



healthwatch



If you are not happy with a health or social care service



EasyRead information about how to complain

What is in this booklet



About Healthwatch 1



About this information 2



How to complain about health care 4



How to complain about care homes and social care 10



Organisations that can help 14

About Healthwatch



Local Healthwatch helps local people make health and social care services better.

Healthwatch England supports local Healthwatch groups.

These organisations helped us write this information:



- The Care Quality Commission



- The Health Service Ombudsman



- The Local Government Ombudsman





About this information



Most people are happy with their health or social care, but sometimes things go wrong.



This information says how you or a member of your family can **complain** about your care.

A **complaint** is a way to say you are not happy with staff or services.



It gives them a chance to sort out the problem and try to put things right.

Who you tell depends on whether you are complaining about:



- Health care



- Social care



- Care that your council or the NHS pay for



- Care you pay for yourself.



Ask your local Healthwatch about free help and advice to make a complaint.





How to complain about health care



Health care the NHS pays for

Who to complain to

If the NHS pays another service for your care you can still tell them you are not happy with it.



You can choose to complain to the service, for example a dentist, GP or hospital.



Or you can complain to the NHS organisation that pays for your care:



- Your Local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group if you are not happy with a hospital or community service



- NHS England if you are not happy with a special NHS services.



If you are not sure who to complain to, ask any NHS organisation, NHS PALS service or your local Healthwatch.



How to complain

Ask for a copy of the **complaints procedure** for the service you want to complain about.



This will tell you:

- Who to talk or write to



- How they will deal with your complaint



- How they will learn from it.





You can:

- Go and talk to someone



- Phone the service



- Send an email



- Write a letter.



If you phone them or go and talk to them, the service should write down what you say and send you a copy.

It is also a good idea to write down who you spoke to and what you said.



If you are not happy with what they say

If you are not happy with how the service deals with your complaint you can ask the **Health Service Ombudsman** to look at it.



The Ombudsman is independent and looks at complaints about public organisations like the NHS. The service is free.



If they decide the NHS were wrong, they can ask them to put things right before you contact the Ombudsman.

How to contact the Ombudsman



Telephone: **0345 015 4033**



Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk



Textphone: **0300 061 4298** if you are deaf or cannot use an ordinary phone





Ask them to call you back by texting 'call back' with your name and mobile phone number to **07624 813 005**



Write to:
**Parliamentary and Health Service
Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP**



Their website is: www.ombudsman.org.uk



Health care that you pay for

If you pay for your own health care you should:



- Start by talking to the person or service that gives you care. Tell them about your complaint and give them a chance to put things right
- If you are not happy with what they say or how they deal with your complaint, you can contact the **Independent Healthcare Advisory Service (IHAS)**.

■ ■ INDEPENDENT
HEALTHCARE
■ ■ ADVISORY SERVICES

Their website is:



www.independenthealthcare.org.uk





How to complain about care homes and social care



If you are unhappy with NHS care in a social care service (for example, a dentist who comes to your care home), please use the information about NHS complaints.



This information tells you what to do if you are unhappy with care from:

- A care home
- Nursing home
- Home care service
- Other social care service.



How to complain

Ask for a copy of the **complaints procedure** for the service you want to complain about.



This will tell you:

- Who to talk or write to



- How they will deal with your complaint



- How they will learn from it.



You should contact the service and give them a chance to put things right:

- Go and talk to someone



- Phone the service





- Send an email



- Write a letter.



If you phone them or go and talk to them, the service should write down what you say and send you a copy.

It is also a good idea to write down who you spoke to and what you said.



If the council plans or pays for your care you can also complain to them.



Local Healthwatch can tell you how to contact your council or you can look on this website: www.direct.gov.uk



If you are not happy with what they say

If you are not happy with how the service or council deals with your complaint, you can ask the **Local Government Ombudsman** to look at it.



The Ombudsman is independent and free. They can look at complaints about care the council pays for and care you pay for yourself.



You must give the care service a chance to put things right before you contact the Ombudsman.

How to contact the Ombudsman



Telephone: **0300 061 061**



Write to:
The Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry CV4 0EH



Their website is: www.ombudsman.org.uk



Organisations that can help



The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service

This service is free and not part of the NHS. They have offices in different parts of England and can help you complain about the NHS.



Your local Healthwatch can tell you how to contact them.

Healthwatch

Healthwatch England speaks up for people who use health and social care services. We have 152 local Healthwatch groups that:



- Help patients and the public speak up about health and social care



- Make sure people who plan and pay for services listen to patients and carers.



Healthwatch cannot look at your complaint but we can tell you who to contact.

You can find your local Healthwatch group on our website:

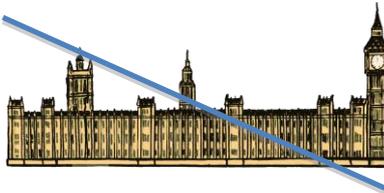


www.healthwatch.co.uk/find-local-healthwatch



The Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The Care Quality Commission is independent and not part of the Government.



They check that health and adult social care services in England meet the rules for good safe care.



People who are being treated under a law called the Mental Health Act.





When people who use services, families and carers tell them about poor care it helps them decide which services to check.



The Care Quality Commission cannot look at your complaint but do want to know when people are unhappy with their care.



You can telephone them on:
03000 616161



or tell them about your care on their website: www.cqc.org.uk

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