

# Making a Complaint – Guide

If you are unhappy with the service we have provided, we want to know what we can do to help.

When you contact us, we will want to talk to you to understand the problem and agree what you would like to happen, is it a problem we can resolve quickly and easily, or a problem that requires a detailed written response.

If the problem can be resolved quickly, we will confirm what we will do and when we will contact you. This is most useful at the time that problems are happening, and action can be taken to make the situation better for you or your relative.

If you are happy with the action we take, and further investigations are not needed, we will document this as a concern.

If a problem needs to be investigated, or needs a formal response, we will confirm the issues to be investigated, how you would like to receive the information from the investigation, and when this will be available.

We are responsible for dealing with your complaint efficiently and ensuring it is properly investigated in line with the **Trust's Complaints Policy**. We will treat you with respect and courtesy and provide a timely and appropriate response.

We will tell you the investigation findings and any action we will be taking. All concerns and complaints are recorded so we can monitor our services and report on the issues raised.

All complaints will be handled in accordance with the **Trust's Complaints Policy**, Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009. The first stage is called Local Resolution, where we investigate the issues raised.

## Independent help or support available in making a complaint

The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service is not part of the Foundation Trust and can provide independent advice and support. Their contact details are:

### For Halifax Residents

Healthwatch Calderdale  
Elsie Whitely Innovation Centre  
Hopwood Lane  
Halifax  
HX1 5ER  
Tel: 01422 399433  
Email: [info@healthwatchcalderdale.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchcalderdale.co.uk)

### For Huddersfield Residents

Touchstone Advocacy Service  
Dewsbury Business Centre  
13 Wellington Road East  
Dewsbury  
WF13 1HF  
Tel: 01924 460211  
Email: [advocacy@touchstonesupport.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@touchstonesupport.org.uk)

## What if my complaint involves one or more organisation?

If the issues raised involve services not provided by the Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust, we will discuss with you whether separate responses or a

joint response will be most helpful for you. If a joint response will be helpful we will need the patient's permission to obtain and share information with the other agencies involved. We will then contact the other agencies to agree who will lead the complaint and how long it will take.

### **Is there a time limit to make a complaint?**

A complaint will normally need to be made within 12 months of the issue arising, or 12 months from when you became aware of the issue. Requests for investigations beyond this time will be considered on the individual circumstances by the Patient Advice and Complaints Manager.

### **Can I make a complaint on behalf of someone else?**

If you are making a complaint on behalf of another person, we will need their permission to share information with you. In circumstances where they are unable to give permission, we will need the agreement of the next of kin.

Members of Parliament (MP) are considered to have the consent of the patient when pursuing complaints on their behalf (Data Protection Act 1998 – Processing Sensitive Personal Data – Elective Representatives Order 2002).

Children are able to make a complaint about a service they have received. Parents and legal guardians may also raise complaints for children, however consent will be required from the patient if he or she is over 16 years old.

## **What happens when I make a complaint?**

### **Receiving your complaint**

A written record must be made of your complaint. This can be in a letter or email from you, or a signed agreement of the issues raised following a discussion with us.

### **Complaint is Acknowledged**

We will write to formally confirm acknowledgement of your complaint

### **Appointment of an Investigator**

The complaint is then sent to an investigator. Many investigations are carried out by a Matron, General Manager, or Service Manager, however some investigations are felt to need two investigators due to the complexity or seriousness of the issues raised and will often be led by more senior members of staff.

### **The Investigation Process**

The investigator will contact you to clarify the issues for investigation and the timescales for their enquiries. During the investigation they will look at any records that have been made and speak to the staff involved to understand what should have happened and compare this to what actually happened.

### **Resolution**

We resolve your complaint in one of two ways:

- **A Meeting** with staff who are responsible for the service you complained about;  
or
- **A Written Response** which will be signed off by an Executive Director

How you would like your complaint to be resolved is your choice.

## **What if I'm not satisfied with the response you provide?**

If you are not satisfied with the way we have dealt with your complaint, you have the right to approach the **Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman** who will consider whether we have acted properly and fairly.

You may **contact** them:

via their website, [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

by telephone, Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm, on **0345 015 4033**;

By e-mail, [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk);

By fax, 0300 061 4000;

Or, **by writing** to them at:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

London, SW1P 4QP

The Ombudsman will first consider whether your complaint can be resolved by further action by the Trust. It is important therefore to be sure we cannot offer any further help.

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