

Formal complaints

Complaints Team

Information for patients and carers

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Caring for you

Introduction

Most medical care goes well, but sometimes things can go wrong.

If you are unhappy with the care, you or someone you know (relative / friend) has received, you may want to make a complaint.

Every NHS organisation has a complaints procedure that provides a clear way for you to raise issues.

At North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust, we value your feedback as this helps us to evaluate and improve the quality of care for all our patients.

The NHS has set a timeframe of 12 months for accepting complaints. This is from the actual event or from when you realised there was a problem.

Getting help

We would encourage you to try and resolve any queries or concerns at the time by speaking to the ward / department manager.

If you feel your complaint cannot be dealt with on the spot or by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Team, you can make a formal complaint. If you do so, we will investigate fully and respond to you in writing. We may also arrange to meet with you.

If you are making a complaint for someone else, they, or their next of kin, must give consent for us to share information with you.

How to make a formal complaint

- **Post:**
Complaints Team, Kendrick Wing, Warrington Hospital, North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust, Lovely Lane, Warrington, WA5 1QG
- **Email:** ncm.complaints@nhs.net
- **Telephone:** 01925 662281

Need help making a complaint?

If you need help making a formal complaint, you can contact:

- **Healthwatch Warrington** – 01925 24892
- **Healthwatch Halton** – 03007 776543
- **Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)** – 0808 802 3000

What will happen next?

You will receive an acknowledgement within 3 working days of receipt of your complaint.

The Complaints Team will then start the review into your complaint.

They will coordinate a response to your complaint with the relevant wards or departments.

The Complaints Team will keep you informed of progress and, if necessary, agree an extension to the timeline (e.g. if the complaint is very complex).

You may be offered a meeting between you and members of our staff to discuss your complaint. You can ask for a meeting at any point.

Your complaint is kept separate from your medical records. Your current or future medical treatment will not be affected in any way.

You will be told when to expect a response to your complaint. The length of the investigation will depend on how complicated the issue is.

What if I am still unhappy?

The Complaints Service will offer a further chance to investigate any additional concerns you may have after the initial response.

You may also want to also consider taking your complaint to an independent review by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).

The ombudsman makes final decisions on complaints that have not been resolved by the NHS, government departments and some other public organisations. Their service is free for everyone.

To take a complaint to the ombudsman, please visit www.ombudsman.org.uk or call 0345 015 4033.