

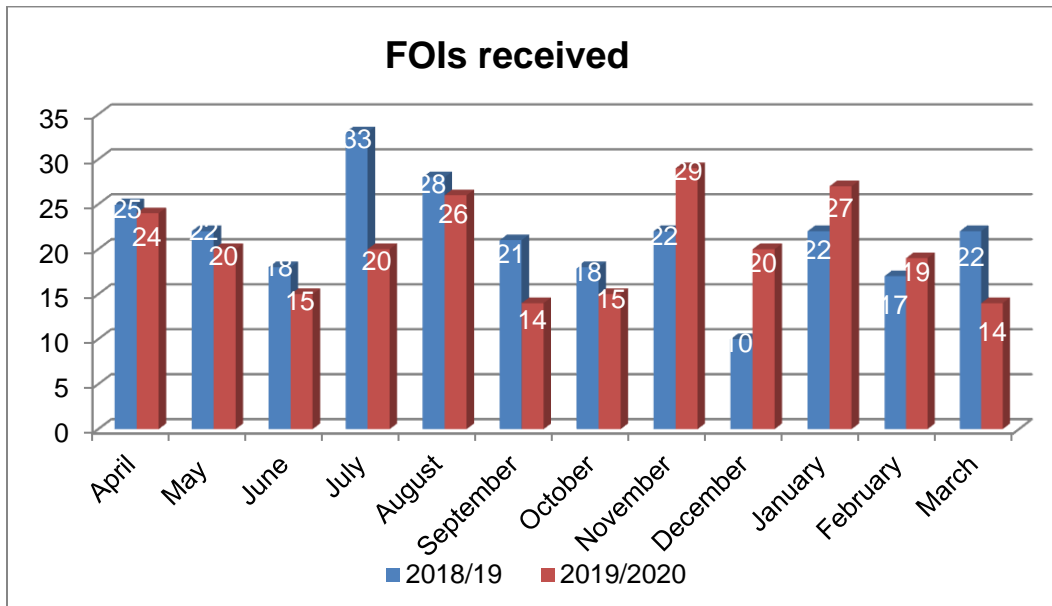
# **Freedom of Information (FOI) and MP report 2019/20**

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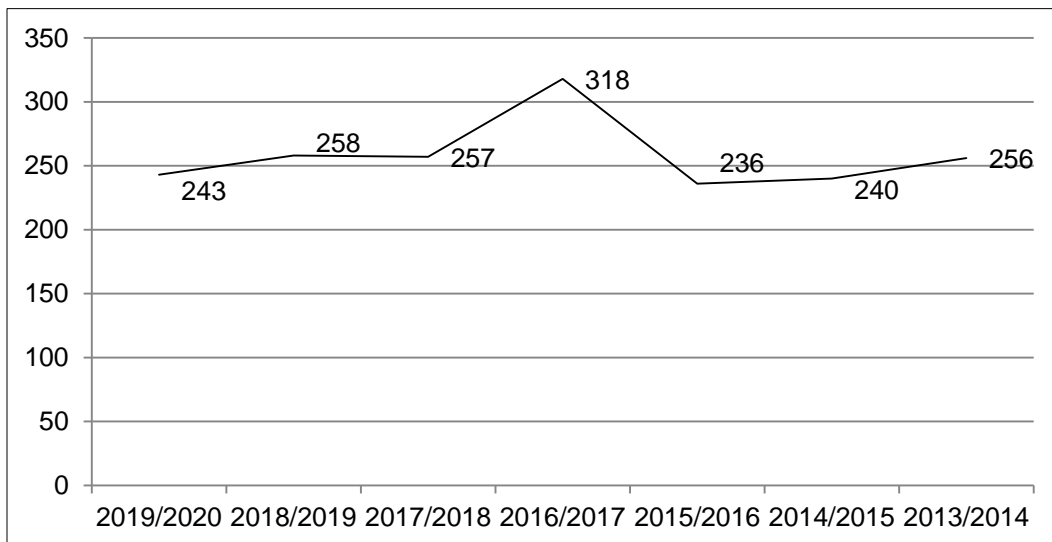
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# 1. Activity

In 2019/2020 NHS Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group (NHS Kernow) received 243 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, this was 15 less than in 2018/2019. The table below sets out the number received for each month of the years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020.



The numbers received during 2019/2020 are in line with those received in previous years.



We had a large number of MP and media FOIs in 2016/17, the media requests were double the average and MP FOIs almost triple the average. This coincided with NHS Kernow being placed under legal directions and a change in leadership.

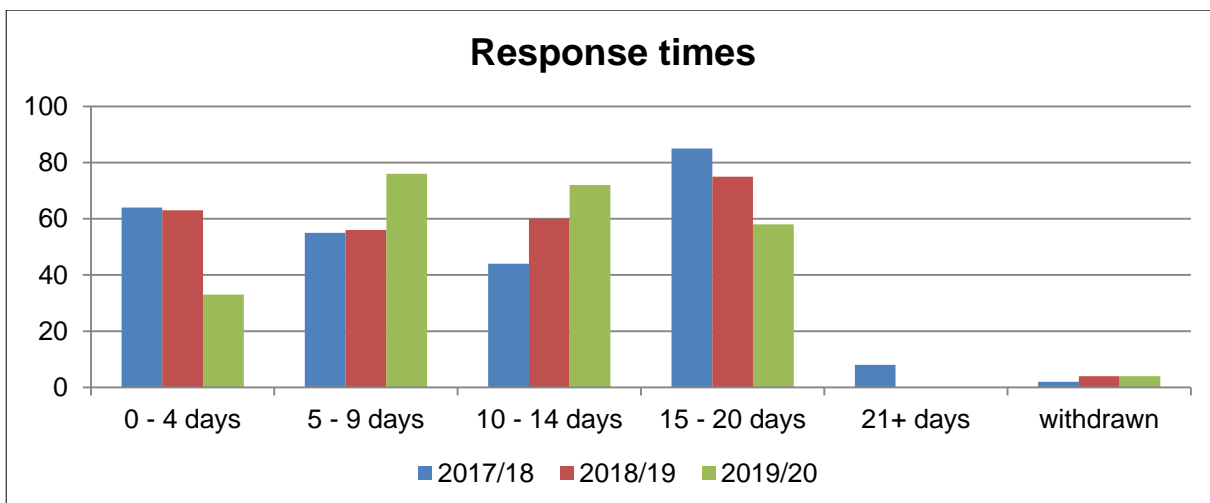
## 2. Internal reviews

NHS Kernow received one request for an internal review from a requestor during the year. This process allows requestors who are dissatisfied with the response they have received to have the response reviewed and to determine if an amended response should be provided. Following the internal review the requestor was provided with an amended response. No requestors approached the Information Commissioners Office to raise a complaint following the FOI process during 2019/2020.

## 3. FOI response times

By law all FOI requests must be answered within 20 working days. To allow this to happen NHS Kernow staff are given 15 working days to locate and provide the information requested to the corporate governance team, this leaves five working days for the FOI and complaints officer to compile the response and organise director sign off.

The corporate governance team continues to work with those within NHS Kernow providing information in order to ensure that FOIs do not exceed the 20 day deadline. This work has meant that, for the second year no requests exceeded the statutory time limit for responding, as shown in the table below. The average timescale for responding was 10 days.



## 4. Types of requestors

The FOI's received are logged under a requestor type, which are as follows.

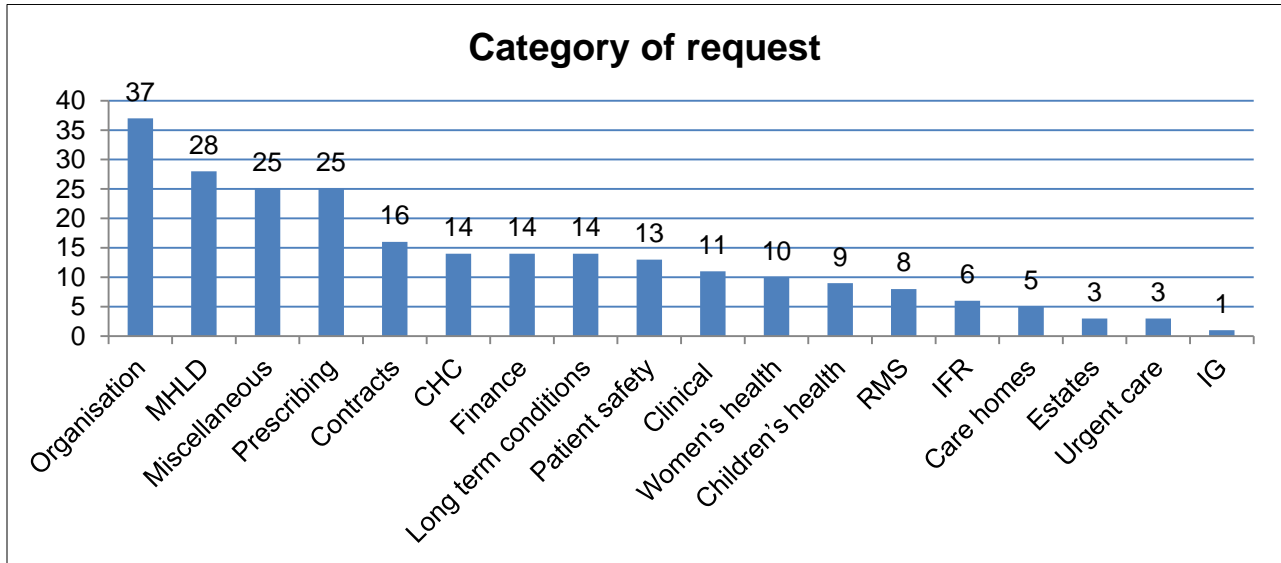
- Commercial company
- General public
- GPs
- Media
- MPs
- Organisations
- Solicitors
- Other

The majority of requests received in 2019/2020 were from the general public, or had no indication that they were from another source.

Type of requestor	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Commercial company	51	59	50	71
General public	94	100	98	77
GP	3	0	1	1
Media	86	40	46	35
MP	22	8	7	2
Organisation	57	46	52	34
Other	4	2	2	23
Solicitors	1	1	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>243</b>

The number of requests received in 2019/2020 is comparable to the numbers received in 2018/2019 with an increase in the requests from commercial companies and a slight reduction in those received from media organisations. All recorded MP requests relate to MPs who have a particular interest in a subject. No local MPs made a request using the Freedom of Information Act during the year.

## 5. Category of correspondence

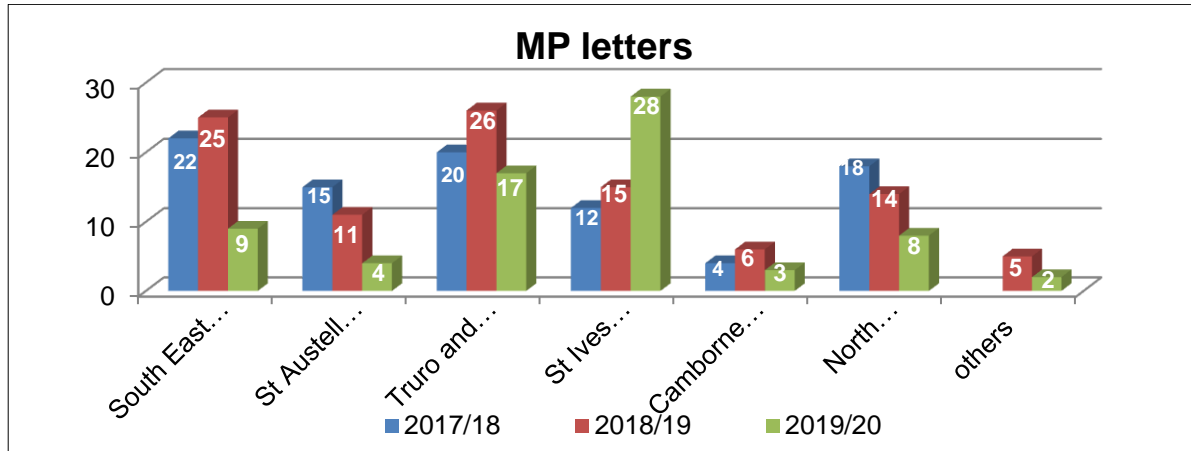


Over the year a large number of requests were received relating to the organisation, mental health and learning disabilities (MHLD), prescribing and those not falling into other categories, shown as miscellaneous. These areas accounted for 47 percent of all requests, placing a burden on these teams to respond.

Where possible teams are encouraged to make information publicly available, thereby reducing the amount of work required when requests are received.

## 6. MP letters

The FOI and complaints officer also deals with letters from MPs, this is reported with the FOI information to provide an overview of the information being sought from the organisation.



The chart above shows the number of letters received from each constituency office, sometimes this is the MP, but often it is a constituency office. Letters are generally related to constituent case work. 71 letters were received in 2019/20 including two from other elected representatives such as local councillors which were managed within the same process as MP letters. There was a significant reduction of 31 compared to 2018/19, this may perhaps be attributed to the general election. During an election period public bodies are not able to respond to MP letters regarding constituency matters due to purdah.

There has been a noticeable increase in correspondence from St Ives and Isles of Scilly MP office. This reflects the positive relationship between the two offices which often results in signposting, advice, as well as responding to complex cases which cross many organisations.

Below is a chart which indicates the nature of concern raised by the MP. Patient safety and continuing healthcare account for a high proportion of the enquiries. Patient safety includes where MPs are concerned constituents are not being seen swiftly enough or have been unable to access services, this is not always a safety issue. Any issues of concern are escalated to the quality team or commissioner as appropriate.

