

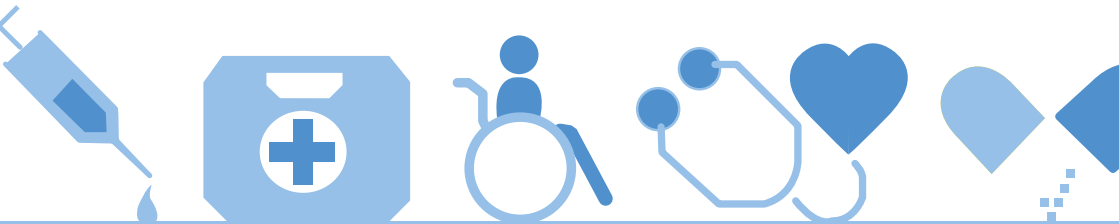


Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

www.cymru.gov.uk

Putting Things Right

Raising a concern about the NHS from 1 April 2011





The NHS in Wales aims to provide the very best care and treatment and it is important that we welcome comments and learn from people's experiences, good or bad. The vast majority of people are happy with the service they receive. Sometimes though, things might not go as well as expected. When that happens, we need to look at what went wrong so we can try to make it better.

This leaflet applies to you if:

- you are not happy with care or treatment provided by or for the NHS in Wales; or
- if you have any other concerns you think we should know about.

It tells you about the arrangements that will be in place from 1 April 2011 for looking into concerns.

What is a concern?

A concern is when you feel unhappy about any service provided by the NHS. By telling us about your concern, we can apologise to you, investigate and try to put things right. We will also learn lessons and improve services where they need to be better.

There are some things that we cannot deal with under the arrangements, such as:

- Private healthcare or treatment (including private dental treatment);
- A complaint which was made and investigated under the arrangements that were in place before 1 April 2011.



Who should I talk to about my concern?

If you feel able to do so, the best place to start is by talking to the staff who were involved with your care and treatment. They can try to sort out your concern immediately. If this doesn't help or if you do not want to speak to staff who provided the service, then you can contact a member of the concerns team.

For concerns about health services, you will need to contact your Local Health Board or the relevant NHS Trust.

If you have a concern about services that you have received from your General Practitioner (GP), Dentist, Pharmacist or Optician you should normally ask the practice to look into it for you, but if you prefer, you can ask your Local Health Board to do so.

You can contact the concerns team by:

- Phoning
- Emailing
- Writing a letter
- Faxing
- Texting

If you need help to tell us about your concern, please let us know, or contact your local Community Health Council (CHC). Your local CHC provides a free and independent advocacy service, which is able to help patients or the people acting for them to raise a concern.

The CHC will offer advice and support, including putting you in touch with specialist advocacy services if you need them. Your local CHC can be found by contacting the Board of CHCs whose details can be found at the end of this leaflet.



Who can raise a concern?

If this is something that has happened to you, you can raise the concern yourself. If you prefer, a carer, friend, relative or your local CHC can represent you, but you will be asked to agree to this.

How soon should I tell someone about my concern?

It is best to talk to someone about your concern as soon as possible after the problem happened but you can take up to 12 months to let us know. If a longer time has passed but there are good reasons for the delay, tell us anyway, as we may still be able to deal with your concern.

What happens next?

We will:

- let you know that we have received your concern within 2 working days (weekends and bank holidays not included);
- at the same time, ask you if you have any particular needs that we should be aware of in dealing with your concern;
- also ask you how much you want to be involved and get your consent to accessing your health records, if this is needed;
- investigate your concern;
- as part of the investigation, decide with you whether we need to get specialist advice (such as a clinical opinion) or other independent help with sorting out your concern;
- let you know what we have found and what we are going to do about it;



- in most cases, let you have a final reply within 30 working days of the date when we first received your concern (weekends and bank holidays not included). If we can't reply to you in that time, we will give you the reasons why and let you know when you can expect a reply.

Some cases might need further investigation under the Redress arrangements. Redress is a range of actions that can be taken to resolve a concern where the organisation might have been at fault in causing some harm. It can include a written apology and explanation of what happened, an offer of treatment/rehabilitation to help relieve the problem and/or financial compensation. If Redress may apply to your concern, we will let you know what this means in more detail.

What you should do if you are still unhappy

If your concern has been looked at by us and you are still not happy with our response, you can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be found at the end of this leaflet.

Useful Contacts

Find your Local Health Board or NHS Trust by contacting:

NHS Direct

Tel: 0845 4647

www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

Health in Wales

www.wales.nhs.uk/ourservices/directory

Putting Things Right

www.puttingthingsright.wales.nhs.uk



Find your local Community Health Council by contacting:

Board of Community Health Councils in Wales

Tel: 0845 644 7814

Tel: 02920 235558

www.communityhealthcouncils.org.uk

Email: enquiries@waleschc.org.uk

Find your local Citizens Advice Bureau by contacting

Tel: 0844 477 2020

www.adviceguide.org.uk/wales

Contacting the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Tel: 0845 601 0987

www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Email: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Address: 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
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