

**Operational Effectiveness Report 01/10/09 to 31/12/09**  
**Period Fourth Quarter 09** **Prepared by CMH**

**Incoming Calls & Callers (answered)**

	Incoming Calls	Answered Callers
This quarter	In shift 528 Out shift 353 <b>Total 881</b>	368 (per tel. system) 247 (per call sheets)
Average for Year to date	In 567 Out 360 <b>Total 927</b>	377 (per tel. system) 255 (per call sheets)
Average for previous year	In 622 Out 506 <b>Total 1128</b>	418 (per tel. system) 271 (per call sheets)

- Total call numbers have fallen by 259 calls (23%) on last quarter (881 in comparison with 1140) and are 320 calls (27%) down on the same quarter last year. (881 in comparison with 1201) and are below the average figures for both years.
- Calls by call sheets have also fallen this quarter to below the average for both 2007 (276) and 2008 (271) and 2009 (255) and below the same quarter in 2008 (294)
- Answered calls this quarter per telephone system have risen to 70% of all calls in shift against last quarter (62%) and an average quarter in 2009 of 67%, 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 (389) on the last quarter (452) and are below the average for last two years (418 and 397).
- In general call numbers have fallen back to the declining call numbers indicated by the majority of 2009 and are below the figures for the same quarter of last year. The third quarter this year was the exception boosted by the Telegraph Supplement and the run up to BackCare week, unfortunately this was not sustained into the last quarter despite BackCare week which normally boosts figures a little.
- 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 9 expert referral requests this quarter. 2 were passed to AG, 2 were passed to CR, for discussion on surgery, 1 to LB on minimally invasive procedures, 2 to HW on pain management, 1 to VS on hyper-mobility and 1 to VJ on IMS Expert referral requests have remained high despite a drop in general call numbers and remain the highest since the Helpline was started with the exception of the last quarter. 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**

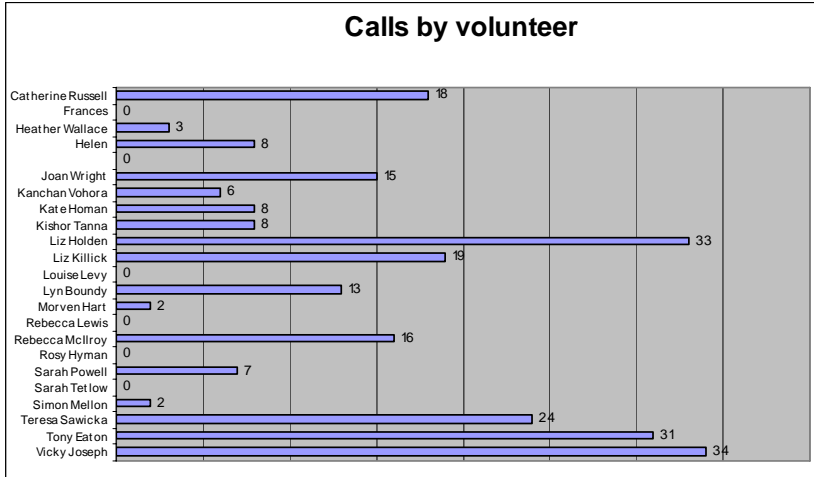
- This quarter the average shift figures have fallen back to the rates for the second quarter of this year, below the last quarter and below the same quarter in 2008 (figs in brackets) The average shift received 4.4 (6) calls, answered 3.1 (3.7) of them and 1.3 (1.3) remained unanswered.
- Shift coverage has remained high with only 3 daytime shifts being uncovered. 14/48 evening shifts reported no. Four day- time shifts, Tuesday am, Thursday am and pm and Friday am have only one person covering them for the quarter.
- Shift popularity remains fairly static with Thursday am being the most popular this quarter followed closely by Monday pm, Monday am and Tuesday am.
- Call figs are –Thursday am 6.9; Monday pm.6.8; Monday am 6.6; Tuesday am 5.1; Thursday pm. 4.6; Wednesday am 4.6; Wednesday pm 4.0; Friday am.3.5; Monday eve 2.6; Tuesday eve 1.9; Wednesday eve 1.7 and Thursday eve 1.2. Popular shifts

by call sheets are Thursday am and pm, Tuesday am, Monday am and pm, Wednesday am and pm.

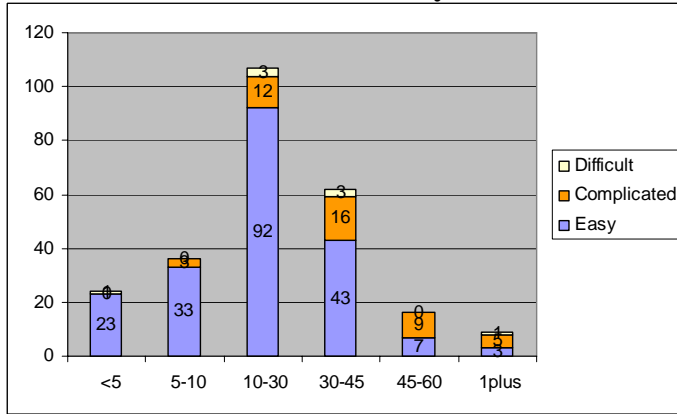
**Recommendation**

- More publicity did have an impact on call numbers but it fell away very quickly.

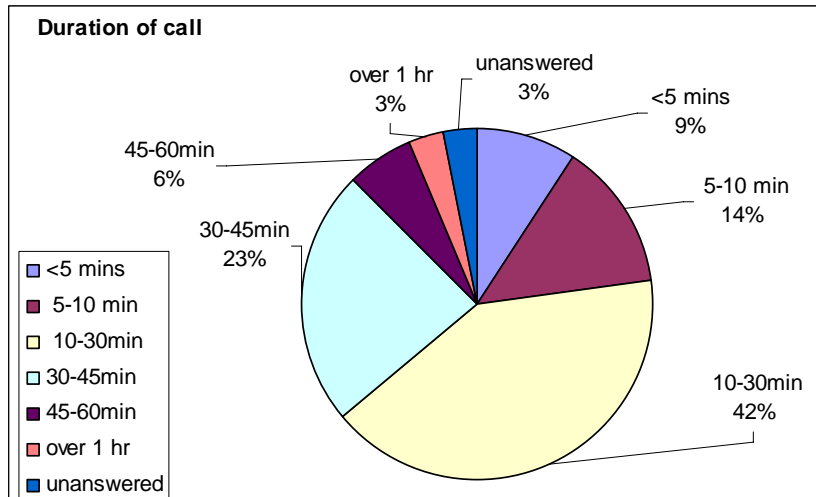
**Calls by Volunteer**



**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
- 91% of calls are within our half hour preferred time slot.

## Fact Sheet Effectiveness

Most requested year to date	Requested & unavailable
Requests this quarter 82 Total requests this year 402	
Relaxation 211 Exercises for Better Backs 175 Physical Activity and Exercise 171 Drugs 150 What to do when Back Pain Strikes 141 Top Ten tips 135 Tens 133 Sciatica 124 Hot and cold 120 Degenerative spine 93	Carers Necks PALS Discs New Surgical Techniques

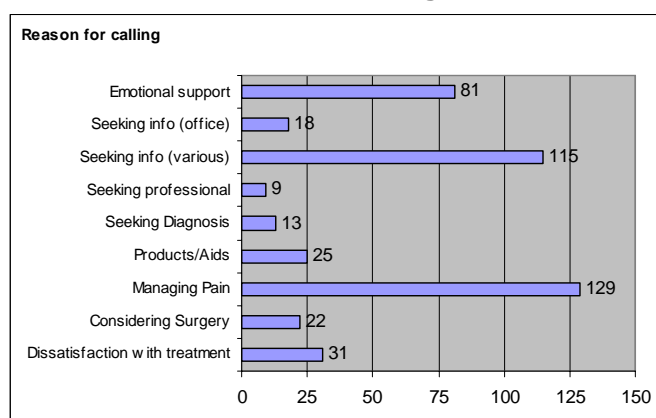
### Comment:

- 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 77, Physiotherapy is also moving up on 99
- Fact sheet requests were 27 an average month, down on the last quarter (35) and down on the fourth quarter 08 (41) and the av. month in the same quarter in 2007 (39)
- The two revised Fact sheets by Sarah Tetlow on Self help groups and Pain Management programmes are also proving very popular reaching 65 and 57 respectively in half year
- 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.
- Make a decision on what will replace Associate supporters, so that lists of suppliers can continue to be provided.

### Speed of Information Delivery

Average dispatch is 3.7 days in comparison with 3.1 days for the third quarter 2008 and 2.2 days last quarter. Mode average was same day, as last quarter, in comparison with 6 days in third quarter 2008. (No figs for 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2008)

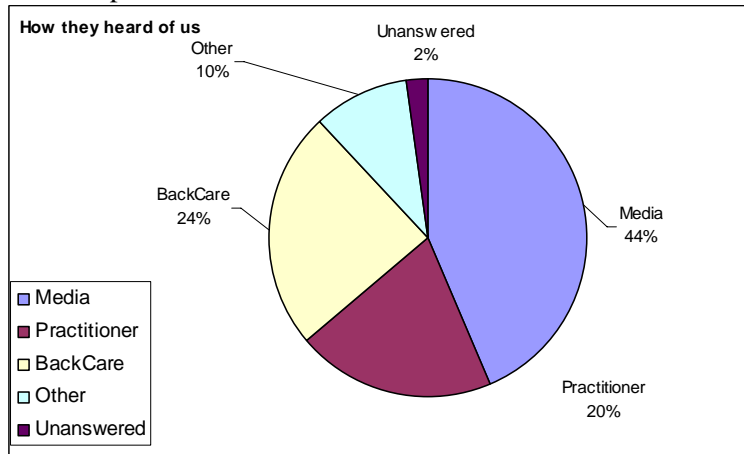
### Statistics: Reason for Calling



- 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 third largest reason for calling.

## Where Heard of the Helpline

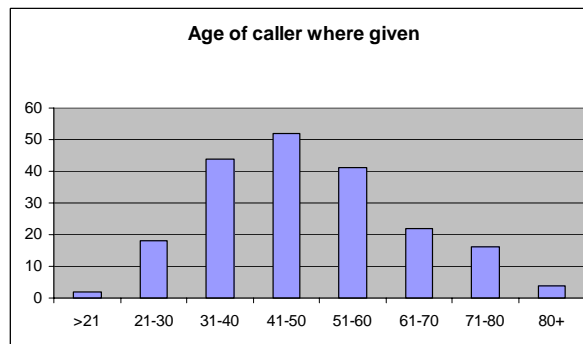
- The media in general is the most significant filed with 20% of people hearing about us from a practitioner.



## Caller Gender

%	Current Q	Last Q	Average Q for last FY
Female	64	64	60
Male	29	30	30

## Age of Caller

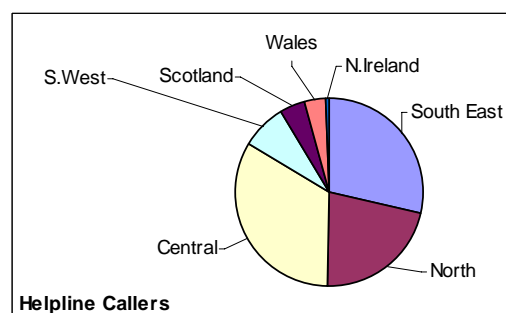
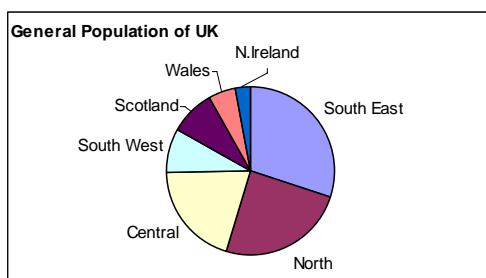


- This is the 6th quarter that this statistic has been collected, and it shows our popularity in the middle age range, when we would expect back pain to have an impact. More men proportionally call at the beginning and end of the age range.

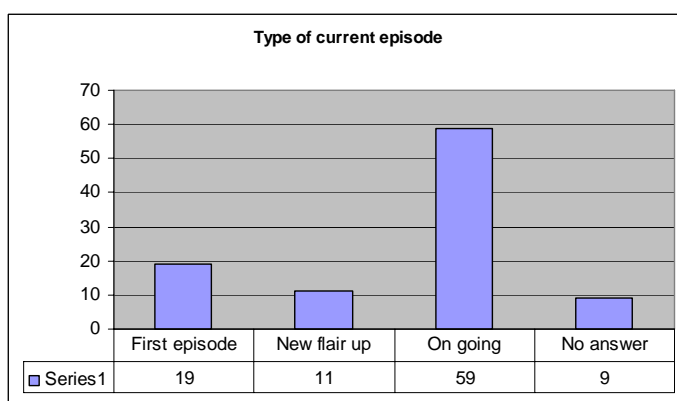
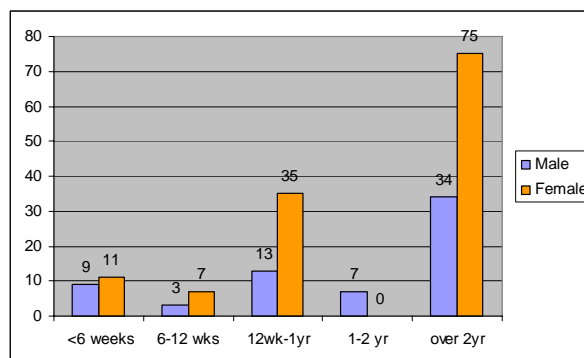
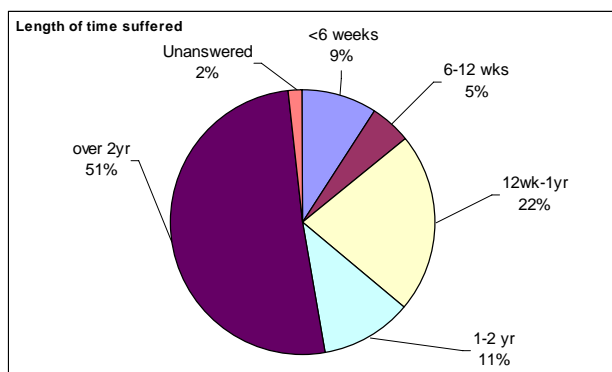
## Geographic Reach

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

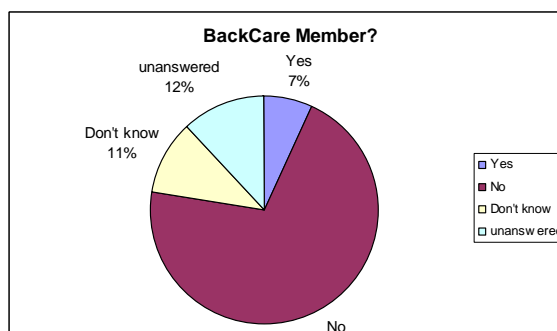
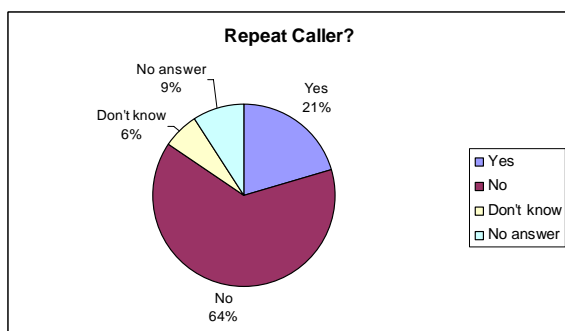
- The North and Northern Ireland remains disproportionate under represented.
- Central England is over represented and S.W. is under
- 16% of callers are outside UK as last quarter.



## Length of time suffered



The number of callers new to back pain having suffered for less than a year remains around 37% 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 9% (8% 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 a 2% fall in Repeat callers and a 1% rise in BackCare members compared to the last quarter..

**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.**