

How to Make a Complaint about your GP, Dentist, Optician or Pharmacist

The NHS Complaints Procedure
for Independent Primary Care
Practitioners

April 2013

The Health Service Ombudsman

If you remain unhappy you may complain to the Health Service Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is completely independent of the NHS and Government.

You can contact the Ombudsman at:

Telephone: 0345 015 4033

Post: Millbank Tower, Millbank, London,
SW1P 4QP

Email: OHSC.Enquiries@ombudsman.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk

Further Help and Advice

- Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS): 0808 803 3000.
- Wigan Citizens Advice Bureau: 0844 826 9713
- Department of Health: their website has information on the NHS complaints procedure at www.nhs.uk.

About Us

Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group is a group of GPs in the Ashton, Leigh and Wigan Borough who together are responsible for commissioning local health services for Wigan Borough.

Your 5-Step Guide to Making a Complaint

1. You can complain on behalf of yourself or a loved one – if you have their consent.
2. You have twelve months to complain.
3. To get a quick resolution, contact the individual or service involved and discuss your concerns.
4. If you wish to make a formal complaint, contact NHS England (0300 311 22 33).
5. If all else fails, you can contact the Health Service Ombudsman.

We hope it never happens, but sometimes we might get it wrong.

If you are unhappy with the treatment you or a loved one have received from an NHS Primary Care practitioner (GP, Dentist, Optician or Pharmacist) you are entitled to:

- make a complaint;
- have your complaint properly considered;
- and, get a response from those concerned.

Who can complain?

You can complain. If you think that an action or decision taken by your GP, Dentist, Optician or Pharmacist with regard to you or a loved one is unjust or inappropriate, you have the right to complain.

If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, you will need their consent.

When can I complain?

The sooner the better, but you have **twelve months** from the events happening that have caused you concern to make your complaint.

If more than twelve months has passed, you may still be able to complain, but there has to be good reasons for the delay.

Who should I complain to?

The first stage of the NHS complaints procedure is 'Local Resolution'.

Local Resolution

You should complain directly to the person or persons providing the service or services that have made you unhappy. Local resolution is often the quickest and most effective way to find a solution.

You can raise your concerns immediately by speaking to a member of staff (e.g. dentist, optician, pharmacist, GP or practice manager). They may be able to resolve your concerns without the need to make a more formal complaint.

However, if you do want to pursue a formal complaint, or for whatever reason you didn't complain immediately, you can make a complaint verbally or in writing (including e-mail) to the practitioner concerned. If you make your complaint verbally, a written record should be made by the practice manager.

NHS England

If you don't want to raise the complaint locally, or you have tried and not had any success, you can complain directly to NHS England. NHS England organises health services nationally.

NHS England can be contacted by:

Telephone: 0300 311 22 33

(8am-6pm Monday to Friday, excl. Bank Hols)

Post: NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT

Email: england.contactus@nhs.net. Please write 'For the attention of the Complaints Manager' in the subject line.

You will be given the opportunity to discuss your concerns and say what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint.

The timescale for the response will be agreed with you and you will receive a written reply to confirm the outcome of the investigation into your complaint.

Healthy People, Healthy Place.

Wigan Life Centre • College Avenue • Wigan WN1 1NJ • www.wiganboroughccg.nhs.uk
Chairman: Dr Tim Dalton • Chief Officer: Trish Anderson

