

# Rethink

Advocacy



## NHS Complaints

This leaflet tells you how to make a complaint about your health care.



**NHS**

# Contents page

## About this leaflet



This leaflet tell you what to do if you are unhappy about your healthcare .

You may feel unhappy if a service :

- has not treated you with respect



- has given you the wrong care or treatment

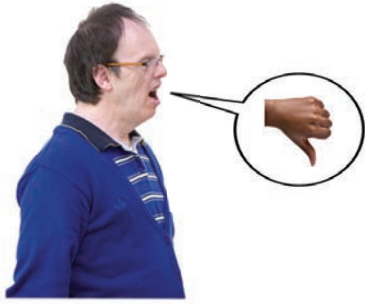


- have not done enough or they were too slow in helping you



- has stopped your care or treatment too quickly





You can make a complaint.  
This is the way you can speak up  
when you think is wrong.



You should not worry about making a  
complaint. It will not affect how you  
are treated in the future.



This leaflet is only about making a  
complaint to the NHS.



Private healthcare services will have  
their own complaints services.

# Making a complaint

The leaflet will help you if you want to complain about:



- GP. This is the doctor you see at your local surgery.



- Mental health team or doctor



- Care coordinator



- Hospital treatment

## Getting help to make a complaint



You may feel happy to make a complaint by yourself. But you may want some help.

Here are people you can ask:



- a friend, family member or carer



- Rethink Complaints advocacy service



- The Patient Advice Liaison Service. They are called **PALS** for short.

**PALS** can give you some advice about making a complaint to the NHS.

## How long you have got to make a complaint



You should try to make your complaint within 12 months of:



- when the incident happened.



- when you realised something was not right right with your care or treatment.



Sometimes the NHS may give you more time to make your complaint.



## How to make a complain



Sometimes you can sort out the problem easily by speaking to someone.



But if this is not possible you can make a complaint.



**You can complain by speaking to a member of staff**

This can be face to face or on the phone.



The member of staff will write down what you said. They will give you a copy of what they have written





You should also write down:



— Who you spoke to



— What you talked about

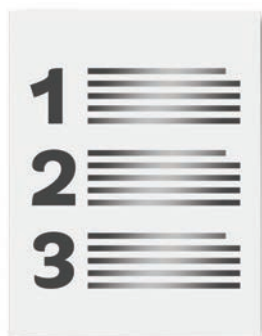


— The date and time of your conversation



## You can complain in writing

You can write a letter to say you are making a complaint.



Your letter should say:

- What has happened
- Why you are unhappy
- What you would like to happen



You can sent the letter by email or post.



## You can complain online

You may be able to make your complaint online.

You can check if you can do this by looking at the website of the service.

# What happens when you complaint

When you make a complaint the service should:



- Let you know they have got your complaint within 3 days.



- Offer to speak to you about what you think has gone wrong and how to sort it out



- Agree with you, how long it should take to sort it out



- Agree with you, how they will let you know about what is happening with your complaint.



**Ombudsman**

## What else you can do

If you are not happy with what has happened to your complaint you can go to the **ombudsman**.



An **ombudsman** is not part of the NHS.



The ombudsman will look into your complaint.



The ombudsman decides what should happen.



To get help from the ombudsman you have to write to them.



You have 12 months to complain to the ombudsman.



**Ombudsman**

You can go straight to the ombudsman if the service won't look at your complaint.

# Complaining about staff behaviour



Staff are expected to behave properly.

Staff **must** will do their job well and treat patients with respect.



If you think a member of staff has not behaved properly you can complain to a **professional regulator**.



A **professional regulator** make sure staff do their job properly.



Staff like doctors and nurses have their own regulators.

# Here is a list professional regulators



- **The General Medical Council (GMC)**

They deal with doctors.



## Telephone

0161 923 6602



## Address

**Fitness to Practise Directorate,  
General Medical Council,  
3 Hardman Street,  
Manchester, M3 3AW**



## Email:

**[practise@gmc-uk.org](mailto:practise@gmc-uk.org)**



## Website:

**[www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org)**





## ● Nursing and Midwifery Council

They deal with nurses and midwives



### Telephone

**020 7637 7181**



### Address

**Fitness to Practise**

**1 Kemble Street**

**London**

**WC2B 4AN**



### Email

**[newreferrals@nmc-uk.org](mailto:newreferrals@nmc-uk.org)**



### Website:

**[www.nmc.org.uk](http://www.nmc.org.uk)**



## ● Health and Care Professions Council

They deal with health, psychological and social care professionals.



**Telephone**  
**0300 500 6184**



**Address**  
**Park House**  
**184 Kennington Park Road**  
**London**  
**SE11 4BU**



**Email:**  
**registration@hcpc-uk.org**



**Website:**  
**www.hcpc-uk.co.uk**

## Taking an NHS service to court



If you think the NHS has treated you badly you may want to use the law to sort the problem out. This will mean going to court.



If you decide this is what you should get advice from a solicitor.



A solicitor will help you think about:

- Are you likely to win your case in court



- Can you sort out the problem without going to court



- How much it will cost

# Essex All Age advocacy Service Rethink



Essex NHS complaints service is part of Rethink. It helps lots of different people. This includes people with disabilities and other needs.



**Address:**  
**Saxon House**  
**27 Duke Street**  
**Chelmsford, CM1 1HT**



**Phone:**  
**0300 7900 559**



**Email:**  
**[essexadvocacy@rethink.org](mailto:essexadvocacy@rethink.org)**