

# How to make a comment or complaint



An easy read guide for people with learning disabilities and their carers

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## Making a comment



We would like you to tell us what you think of our hospitals and the support you receive.



Please tell us if we can do better.



If you have had a good experience, we would like you to tell us about it.



This is how you can give us your comments:



- speak to someone from our patient advice and liaison service (PALS)
- use one of the hand-held computers on the ward or department you are visiting

## If you are not happy with the care or treatment you receive



The Trust hopes to offer good support to all patients.



Sometimes things go wrong.



If you are not happy with the support you have received, you should tell us as soon as possible.



This booklet will tell you:

- how to complain
- the steps you will need to take
- who can give you support

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## Step 1: how to make an informal complaint



If you are not happy you should speak to the hospital staff caring for you.

Often things can be put right this way.



If you want to talk about the problem with someone else in the hospital, you can contact the patient advice and liaison service, PALS.



PALS can speak to the ward or department and try to put things right.

## Using PALS



Every hospital has a patient advice and liaison service (PALS). They can help you with:

- any questions you have about your visit
- putting right any problems during your visit
- speaking to the ward or department on your behalf



We have PALS services at these hospitals:

- Charing Cross Hospital
- St Mary's Hospital
- Hammersmith Hospital

You can also contact PALS by telephone:



Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals on:

**020 3313 0088**

St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals on:

**020 3312 7777**

or by email: [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net)

## Professional advocacy



Professional advocates can help people with difficult problems or situations.



A professional advocate could:

- help you to understand your health problem or condition
- try to find out what you want to know
- support you to say what you want
- help hospital staff to support you in a way that works for you
- help you to make a complaint



**The Advocacy Project** supports people with learning disabilities who live in Westminster, Camden or the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Telephone: **020 8969 3000**

Email: [info@advocacyproject.org.uk](mailto:info@advocacyproject.org.uk)



**Hammersmith & Fulham Mencap** supports people with learning disabilities who live in the Royal Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.

Telephone: **020 8748 5168**

Email: [info@hfmencap.org](mailto:info@hfmencap.org)



**Mencap** - empower me - supports all people with learning disabilities.

Telephone: **0808 808 1111**

Email: [helpline@mencap.org.uk](mailto:helpline@mencap.org.uk)

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## Step 2: making a formal complaint



If you feel that your concerns have not been put right you can make a formal complaint.



To make a formal complaint you should write to us at:

Complaints department  
Seventh floor  
Salton House  
St Mary's Hospital  
Praed Street  
London W2 1NY



Or you can email us at:  
[ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)



## Here are some ideas about what to include in your letter



### **Include:**

- your name and address
- date of birth and
- hospital number (if you know it)



### **Be brief:**

- keep your letter to no more than two pages if possible
- if the complaint is complicated, attach a list of things that happened



### **Suggest how things could be improved:**

- say what you expect to happen
- put your concerns politely but firmly



### **Make sure your letter is received:**

- send your letter by recorded delivery



### **Keep copies:**

- keep a copy of all letters you send or receive



### **If you are writing on behalf of someone else:**

- please include your own name and address, as well as the patient's details
- the patient will need to agree to the complaint
- you must include their written agreement in the content of the complaint or we can send you a form to give to them to sign and send back to us
- if the patient is unable to give their written agreement because of disability or ill health, please contact us for advice



Remember, if you need advice about making a complaint you can contact the patient advice and liaison service, PALS.

The contact details for PALS are on page 5.



You can also get support from:

- a professional advocate
- the independent complaints advice service

## NHS Complaints Advocacy (NCA)



NHS Complaints Advocacy (NCA)



NCA provides a free and confidential service to anyone thinking about making a complaint.



The NCA could help you by:

- providing information about making a complaint
- helping you to write letters and making sure you send them to the right person
- going with you to any meetings about your complaint
- contacting and speaking to the hospital (if you agree to this)



### How to contact the NCA

Telephone: 0300 330 5454

Email: [nhscomplaints@voicability.org](mailto:nhscomplaints@voicability.org)  
[www.nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org](http://www.nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org)

## What happens next?



- someone will look at your complaint
- we will write to you within three working days of starting our investigation
- or we might telephone you or email you to talk about the best way to help
- we will telephone you or write to you again once we have finished a full investigation



If your complaint is complicated, we may want to meet to discuss your concerns.

We call this a local resolution meeting (LRM).



If you remain unhappy after we have investigated your complaint, please speak to the complaints manager who can tell you what else you can do.

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## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print, as a sound recording, in Braille, or in alternative languages. Please contact the communications team:

[imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

The Trust would like to thank:

- the Westminster Society for people with learning disabilities
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