

Making a complaint to the NHS in the North East and North Cumbria

We welcome feedback about NHS services, both positive and negative. If you are unhappy with the treatment or service you, a relative or someone you care for has received from your local NHS, with appropriate consent, you have the right to make a complaint, have it looked into and get a response. Within the NHS we aim to make sure all complaints are handled well, and that appropriate action is taken to try and resolve the matter to your satisfaction.

You can make your complaint in writing, by email, via a complaint form or verbally.

Your complaint should be acknowledged within three working days of receipt and fully investigated in a manner that is fair both to you and the staff involved. If failings are identified during the investigation, these will help us to improve the quality of local health services. You will receive a written response to your complaint which will include information on the service improvements we have identified.

It should be noted that complaints relating to some types of funding decisions and eligibility criteria are not routinely handled via the complaints process; the Complaints Team can provide advice on the process to follow.

Face to face meetings can be arranged by appointment with the Complaints Team.

Care will not be compromised as a result of raising a complaint/concern.

Information about complaints is available in other languages and formats upon request.

Where do I send my complaint?

This will depend on the service your complaint is about.

A complaint about the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)

This includes complaints about the commissioning of services or the actions of the ICB. Please contact our Complaints Team.

Email: nencicb.complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: 0191 374 4218

Freepost: FREEPOST, NENC ICB COMPLAINTS

Contact Address: Complaints Team, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, Pemberton House, Colima Avenue, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR5 3XB

A complaint about a doctor, dentist, pharmacist or optometrist

Complaints about these services should be raised directly with the practice or service involved. However, if you prefer, you may contact the ICB using the details above, but please note that the ICB will need to contact the practice/service as part of the investigation into your complaint.

Other NHS services

If you have a concern, complaint, or compliment about the provider of NHS services such as a **hospital, mental health service, urgent care service, ambulance service or community service**, please contact the provider directly.

If you would prefer not to approach the provider about the complaint, then you may contact the ICB using the details above, but please note that the ICB will need to contact your healthcare provider to investigate your complaint.

Complaining to the commissioner of an NHS service

In most cases, complaints about the care you have received can be handled by the provider of that care. However, you are also entitled to complain to the commissioner of these services if that is your preference.

Complaining to the commissioner may be the right option if you are not comfortable complaining directly to your healthcare provider. However, the healthcare provider will normally be given the opportunity to investigate and respond to your complaint directly.

If you have already complained to your healthcare provider, the commissioner will not be able to re-investigate the same concerns. If you remain unhappy following a response to your complaint, you should contact either your healthcare provider or the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman (PHSO), contact details are shown below.

Can my issue be resolved without formally complaining?

You can raise your concerns immediately by speaking with the staff involved. This might give you the response you require without having to take the matter further. You can also contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who can help in many ways including helping to resolve concerns or problems about services and providing advice on the complaints process.

Who can complain?

Anyone can complain about NHS services or treatment they have received or if the actions or decisions of an NHS organisation or primary care practitioner have affected them. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, consent may be required for the ICB to manage the complaint.

When should I make a complaint?

A complaint should be made within 12 months from the date the issue occurred or when it came to your attention, or you had good reasons for not making the complaint within this time limit.

What happens if my complaint involves several organisations?

If your complaint involves more than one NHS organisation or the NHS and social care (provided by the local authority), you can make your complaint to just one of the organisations involved and they will liaise with the other organisations and arrange for you to receive a single, coordinated response.

What happens if I am unhappy with the response?

If you remain unhappy with how your complaint has been handled following the conclusion of local resolution, you can ask the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) to review your complaint.

Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk
Telephone: 0345 015 4033
Post: PHSO, Citygate, Mosley Street, Manchester, M2 3HQ
Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk

Who can help me make a complaint?

Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICA) services can guide and support you through the complaints process. They can help you put your complaint in writing and attend meetings with you; however, the ICA Team does not investigate complaints.

Cumberland, Westmorland & Furness, Redcar & Cleveland, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough

People First
Telephone: 03003 038037
Email: admin@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk

Darlington, Durham, North Tyneside and South Tyneside

Carers Federation
Telephone: 0808 802 3000
Email: ica@carersfederation.co.uk

Gateshead and Newcastle

Your Voice Counts
Telephone: 0800 048 7856
Email: nhsadvocacy@yvc.org.uk

Northumberland and Sunderland

VoiceAbility
Telephone: 0300 303 1660
Email: helpline@voiceability.org

Stockton

Stockton ICA (Healthwatch)
Telephone: 0800 304 7538
Email: sica@pcp.uk.net

The ICB will retain personal information for the purposes of a complaint investigation only. To help us make improvements to the services you receive, anonymous information about your complaint may be shared as part of our reporting process. Should you have any concerns about these arrangements please contact us.