

Meeting	Forensic Services Committee
Date	25 April 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Forensic Services Performance Report
Presented By	Fiona Douglas
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To present Forensic Services Performance Report, Q4 2021/22 for Committee consideration.

This paper is presented in line with;

- The Scottish Police Authority Scheme of Delegation

This paper is for discussion.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Forensic Services Business Performance Report is presented for Q4 2021/22.
- 1.2 This report captures activity conducted across SPA Forensic Services. This performance evidence also informs the content of the Authority's quarterly Strategic Police Plan Delivery Review and the Annual Review of Policing 2021/22.
- 1.4 The report demonstrates SPA Forensic Services delivery over the last quarter through the following components:
 - Progress updates on Forensic Service commitments laid out in the annual business plan
 - Qualitative performance data.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Overall demand during Q4 is reduced in comparison to the previous quarter however this increased significantly during the quarter with demand exceeding capacity during March across most areas of Forensic Services. There are a number of initiatives ongoing in Police Scotland which will have contributed to this increase during the latter part of the quarter which are one off interventions and therefore monthly demand is expected to equalise over the next reporting period.
- 2.2 Reducing the age of the caseload across the organisation continues to be a priority focus. Biology casework is reducing in age when compared to Q3 however increases are noted in both Drugs and Mark Enhancement. Drugs have experienced delays in recruitment and vetting which is impacting performance however this is expected to improve into the next financial year as critical gaps are filled. Mark Enhancement is subject to a specific improvement plan to reduce the amount of casework subject to examination for both DNA and Fingerprints which are examined in this area of Forensic Services. Targeted improvements are planned and monitored to ensure that improvement is delivered in line with agreed milestones.
- 2.3 The impact of COVID-19 has continued to result in increased levels of sickness absence across Forensic Services. By and large this has

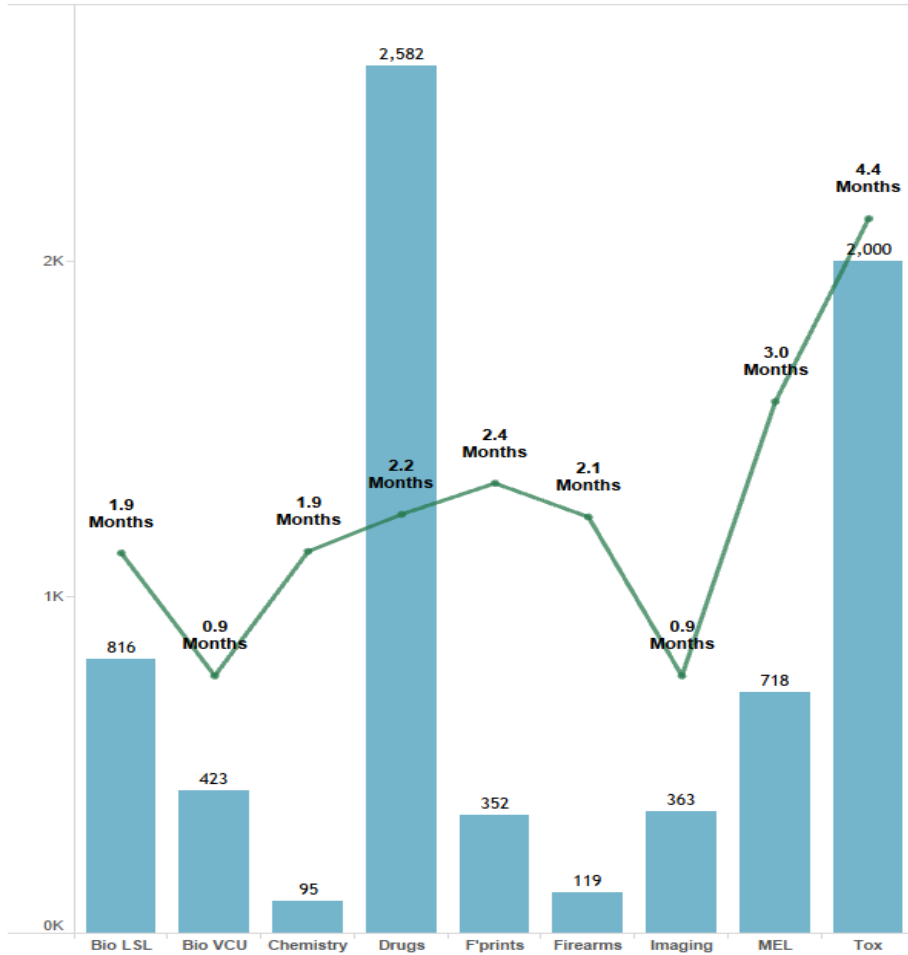
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been managed to ensure that no significant impact on service has been experienced by our partners however, there has been some specific localised areas of impact on our scene examination services over two weekends due to high levels of absence, neither of these resulting in any significant impact. Physical distancing arrangements and mask wearing has continued in line with Operation Tala guidance, ensuring that we have safe working practices for our people at all times.

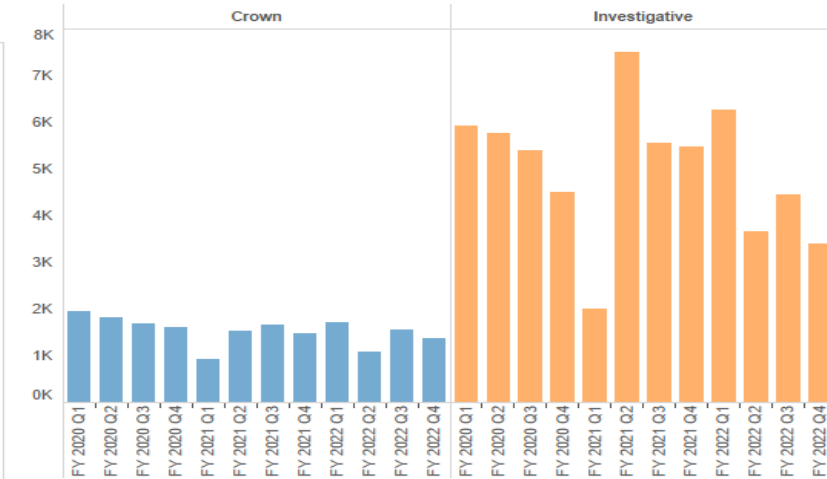
- 2.4 Scene Examination services have continued to be delivered effectively and overall there is little change in performance against the scenes attended within the 24 hours target between Q3 and Q4. There has been a notable increase in evidence recovery rates in Q4 and this remains an area of focus to ensure good decision making during the scene examination, and then subsequent analysis in the laboratory.
- 2.5 Consultation on the new operating model for Forensic Services has continued during Q3 with a significant amount of engagement and discussion in relation to the proposed changes for the organisation and for our staff.
- 2.6 Work has continued on the revised Memorandum of Understanding and the final draft of this document, and the underpinning Standard Operating Procedures has been submitted to Police Scotland and COPFS for review and approval. Further discussion is required to finalise the KPI's within the MOU, taking account of current performance and future aspirations for improvement.
- 2.7 Demand for toxicology services continues to be an area of concern and a substantial amount of work has been completed to determine what a sustainable model for this service could be in the future to account for the current and future levels of demand.
- 2.8 All evidence has been provided to UKAS in response to the recommendations made in the October – December 2021 assessment visits. This is a substantial amount of work across all accredited areas of Forensic Services and the high quality of the submissions is noted.

2.1 Forensic Services Overall Position

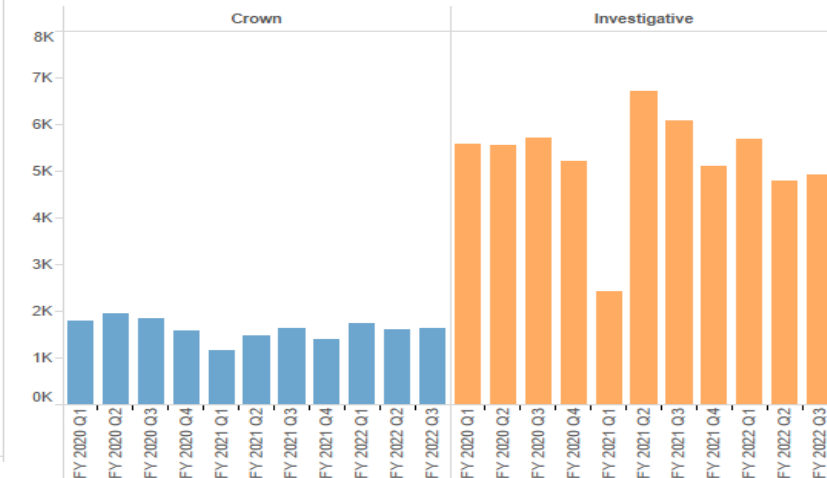
Forensic Services - Laboratory Casework
Open Cases - end Q4 21-22 with average age



Casework Demand

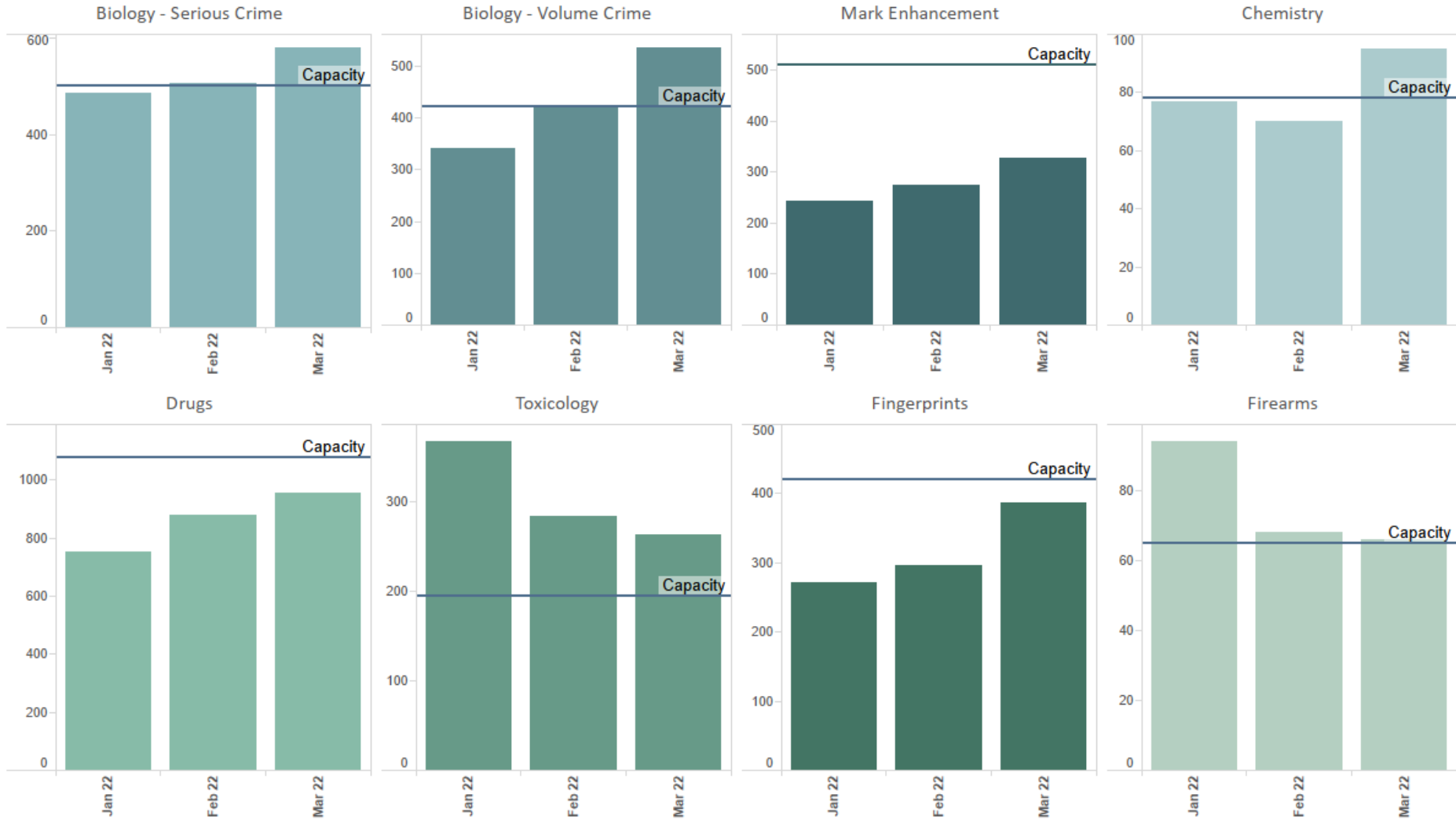


Casework Output

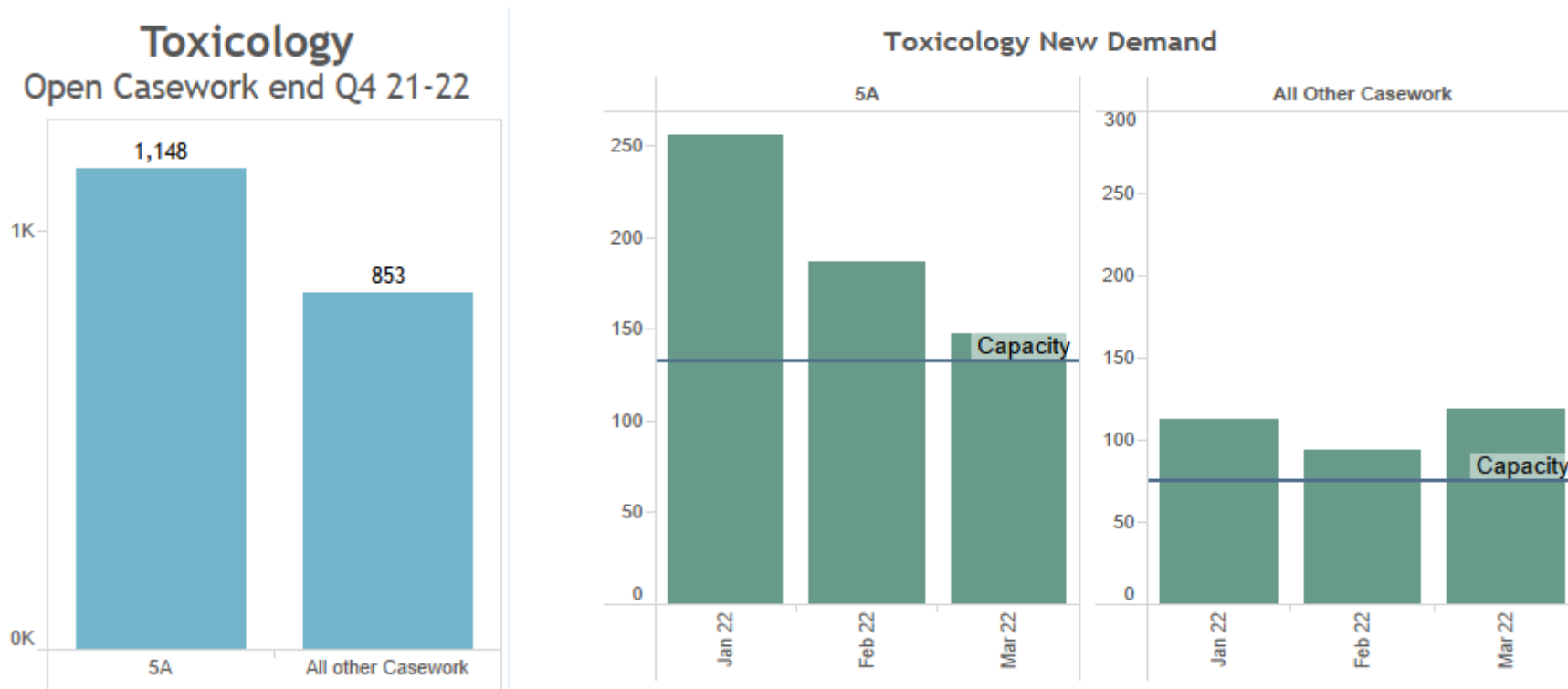


Forensic Services - Laboratory Capacity

Charts illustrate new requests for casework opened per month



2.2 Forensic Services - Toxicology

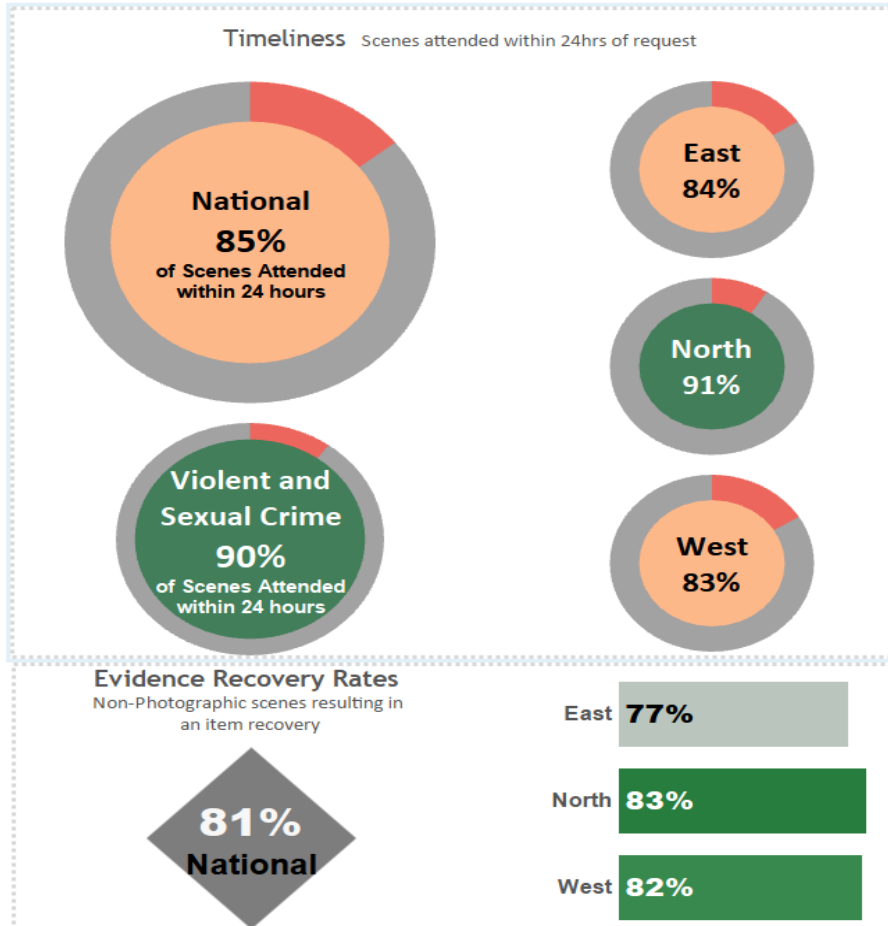


Demand for toxicology remains higher than capacity, although demand has reduced over the last three months. The Toxicology team have increased output in recent months. This, in conjunction with continued outsourcing, has meant that the number of open cases has reduced by c.10% since Q3 (and is returning to a figure comparable to Q2). February and March have been particularly challenging months for the Toxicology team, as predicted.

Toxicology demand continues to be a risk area for Forensic Services.

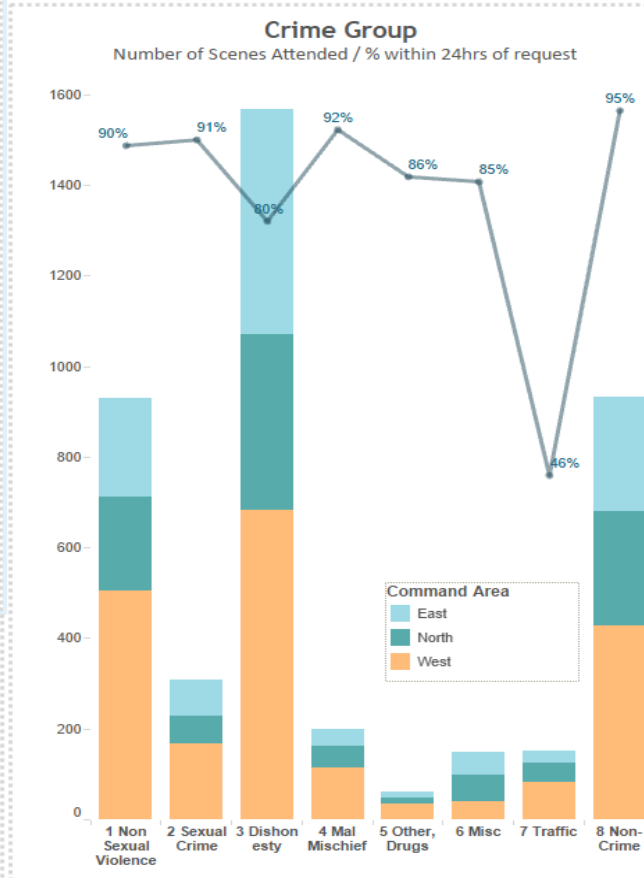
2.2 Forensic Services – Scene Examination

Forensic Services - Scene Examination Unit Quarterly Performance Q4 21-22



4,228 Scenes Attended This Quarter

4,167 Scenes Attended Q4 previous year



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2.3 Forensic Services – Quality Management System & Accreditation (to end Feb 2022)

Forensic Services Committee
Business Performance Q4 Report Cover
25 April 2022

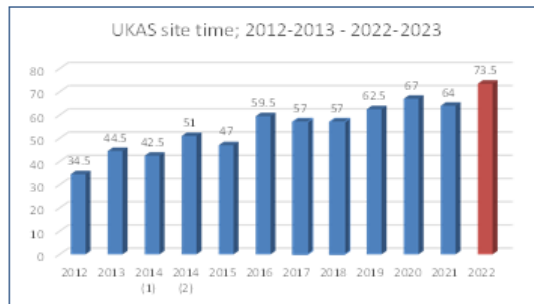
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Accreditation Summary

- The annual UKAS accreditation assessment programme ended on Friday 17 Dec 2021. The majority of evidence was submitted on or before Fri 28 Jan 2022, with a small number following before the end 11 Feb 2022.



- At the conclusion of the assessment cycle and re-assessment visit, UKAS review the effort assigned to the accredited organisation. UKAS Assessment Manager, Arlene Stephen provided detail of the anticipated effort for 2022. See below:



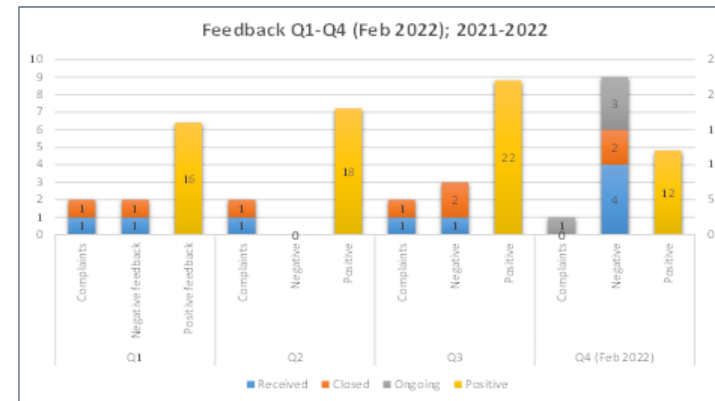
- This amounts to a **13% increase** on the re-assessment effort for Surveillance (SU1) site time. This will be robustly challenged by the Head of Quality.

Quality Improvement Plan

- Data on open and outstanding Critical NCs, Complaints and Negative feedback as well as positive feedback received is reported weekly to the FS SMT.
- A separate report on current progress against the QIP targets was made available to the Jan 2022 FS Performance & Planning Board.

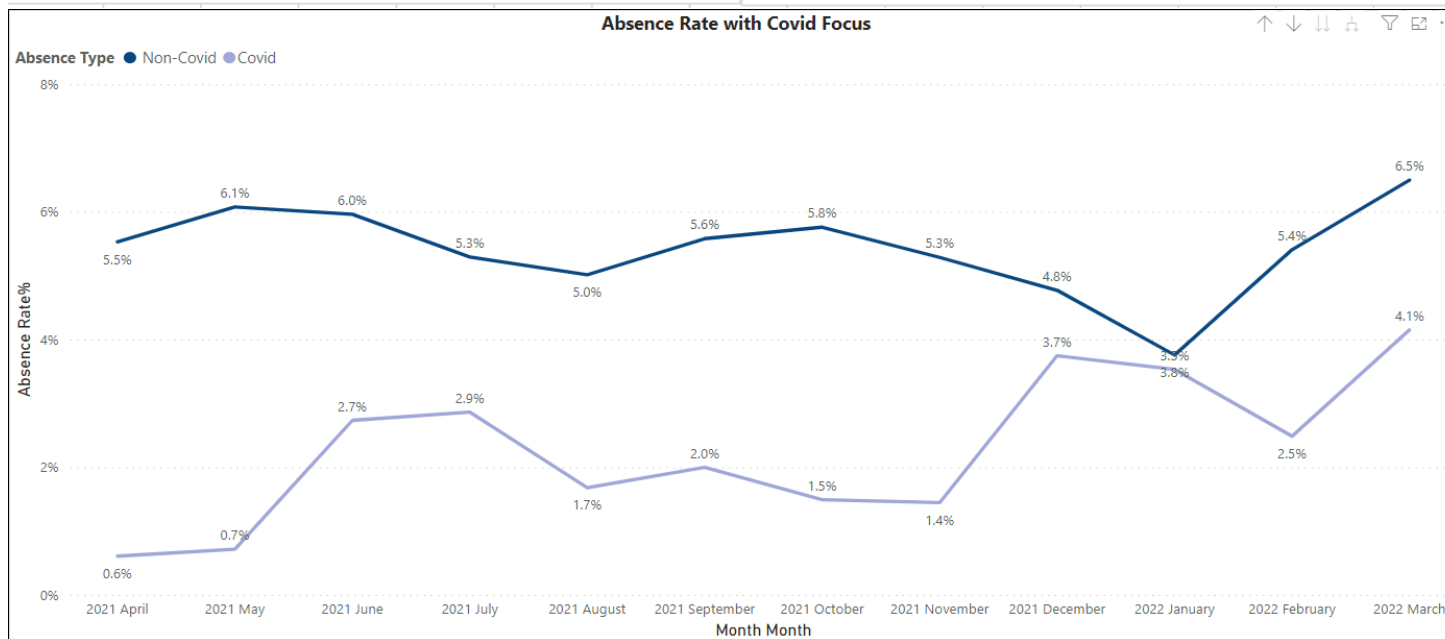
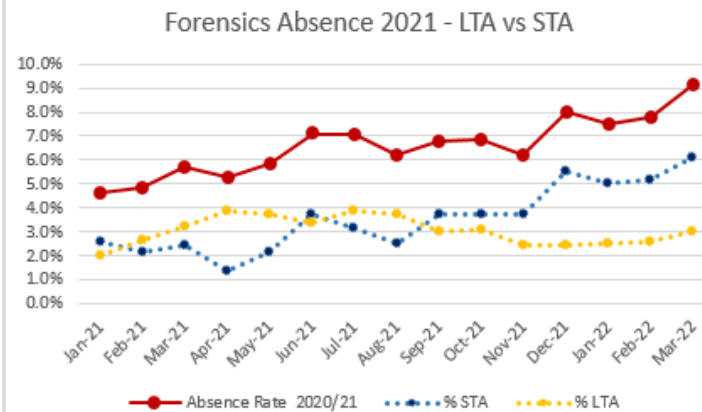
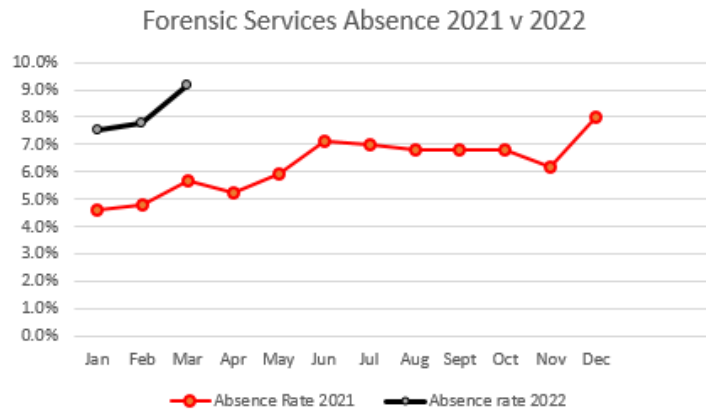
Complaints and Feedback

- Complaints and both positive and negative feedback is recorded in compliance with the ISO 17025 Standard.
- During this reporting period, none were reportable to the SPA Complaints & Conduct Committee, with all relating to service delivery to COPFS or PSoS.



- All complaints or negative feedback recorded in the Management System will have corrective and preventive action documented following Standard Operating Procedure.
- Effectiveness of actions taken are reviewed through the internal audit process and in turn through Management System Review meetings.

2.4 Forensic Services Absence



3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications in this report.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications associated with this paper.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no reputational implications associated with this paper.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no social implications associated with this paper.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

There are no community impact implications associated with this paper.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the information in this report.