

# How we deal with complaints



**easy  
read**

# Introduction



Healthwatch works to make sure NHS and social care services are the best they can be for the people who use them.



If you are not happy with some of the work we have done, you can make a complaint.



This information will tell you how we deal with complaints.

# How we treat complaints and concerns



We will treat both complaints and **concerns** in the same way.

A **concern** is when you are worried something might be a problem.

We will:

- listen carefully to your concern
- be polite and helpful
- deal with your complaint fairly and quickly
- let you know how we are getting on with your complaint
- admit our mistakes and put them right if we can





- let you **appeal** if you don't agree with a decision made by the lead person in charge of the Healthwatch group

An **appeal** is when you ask for a decision to be changed.



- provide **reasonable adjustments** to help you if you need extra support to make a complaint

**Reasonable adjustments** are changes that places and services can make so that disabled people can take part like everybody else.



- use the things you have said to make our service better for everyone.

## Complaints we can't deal with



We can't deal with complaints or concerns about the NHS. They deal with their own complaints.



We can't deal with complaints about **social care** services. The local council deals with these.

**Social care** is support you need to look after yourself. Social care workers include nurses, care home workers and social workers.



## Making things equal for everyone

We will deal with complaints in the same way, without **discrimination**.



**Discrimination** is when you are treated badly or unfairly because of your age, sex, race, religion, disability, health condition or sexual orientation.



We will keep an eye on how we deal with complaints to check that things are equal for everyone.

# Protecting your information



To help us deal with your complaint, we keep a record of your information.



We follow the laws about keeping information safe and private.



Our staff will only see the information they need to deal with your complaint.



If we want to use your information for training to improve our service, we will:

- ask you first
- not use your name.

# How we will deal with your complaint



Please tell us as soon as possible if you are unhappy with our service, so we can try and make things right.

The more you can tell us, the better chance we will have to solve your complaint.



You can speak to any of our staff, or contact us by telephone, email or letter.



If you think your complaint or concern has not been solved, you can contact the lead person in charge of the Healthwatch group.



If your complaint or concern is about the lead person in charge of the Healthwatch group, you can contact the **Chair**.

The **Chair** is the person who runs the local Healthwatch meetings.



The lead person in charge of the Healthwatch group, or the Chair, will let you know they have received your complaint or concern within 7 days.

They will contact you to:



- get as much information as possible
- tell you how we will deal with your complaint or concern.



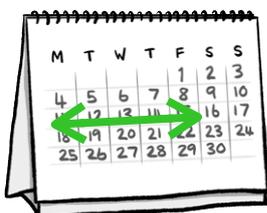
The lead person in charge of the Healthwatch group, or the Chair, will arrange an **investigation** of your complaint or concern.

An **investigation** is where we look into something to find out what has happened.



They will:

- collect all the information they can about your complaint or concern
- try to solve things within 15 **working days**



**Working days** are Monday to Friday.



- let you know what the decision is and how it was reached



- let you know what is happening if more than 15 working days have passed.



If you are not happy with what has been done, you can appeal.

You will need to do this within 20 days of us letting you know our decision.



Your complaint or concern will be passed to a new person who hasn't been involved before.

They will look at all the information to see if the decision should be changed.



They will let you know within 20 working days.

After that, your complaint or concern will be closed.



If you are still not happy, you can tell your local council about your complaint or concern.



After that, you can tell the Local Government Ombudsman by:

- website [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)



- telephone - **0300 061 0614**



We will keep checking to see how well we are dealing with complaints and concerns and change things if we need to.



We will put any changes on the Healthwatch website as soon as possible.