

Help with your NHS Complaint - Sheet 2

Making an NHS Complaint

If you are unhappy about any aspect of NHS care or treatment, or have a complaint about Public Health provision you or others have received, you can raise your concerns about it. This sheet will give you the information you need to know to get you started. Please get in touch if you need us to help with this.

Before you start this process, you may find it helpful to:

- Think about what you are unhappy about and make sure it is an NHS service
- Think about whether you have a complaint or an enquiry
- Check that your complaint is within the time limits
- Think about why you are making a complaint and what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint, and;
- Check that your complaint can be pursued through the NHS complaints process or as a Public Health complaint

Raising concerns

If your concern is about something that can be resolved quickly, i.e. by the following day, you may find it helpful to speak directly to the member of staff involved, their manager or speak with PALS. For more information about this, please see the sheet on “Enquiry, Feedback or Complaint”

Time Limits

The NHS Complaints Regulations state that a complaint must be made within 12 months of the incident happening, or within 12 months of you realising you have something to complain about. A complaint may be accepted outside of this if the body you are complaining to is satisfied that you had a good reason for not making the complaint sooner, and they feel it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly.

What cannot be pursued through the complaints process?

- Compensation for clinical negligence
- Disciplinary action against an NHS Staff member
- Complaints about privately funded treatment
- Complaints about organisations which are not NHS funded.

For more information about these please see the sheet “Other Useful Agencies.”

Once you have considered the above, you may wish to make a note of your complaint and what you want to achieve as simply and clearly as you can. This will help you to keep focused during the complaints process, and will be something you can refer back to later to help you to decide if the actions taken have answered your complaint.

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