

How to make a complaint about the NHS

If you are unhappy with the treatment or service you have received from the NHS you are entitled to make a complaint, have it considered, and receive a response from the NHS organisation or primary care practitioner concerned. The NHS complaints procedure described in this leaflet applies to the NHS in England, except for NHS Foundation Trusts (see below).

A Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) has been established in every NHS Trust and Clinical Commissioning Group. PALS are not part of the complaints procedure itself but they might be able to resolve your concerns informally or can tell you more about the complaints procedure and independent complaints advocacy services.

Who can complain?

A complaint can be made by a patient or person affected or likely to be affected by the actions or decisions of a NHS organisation or primary care practitioner. A complaint can also be made by someone acting on behalf of the patient or person, with their consent.

What is the time limit for making a complaint?

You should normally complain within 12 months of the event(s) concerned or within 12 months of becoming aware that you have something to complain about. Primary care practitioners and complaints managers in NHS organisations have discretion to waive this time limit if there are good reasons why you could not complain earlier.

To whom should I complain initially?

The first stage of the NHS complaints procedure is 'Local Resolution'. Your complaint should be made in the first instance to the organisation or primary care practitioner providing the service. Local resolution aims to resolve complaints quickly and as close to the source of the complaint as possible using the most appropriate means; for example, use of conciliation.

You can raise your concerns immediately by speaking to a member of staff (e.g. doctor, nurse, dentist, GP or practice manager) or someone else, e.g. the PALS. They may be able to resolve your concerns without the need to make a more formal complaint.

However, if you do want to continue with your complaint you can do this orally or by writing (including e-mail) to the primary care practitioner or the NHS organisation concerned. If you make your complaint orally a written record should be made by the complaints manager.

You should receive a response from a primary care practitioner within 10 working days or from the Head of Corporate Affairs of the NHS organisation concerned within 20 working days. You should be kept informed of progress if this is not going to happen.

Independent Review

If you are unhappy with the response to your complaint, including a complaint about an NHS Foundation Trust, you can ask the Health Service Ombudsman for an “Independent Review” of your case. The Health Service Ombudsman is an independent body established to promote improvements in healthcare. You can contact the Ombudsman by:

- Visiting www.ombudsman.org.uk
- Calling the complaints helpline 0345 014 4033 (Mon–Fri 8.30am to 5.30pm)
- Emailing phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk
- Faxing 0300 061 4000
- Writing to:

The Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP

Where can I get further advice and help?

The PALS or complaints manager at the NHS organisation you are complaining about can provide advice, including about local independent complaints advocacy services. PALS (0118 9822829)

The Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) provides advice and support to people who want to complain about the NHS. Details are at www.dh.gov.uk.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) CQC is the independent regulator of all health and social care in England. They monitor, inspect and regulate all hospitals, care homes, home-care agencies, GP practices and dental practices.
www.cqc.org.uk / 03000 616161

Baltimore Park Surgery

Complaints/Comments/Suggestions

If you have any complaint, comment or suggestion regarding the service you receive from the surgery please let us know.

We operate an informal procedure as part of an NHS system for dealing with complaints.

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know **as soon as possible**.

Your complaint will be dealt with by Ms Eiliis McCarthy, our Practice Manager, who will ensure that your complaint is registered, investigated and reported back to you as quickly as possible.

We shall acknowledge your complaint within three working days and aim to have looked into the matter within ten working days of the date when you raised it with us. We shall then be in a position to offer you an explanation, or a meeting with the person(s) involved.

It is accepted that there may be occasions when our efforts to try and resolve the complaint may not be to your satisfaction and that you may wish to pursue matters further. On these occasions you are free to ask the Health Service Ombudsman to look into your concerns.

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Please note:

1. This procedure does not deal with matters of legal liability or compensation.
2. We are bound by strict rules of confidentiality and we cannot release or provide confidential information without the appropriate authority if you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else.

BALMORE PARK SURGERY
59a Hemdean Road Caversham Reading RG4 7SS

Ms Eiliis McCarthy
Dr Helen Paige

Practice Manager: 0118 9187860
Complaints GP: 0118 9471455

Complaints/Comments/Suggestions

Complainant:

Name: Date of Birth:

Address:

..... Telephone No:

Patient (if not complainant)

Name: Date of Birth:

Address:

..... Telephone No:

Summary of Complaint/Comment or Suggestion: (Please include details including date, time and staff involved. Continue on reverse of form if needed.)

Complainants signature: Date:

Patient's Authority:

I hereby authorise the above complaint to be made on my behalf and I agree that members of the Practice staff may disclose (in so far only as is necessary) confidential information about me to the above complainant.

Patient's signature: Date: