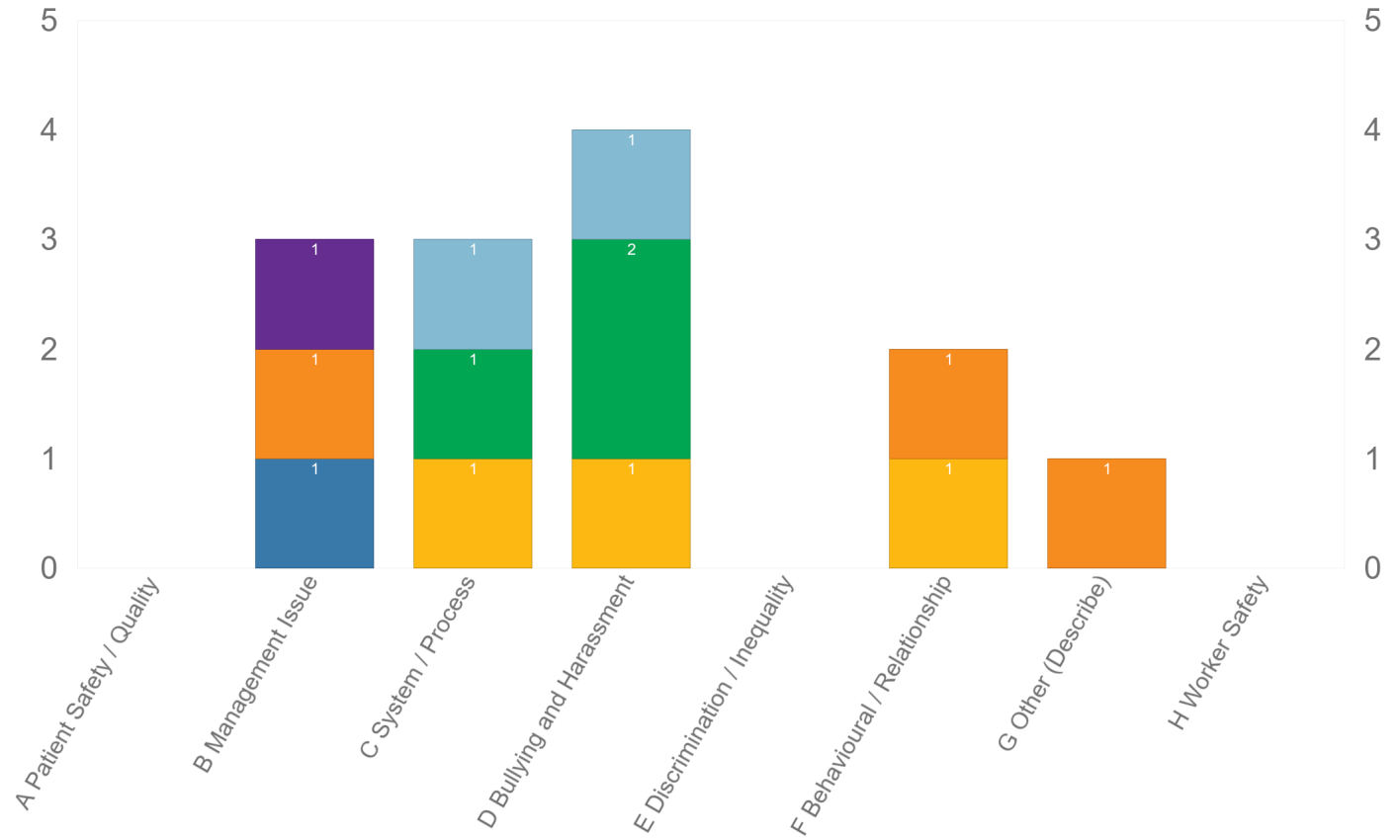
Case Status by Outcome

Case Number	Start Month	Status	Outcome
EEAST-24-01	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-02	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-03	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-04	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-05	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-06	Aug	Closed	1. Written / verbal outcome
EEAST-24-07	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-08	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-09	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-10	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-11	Aug	Open	
EEAST-24-12	Aug	Closed	1. Written / verbal outcome
EEAST-24-13	Aug	Open	

Totals

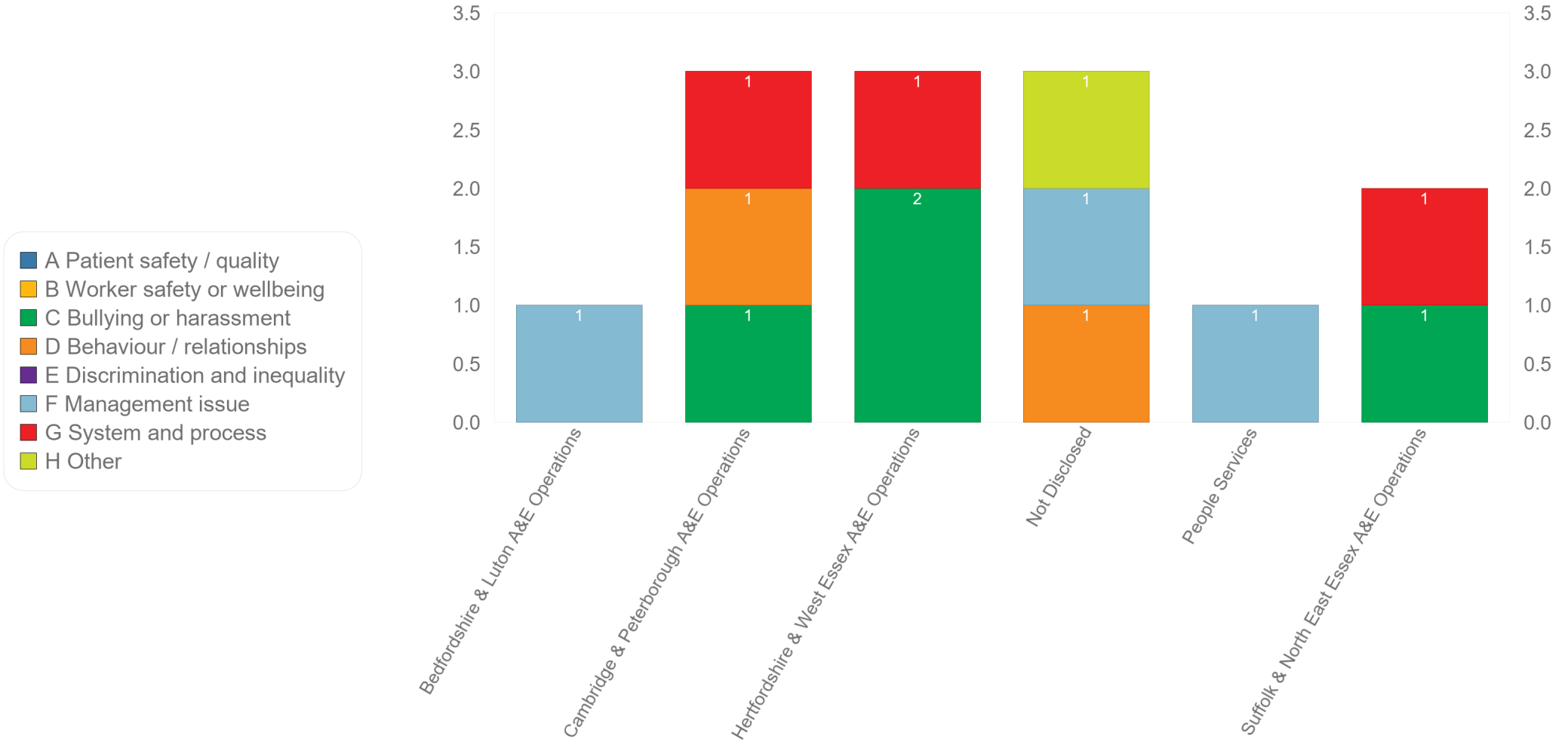
Open Cases	11	Written / Verbal	2	No further contact	0
Closed Cases	2	Chose not to pursue	0		

Directorates by Primary Theme YTD



- Bedfordshire & Luton A&E Operations
- Cambridge & Peterborough A&E Operations
- Hertfordshire & West Essex A&E Operations
- Not Disclosed
- People Services
- Suffolk & North East Essex A&E Operations

Primary Themes by Directorate YTD



Summary - Directorates by Theme

B Management Issue

Directorate	This Month	Year to Date
Bedfordshire & Luton A&E Operations	1	1
Not Disclosed	1	1
People Services	1	1

C System / Process

Directorate	This Month	Year to Date
Cambridge & Peterborough A&E Operations	1	1
Hertfordshire & West Essex A&E Operations	1	1
Suffolk & North East Essex A&E Operations	1	1

D Bullying and Harassment

Directorate	This Month	Year to Date
Cambridge & Peterborough A&E Operations	1	1
Hertfordshire & West Essex A&E Operations	2	2
Suffolk & North East Essex A&E Operations	1	1

F Behavioural / Relationship

Directorate	This Month	Year to Date
Cambridge & Peterborough A&E Operations	1	1
Not Disclosed	1	1

G Other (Describe)

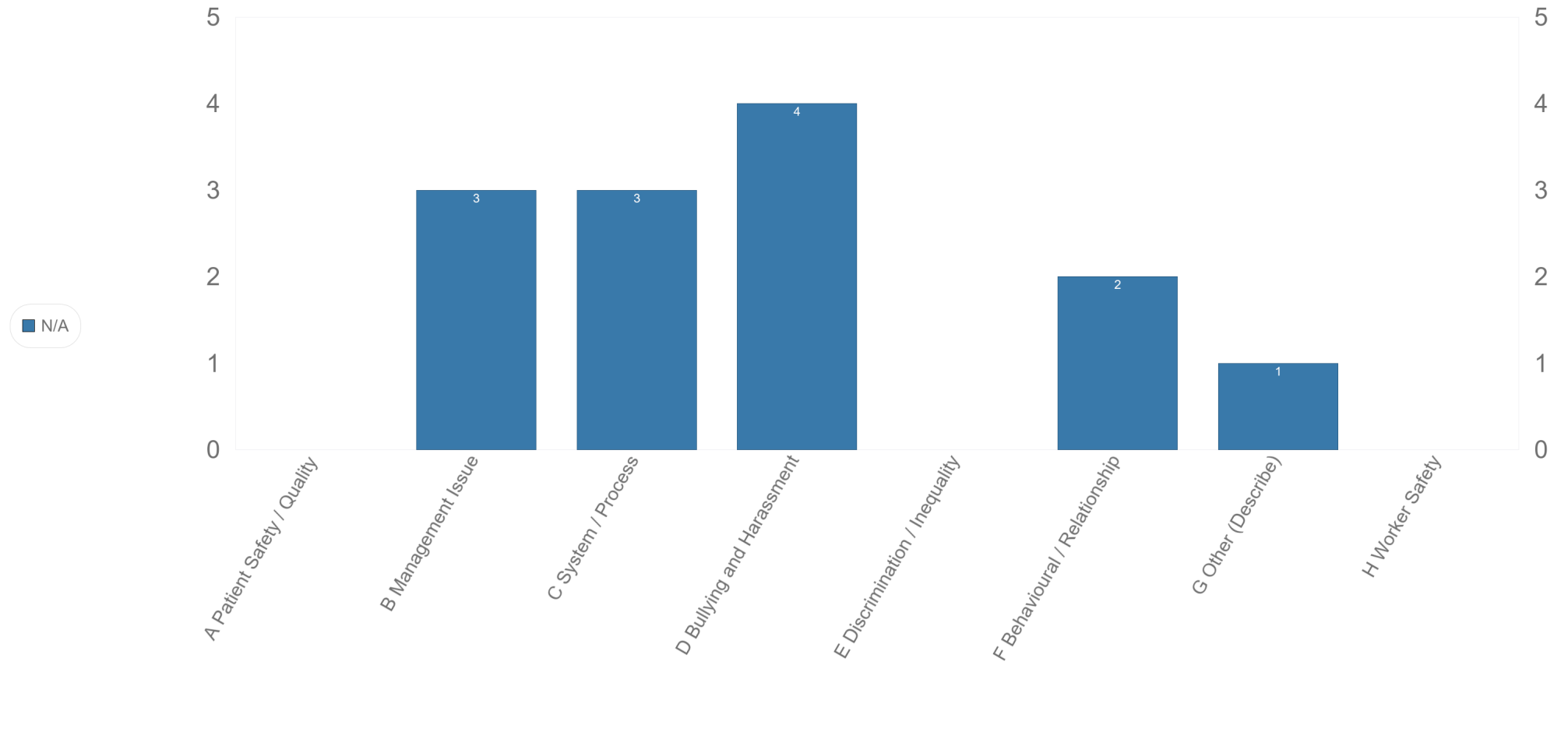
Directorate	This Month	Year to Date
Not Disclosed	1	1

Total	13	13
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Cases by Directorate - Summary

Directorate	This Month	Year to Date
Bedfordshire & Luton A&E Operations	1	1
Cambridge & Peterborough A&E Operations	3	3
Hertfordshire & West Essex A&E Operations	3	3
Not Disclosed	3	3
People Services	1	1
Suffolk & North East Essex A&E Operations	2	2
Totals	13	13

Locations by Primary Theme YTD





Summary - Locations by Primary Theme

B Management Issue

<u>Location</u>	<u>This Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
N/A	3	3

C System / Process

<u>Location</u>	<u>This Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
N/A	3	3

D Bullying and Harassment

<u>Location</u>	<u>This Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
N/A	4	4

F Behavioural / Relationship

<u>Location</u>	<u>This Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
N/A	2	2

G Other (Describe)

<u>Location</u>	<u>This Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
N/A	1	1

Total	13	13
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Cases by Location - Summary

Location	This Month	Year to Date
N/A	13	13
Totals	13	13

Why use the Guardian service? (Year to date)

Reason	Number	Percentage
A Impartial support	4	30.77%
B Fear of reprisal	2	15.38%
C Believe they will not be listened to	2	15.38%
D Have raised concern before but have not been listened to	5	38.46%
E Other	0	0.00%
	13	100.00%

Confidentiality	Number	Percentage
1 Keep confidential	6	46.15%
2 Permission to escalate with name	5	38.46%
3 Permission to escalate anonymously	2	15.38%
4 Permission to escalate without name	0	0.00%
	13	100.00%

Case Escalations, Actions & Outcomes

Case Number	Case Date	Open	Closed	Escalated to	Escalation Date	Org Response time	Action taken	Outcome After Action Taken
EEAST-24-01	Aug	✓						
EEAST-24-02	Aug	✓		HRBP	08-Aug-2024	Awaiting response		
EEAST-24-03	Aug	✓		Local Operations Manager	08-Aug-2024	Same day		
EEAST-24-04	Aug	✓						
EEAST-24-05	Aug	✓		shared services Manager	09-Aug-2024	Awaiting response		
EEAST-24-06	Aug		✓					Staff member to take concerns forward independently after seeking impartial support from FTSUG
EEAST-24-07	Aug	✓						
EEAST-24-08	Aug	✓						
EEAST-24-09	Aug	✓		Head of clinical Operations	19-Aug-2024	2 days		
EEAST-24-10	Aug	✓		Dept Head of HR	19-Aug-2024	2 days		
EEAST-24-11	Aug	✓		Line Manager & Area Manager	19-Aug-2024	2 days		
EEAST-24-12	Aug		✓					Sign posted staff member to mental health support
EEAST-24-13	Aug	✓		Local Area Manager	23-Aug-2024	1 day		

Case Escalations, Actions & Outcomes

Case Number	Case Date	Open	Closed	Escalated to	Escalation Date	Org Response time	Action taken	Outcome After Action Taken
Totals		11	2					

Directorates by Location

N/A	This Month	Year to Date
Bedfordshire & Luton A&E Operations	1	1
Cambridge & Peterborough A&E Operations	3	3
Hertfordshire & West Essex A&E Operations	3	3
Not Disclosed	3	3
People Services	1	1
Suffolk & North East Essex A&E Operations	2	2
Totals	13	13

Cases by Professional level	This Month	Year to Date
Worker	12	12
Senior Leader		
Manager		
Not Disclosed	1	1
Totals	13	13
