

Operational Effectiveness Report 01/07/09 to 31/09/09

Period Third Quarter 09

Prepared by CMH

Incoming Calls & Callers (answered)

	Incoming Calls	Answered Callers
This quarter	In shift 719 Out shift 3421 Total 1140	452 (per tel. system) 303 (per call sheets)
Average for Year to date	In 580 Out 363 Total 943	380 (per tel. system) 257 (per call sheets)
Average for previous year	In 622 Out 506 Total 1128	418 (per tel. system) 271 (per call sheets)

- Total call numbers have risen hugely by 297 calls (27%) on last quarters figures which were 30% down on the fourth quarter 2008 (847 in comparison with 1201) and are above the same quarter in 2007 (1053) and are only 19% down on the same quarter in 2008 (1414) and above the average figures for both years.
- Calls by call sheets have risen this quarter to above the average for both 2007 (276) and 2008 (271) and above the same quarter in 2008 (287) and 2007 (289)
- Answered calls this quarter per telephone system have fallen again to 62% of all calls in shift against last quarter (65%) and an average quarter in 2008 of 69%, 2007 of 72% and 71 % in 2006.
- Answered call numbers from the telephone system are down on the same quarter last year (536) but have risen on the last quarter (341) and are above the average for last two years (418 and 397).
- In general call numbers are strengthening on all indicators after a significant fall in the last quarter and underlying over the last 3 quarters.
- Email requests have also risen to 126 in comparison with last quarters low of 91 in comparison with an average last year of 179 and 237 for the same quarter 2008

Referral Numbers

- There have been 14 expert referral requests this quarter. 3 were passed to CR, for discussion on surgery, 2 to LL on work issues and injections, 2 to HM on surgery, 1 to HW on pain management, 1 to KH on facet joint injections and 2 on spinal stimulators to Pain Concern the charity for an expert referral. Requests have risen enormously from 5 last quarter and are the highest number since the Helpline's conception. Increasingly callers wish to talk to someone who has experienced a particular procedure and our in house expert patient system works well and we also work closely with Pain Concern who provide a similar service.

Shift Coverage

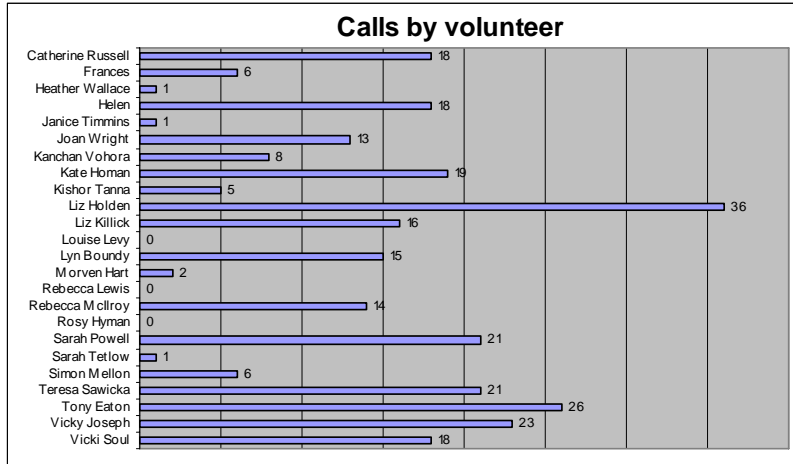
- This quarter the average shift figures have risen above those for the last 2 quarters and for the same quarter in 2007 but below the same quarter in 2008 (figs in brackets). The average shift received 5.4 calls, (6.5) answered 3.4 (4.4) of them and 2.00 (2.1) remained unanswered.
- Shift coverage has improved once the new shifts bedded in. Wednesday AM shift again went uncovered twice at short notice and both Thursday AM and Friday AM went uncovered once. A single volunteer covers these shifts and this makes emergency cover very difficult. 9 evening shifts reported no calls. Three day- time shifts, Thursday am and pm and Friday am had only one person covering them for the quarter.
- Shift popularity remains fairly static with Tuesday am being the most popular this quarter Call figs are – Tuesday am 8.5; Monday pm.7.6; Wednesday pm 7.6; Wednesday am 7.5; Thursday am 6.5; Monday am 6.3;; Friday am.5.6; Thursday am 6..5; Thursday pm. 4.6; Tuesday eve 3.1; Monday eve 2. Wednesday eve 2.0 and

Thursday eve 0.8. Popular shifts by call sheets are Thursday am, Tuesday am, Monday am, Monday pm, Wednesday am and pm.

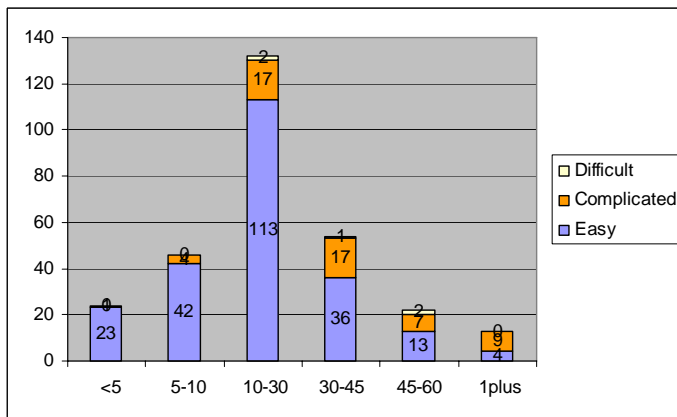
Recommendation

- More publicity is having an impact on numbers although the Sunday Telegraph supplement and BCAW will have had only a minor impact so far.

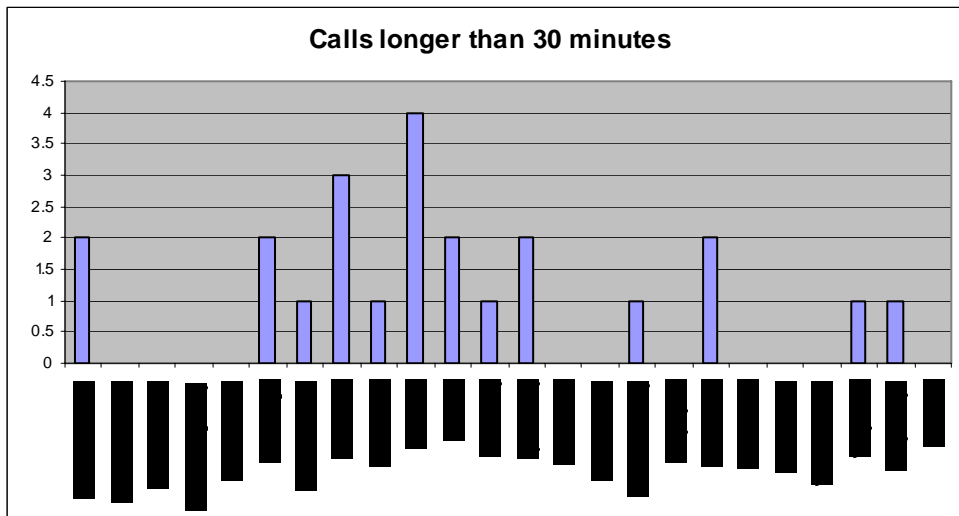
Calls by Volunteer



Volunteers Reaction to the calls by number and duration



Duration of Call



- The majority of volunteers find that the calls are well within their competence
- 92% of calls are within our half hour preferred time slot.

Fact Sheet Effectiveness

Most requested year to date	Requested & unavailable
Requests this quarter 105 Total requests this year 320	
Relaxation 133 Physical Activity and Exercise 122 Exercises for Better Backs 120 What to do when Back Pain Strikes 102 Drugs 93 Top Ten tips 93 Tens 83 Sciatica 81 Hot and cold 65 Degenerative spine 59	Carers Necks PALS Discs New Surgical Techniques

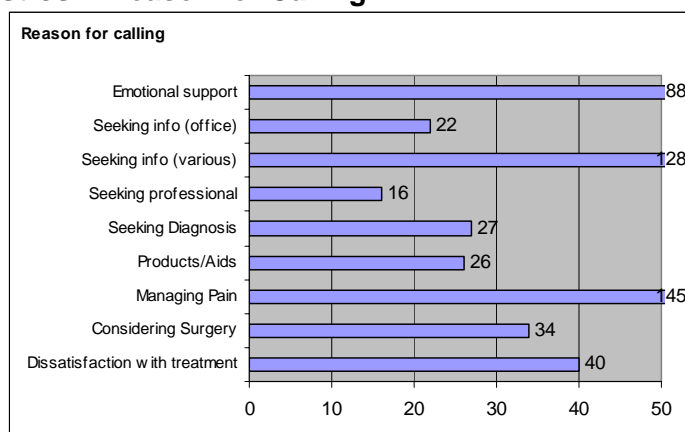
Comment:

- The most requested leaflets have remained consistent, except that the new one on hot and cold has moved into the top ten. Pushing out Alexander Technique on 47, Physiotherapy is also moving up on 53
- Fact sheet requests were 35 an average month, up on the last quarter (32) but down on the third quarter 08 (51) and the av. month in the same quarter in 2007 (56)
- The appointment of a Research officer P.W. has already impacted positively on the revision and creation of fact sheets.
- The Education Committee is reviewing/revising all the fact sheets on conditions and medical treatments over time.
- Drugs, Physical Exercise and 'When back Pain strikes' will be revised to include good rest and pacing in line with discussion at the Refresher day by P.W.
- **Recommendation:** continue to improve standard and look of the sheets and to rewrite as necessary.

Speed of Information Delivery

Average dispatch is 2.2 days in comparison with 3.1 days for the same quarter 2008. Mode average was same day in comparison with 6 days in third quarter 2008.

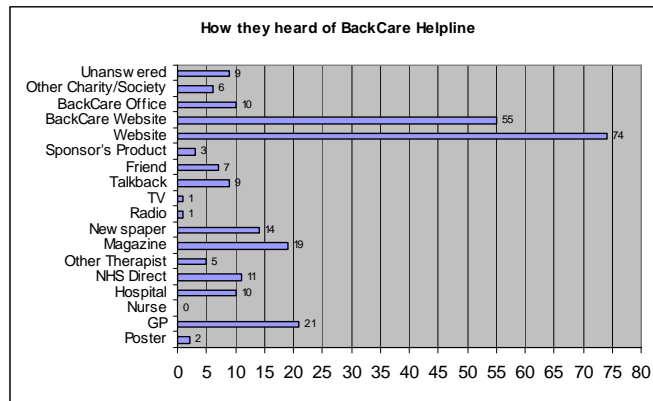
Statistics: Reason for Calling



- Seeking information and managing pain remain the two significant fields but the addition of emotional support to the screen has had an interesting outcome, it is now the largest reason for calling.

Where Heard of the Helpline

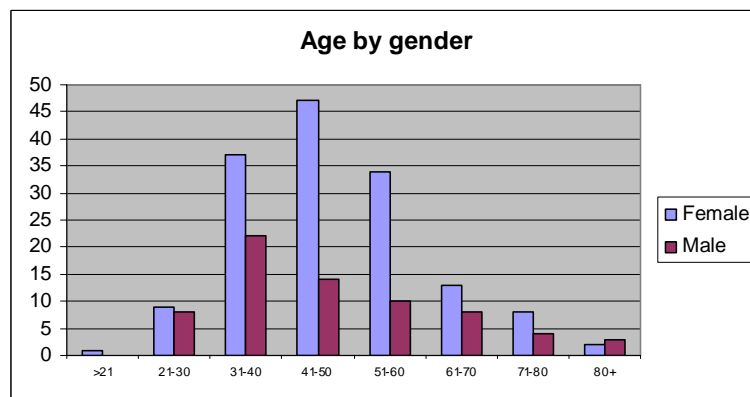
- Websites (ours and others) are the most significant field and this has been growing over time. Magazine remains a significant field and GPs are down from 24 following 3 rising quarters.



Caller Gender

%	Current Q	Last Q	Average Q for last FY
Female	64	51	60
Male	30	48	30

Age of Caller

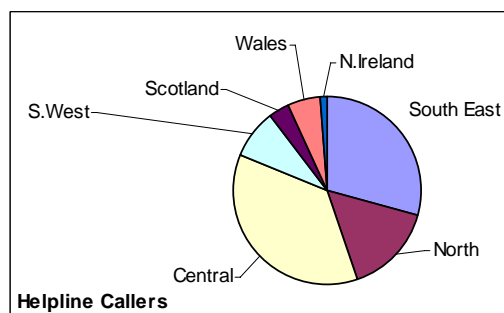
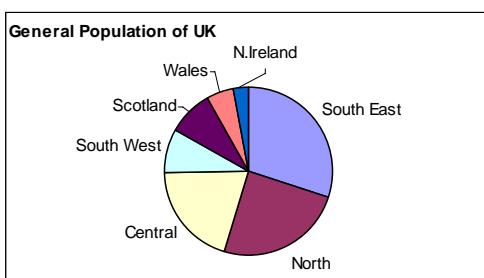


- This is the fifth quarter that this statistic has been collected, and it shows our popularity in the middle age range, when we would expect back pain to have an impact. More men proportionally call at the beginning and end of the age range.

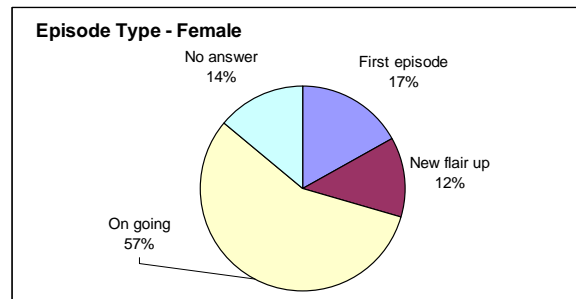
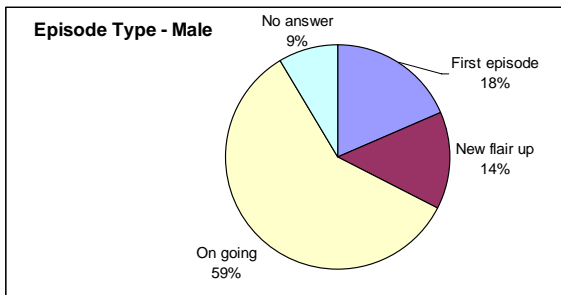
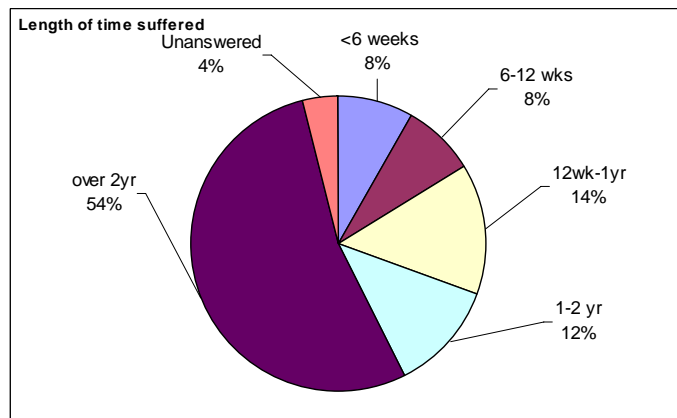
Geographic Reach

Helpline callers for the quarter compared to UK pop distribution based on Arthritis Care Figures as percentages

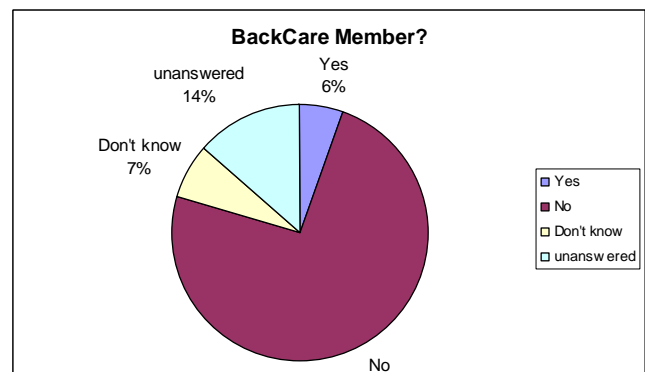
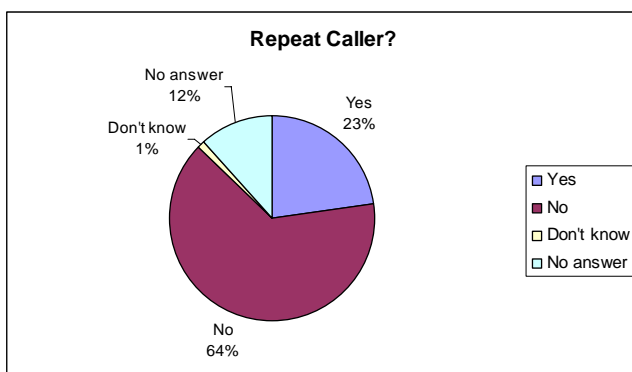
- The North and Northern Ireland remains disproportionate under represented.
- Central England is over represented and S.W. is under
- 14% of callers are outside UK as last quarter.



Length of time suffered



The number of callers new to back pain having suffered for less than a year has fallen to 30% from 37% last quarter compared to 30% for the average quarter in 2008, but the vast majority are chronic sufferers who have had back pain for more than 2 years. Sufferers of less than 6 weeks has held steady at 8% (9% last quarter), the average for 2008 was 11%. There is little difference between when men and women call in relation to type of episode.



- There was an 8% rise in Repeat callers and a 2% fall in BackCare members compared with the 2008 average.

Our caller profile remains constant - the average caller is female, aged 41 to 60, lives in Central or Southern England, seeks emotional support, information in general and on managing back pain in particular, and heard of us from a website. She is most likely to call a day time shift and speak for about 30 minutes, wants information on exercise and relaxation, and probably a cluster of fact sheets that make up pain management

alternatives and has suffered with back pain, possibly sciatica, for over 2 years and is not a member.