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# People like us? Understanding complaints about health and care professionals

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## HCPC Research strategy 2016-2020

- Commission / undertake research – to inform better decisions; continuous improvement; engagement of stakeholders

**‘Continuing to explore ways of making better use of our own data to generate intelligence’**

- Build internal capacity to manage effectively the delivery of research
- Engage effectively with others to disseminate the outcomes of research and identify themes and issues to be addressed through future research

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## Data – intelligence – prevention?

- Focus on preventing and reducing harm
- Data versus intelligence
- The regulator as one part of a system - practice, education, employment, representation and regulation all important
- Focus on two professions as well as learning for future approaches / methodologies
- Qualitative research with a focus on subsequent engagement

## Paramedics and social workers

Profession	Complaints per 1000
<b>Paramedics</b>	10.7
<b>Social workers in England</b>	12.6
Physiotherapists	2.7
Practitioner psychologists	6.8
Radiographers	2.9
<b>All professions average</b>	6.2

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# People like us? Understanding complaints about paramedics and social workers

van der Gaag, A, Gallagher, M, Zasada, M, Lucas, G, Jago, R, Banks, S, Austin, Z.

## Methodology

- Literature review (n=698 entries)
- Delphi consultation with international experts (n=14)
- Interviews (n=26) and four focus groups (n=23)
- Case review (n=284)

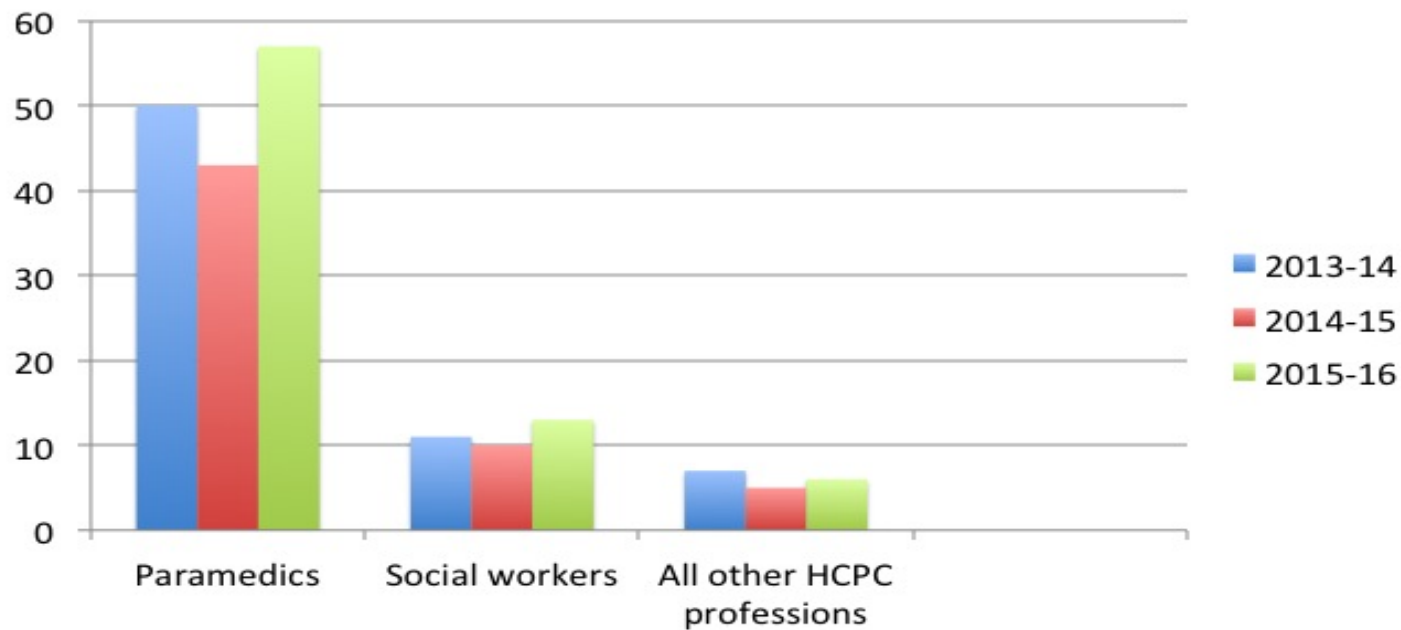
## Case reviews

	Closed at initial stage	Closed by Investigating Committee	Final hearing	Total
Paramedics	30	9	13	52
Social workers (England)	173	28	31	232

## Findings

	Paramedics %	Social Workers (England) %
No further regulatory action	79	88
Voluntary removal order	2	0
Sanction	12	8
Struck off	7	4

## Paramedics and self-referrals





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## Qualitative Findings

*Some possible reasons behind complaints:*

- Regulator as '**big brother**'
- Changing **Public** and societal expectations
- **Challenging practice**
- **Pressurised** work environments
- **Evolving** nature of the two professions

## People like us?



- Serial offending
- Silence from peers
- Widely known behaviours
- No-one 'called him out'

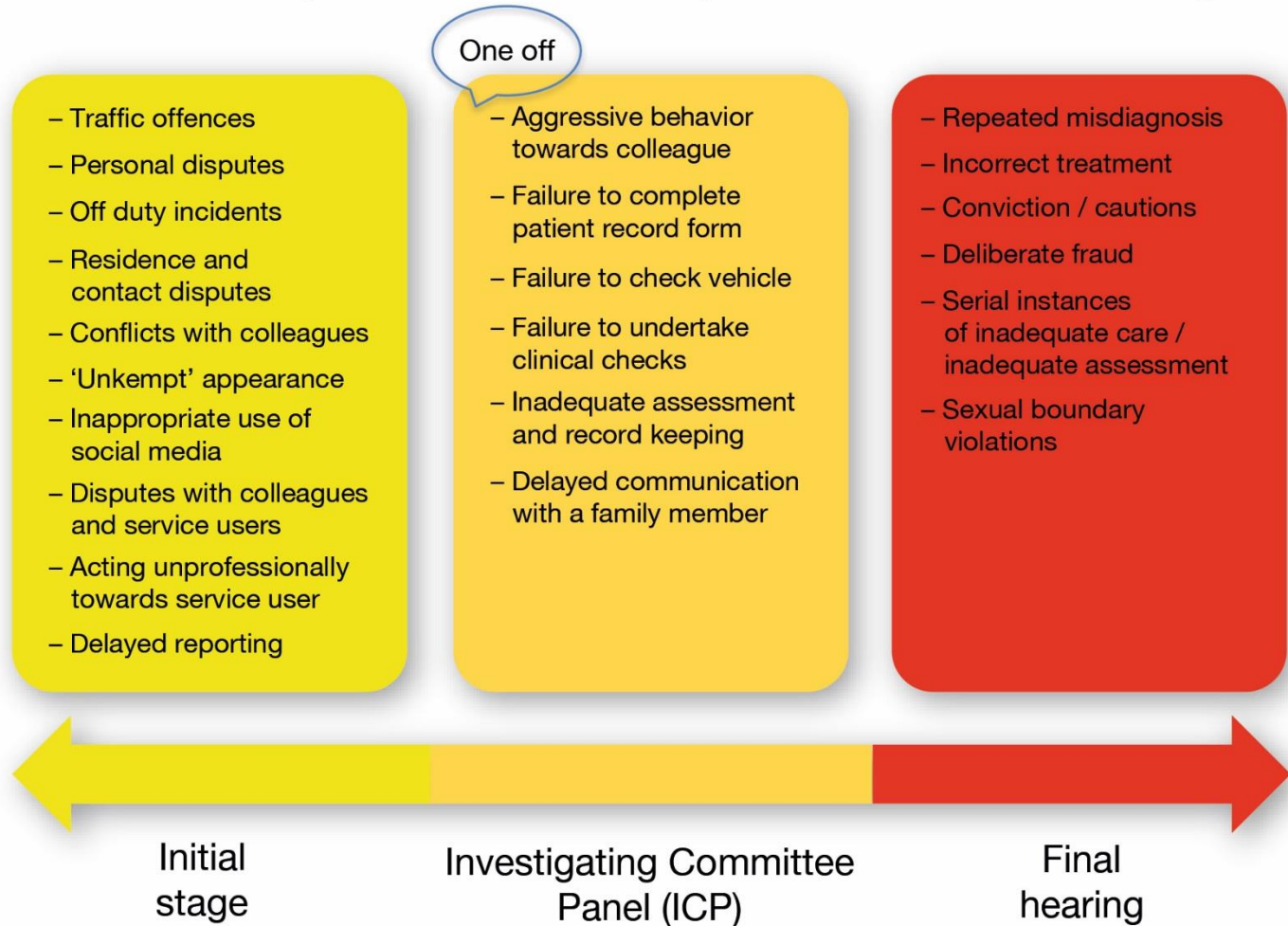
## People like us?

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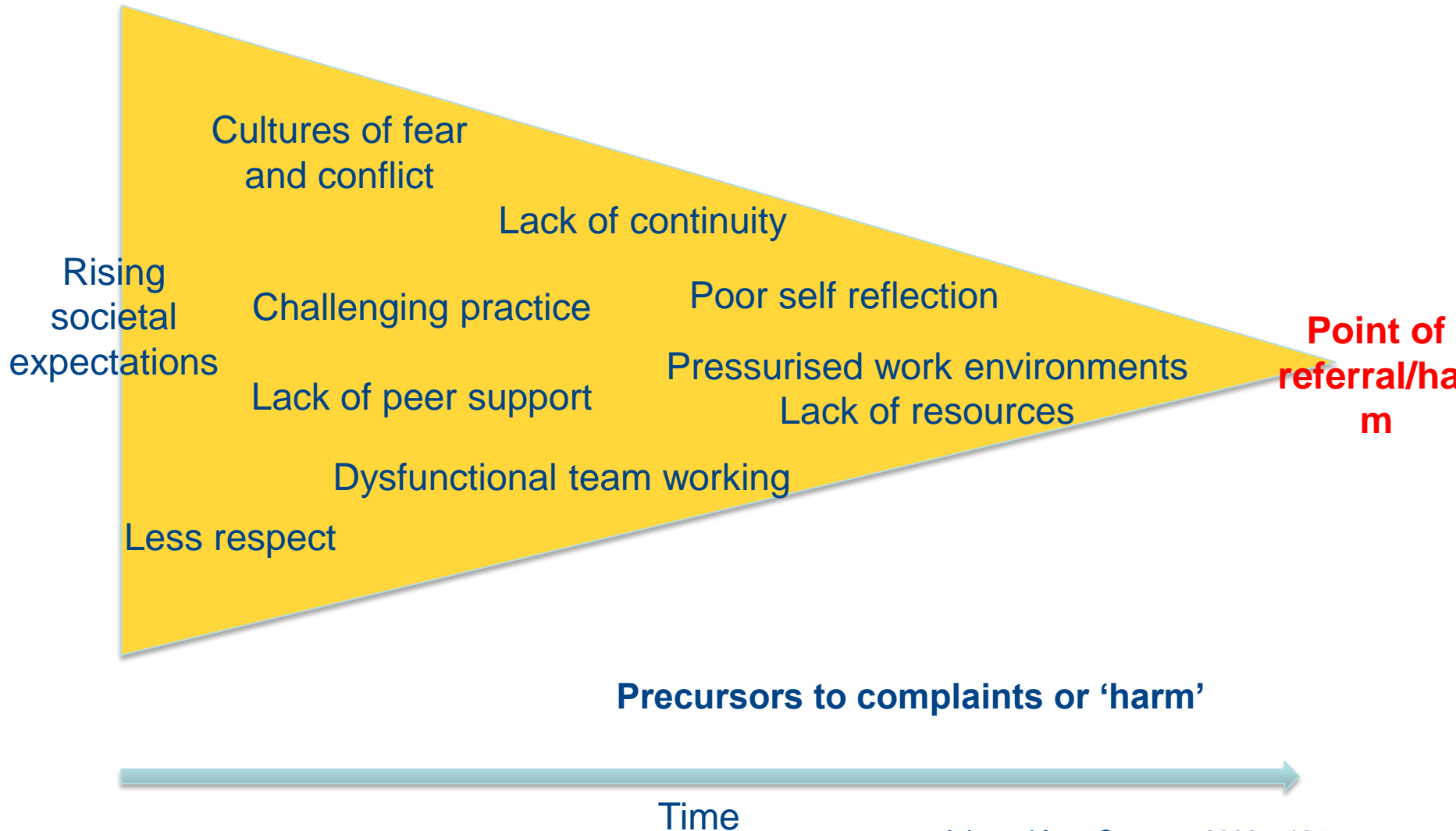
- A paramedic was asked at short notice, to provide shift cover for a colleague who was unwell.
- On the return journey to work, the paramedic activated a speed camera.
- Did not inform the employer of the offence, and was referred to the HCPC.
- Showed remorse and a commitment to learn from the incident.
- ICP concluded that there was a lack of care rather than any intention to deceive.
- Case length was seven months.



## The continuum of impact on fitness to practise and the 'dark yellow card'

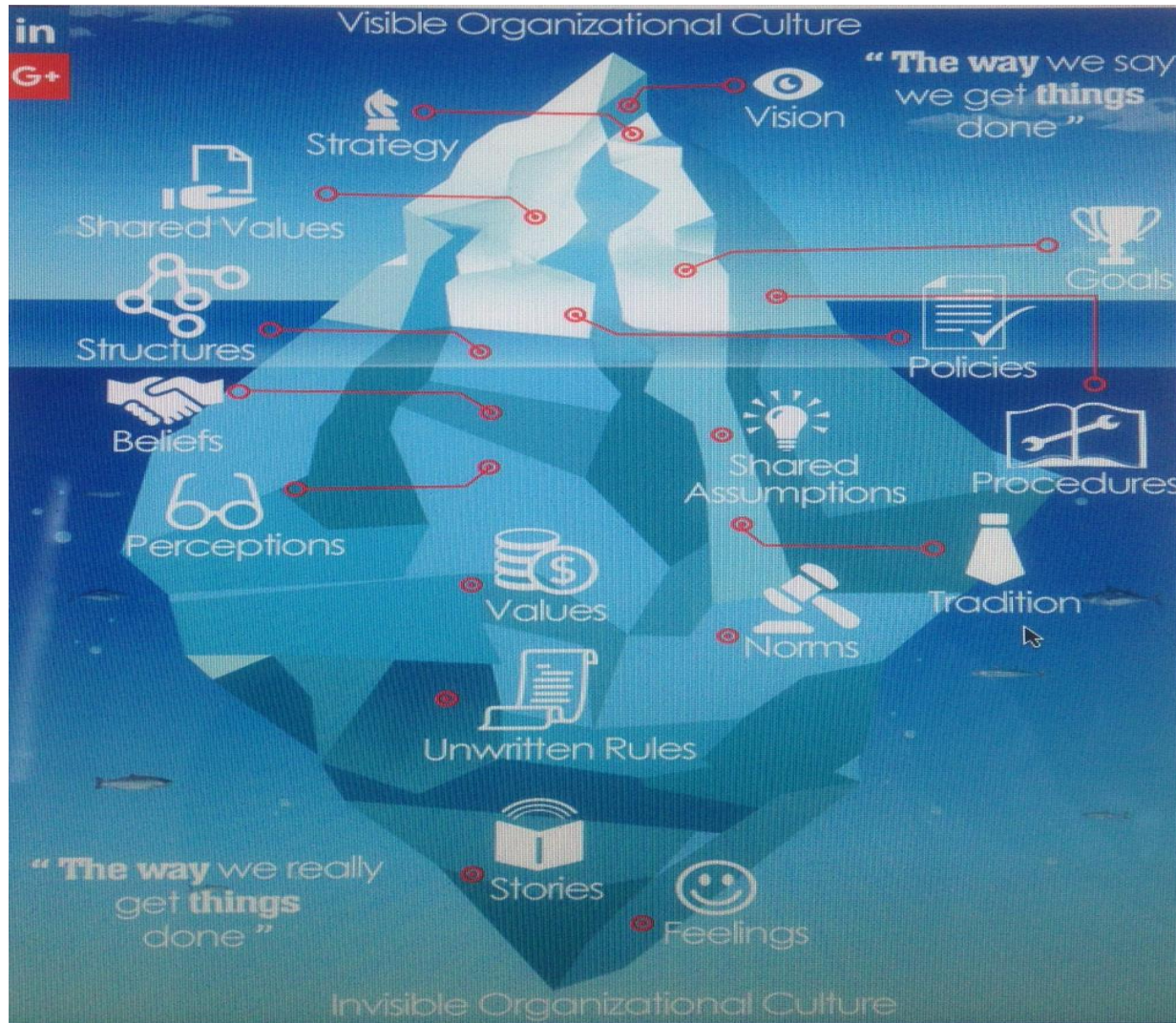


## Understanding the chronology of harm





# Strong influences below the surface



## Prevention?

- Is prevention desirable?
- Does a focus on prevention ignore the potential of complaints as a source of learning?

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## Key recommendations

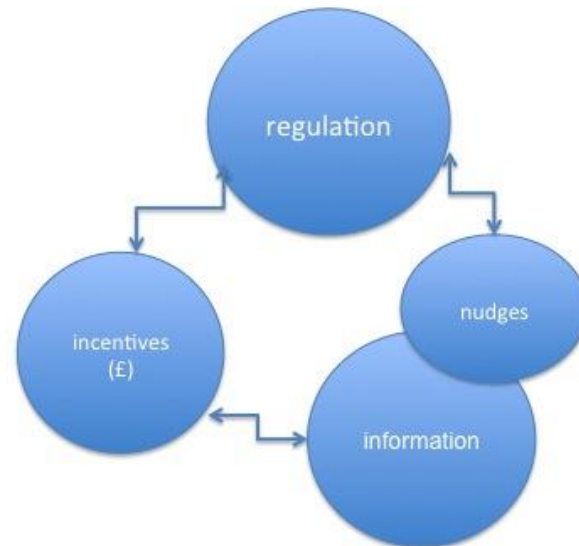
### Engagement, guidance, education, early resolution

- The Public (to enhance signposting for appropriate resolution)
- Registrants (to revise guidance, increase awareness and reduce inappropriate self-referrals)
- Employers (to support registrants and pilot early local resolution processes)
- Educators, professional bodies, unions (to develop and mobilise learning from fitness to practise cases)
- Systems regulators (to highlight the impact of negative organisational cultures)



## Lessons from behavioural insights

The relationship between policy tools, nudges and behavioral insights



Hallsworth et.al,2016

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## Learning

- ‘Uncomfortable truths’
- ‘Small data’ as well as ‘big data’
- Value in looking at cases at all decision points to generate learning
- Case studies have the potential to educate and engage
- Development and testing of a typology of cases for routine data collection
- In-house analysis of cases looking at particular themes, characteristics or professions, with a focus on action

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**Thank you for listening**

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