

How to Complain about

Health Services

in Worcestershire

Healthwatch Worcestershire has prepared this guide at the request of local people who have found difficulties in navigating around the complaints process. The following information applies to publicly funded health and social care services.

If you choose to make a complaint about a health or social care service that you have received we would like to hear your experiences. For further information on the complaints process please contact us.

The Complaints Process

For many, the thought of complaining can be daunting. This guide takes you through the process of making your complaint and where you can obtain further information.

To start with, who you contact to make a formal complaint will depend on:

- Whether you are complaining about health care or social care, and
- Whether that care is funded by the NHS or paid for privately.



Healthcare

If you are unhappy with the NHS publicly funded healthcare you have received e.g. from GPs, hospitals or community services you have the right to have your concerns heard.

Many health providers prefer people to notify them immediately of any concerns they may have so they can be dealt with as soon as possible. Should you not wish to do this, there is a formal complaints system that you can use for all NHS-funded services, which allows you to have your complaint formally investigated.

You can complain to either the **Provider** or the **Commissioner** of the health service you are unhappy about.

- The provider is the organisation that provides the service to you, for instance a GP, dentist, pharmacist, optician or a hospital.
- The commissioner (or purchaser) of Primary Care i.e. GPs, dentists, opticians, pharmacies and some specialised services is **NHS England**.
- The commissioner of hospital services, mental health services, out of hours services and NHS 111 services amongst others is the **Clinical Commissioning Group**.

Some complaints may be complex due to the fact that they involve several parts of the NHS, however whichever organisation your complaint starts with should manage it and pass it to other relevant service providers or commissioners with your permission.

Primary Care

Primary care services include your local GP, pharmacy and dental services, and high street optometrists. If you are making a complaint about one of these services, you have two routes to make your initial formal complaint:

- **Primary Care Provider** - You can complain direct to the provider of the service e.g. the GP practice, dentist, pharmacy or optician. Ask your primary care service for their complaints procedure or check their website. Visit www.nhs.uk for your providers contact details or web address or contact Healthwatch Worcestershire for more information.

OR

- **NHS England (Commissioner)** - This organisation is responsible for running the NHS and directly buying primary care services.

Contact NHS England - Tel: 0300 311 22 33

Email: england.contactus@nhs.net

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

Web: www.england.nhs.uk

Recently the way in which GP services are commissioned has change. This means that GP services are now being commissioned by Clinical Commissioning Groups. However, NHS England are still currently responsible for dealing with GP complaints.

Hospital and Community Services

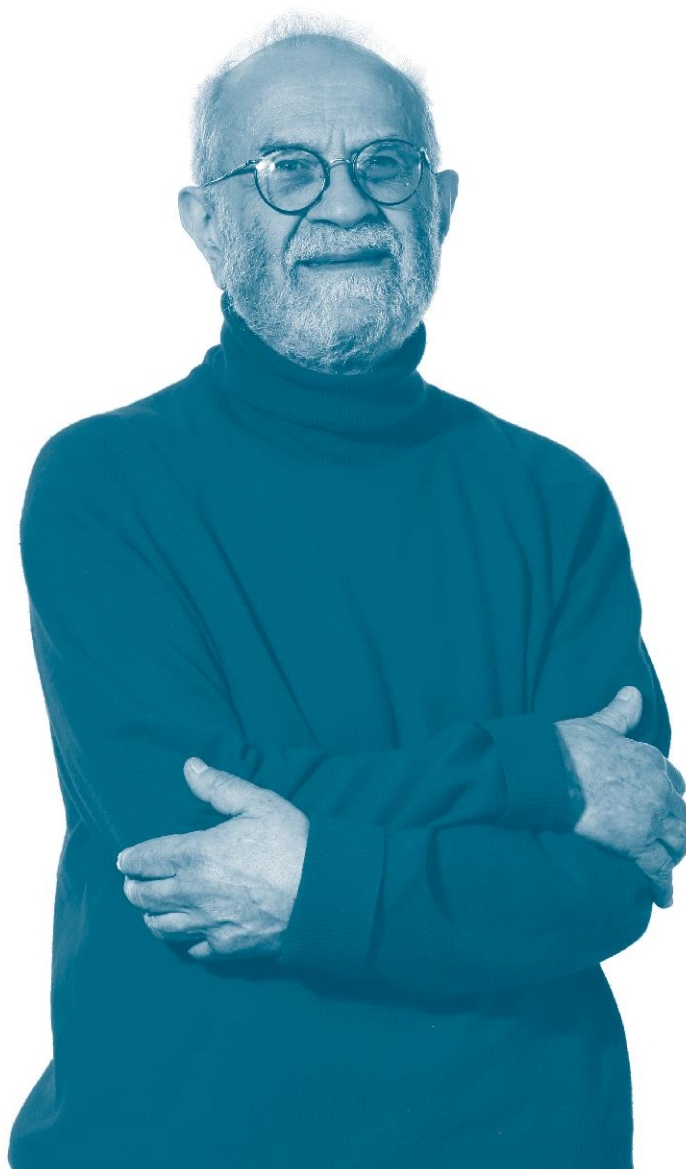
If you would like to make a complaint regarding a hospital or community service (including district nursing, health visiting), you should make a complaint to either the service provider or the Clinical Commissioning Group in the first instance.

- **Service provider** - For most people, the first step in the complaints process will be to contact the organisation who provided the service e.g. the NHS hospital or community trust to make a complaint. The provider trusts in Worcestershire are **Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust and West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust.**

OR

- **Clinical Commissioning Group** - The local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are responsible for planning and paying for all NHS funded hospital and community health services for its residents. Our local CGG is **Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.**

If you are making a complaint regarding hospital or community health services, you can make it directly to the Clinical Commissioning Group and they will work with the provider to investigate it.





Complaint Contacts - Service Providers of Hospital & Community Services

We have provided information for hospitals in Worcestershire however if your complaint regards a hospital in a surrounding area contact us for further information.

Acute Hospitals

If your complaint is about Worcestershire Royal Hospital, Alexandra Hospital and Kidderminster Hospital and Treatment Centre you can contact the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and can carry out any of the following steps:

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (Provider)

- Inform the Senior Ward Sister, Charge Nurse or Matron at the time if possible
- If this issue is unresolved contact the Patient Advice & Liaison Service -
Tel: 0300 123 1732

Or make a formal complaint:

- Write to the Chief Executive, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Worcestershire Royal Hospital, Charles Hastings Way, Worcester WR5 1DD
- Contact Patient Services (Complaints Team) -
Tel: 0300 123 1733
Email: wah-tr.PET@nhs.net
Web: www.worcsacute.nhs.uk

Community Services and Community Hospitals

If your complaint is about the community hospitals at Pershore, Malvern, Evesham, Bromsgrove or Tenbury, community services, mental health or learning disability service and offender healthcare you can contact the Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust (Provider)

- Speak to staff, team, or manager at the time of incident if possible.
- Contact Patient Relations Team
Tel: 01905 681517 Email: WHCNHS.PALS@nhs.net
- Write to Chief Executive, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health & Care Trust, 2 Kings Court, Charles Hasting Way, Worcester, WR5 1JR
- Web: www.hacw.nhs.uk

Complaint Contacts - Commissioners of Hospital & Community Services

If you do not want to contact the provider of the hospital or community service you can contact the Clinical Commissioning Group as the commissioner of the Hospital or Community service you wish to make a complaint about:

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group

Email: hw.complaints@nhs.net

Address:
The Complaints Team
NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG
The Coach House
John Comyn Drive
Perdiswell
Worcester WR3 7NS

Ambulance Service

West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (Provider)

- Contact Patient Advice & Liaison Service -
Tel: 01384 246370
Email: pals@wmas.nhs.uk
- Contact The Patient Experience Team -
Tel: 01384 246366
Email: complaints@wmas.nhs.uk
Address: West Midlands Ambulance Service, NHS Foundation Trust Regional Ambulance Headquarters, Millennium Point, Waterfront Business Park, Waterfront Way, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, DY5 1LX
Web: www.wmas.nhs.uk



Advocacy Support

If you require independent support to raise a concern or make a complaint about any health service you have experienced you can contact the free local advocacy service at:

- Onside Advocacy - Tel: 01905 27525
Email: info@onside-advocacy.org.uk
Address: 14 Charles Street,
Worcester WR1 2AQ
Web: www.onside-advocacy.org.uk

The Ombudsman - The Next Stage

If you are not happy with the response you receive to your complaint you can go to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO), the independent organisation responsible for investigating complaints across the health system. The PHSO will usually only investigate a complaint after the NHS has had a chance to try to resolve it so it is important you have already formally complained to the local provider or purchaser (Clinical Commissioning Group or NHS England) of the service.

The PHSO will not investigate all complaints but if it decides the NHS have got things wrong, it can make recommendations to put things right.

- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman - Tel: 0345 015 4033
Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk
Textphone: 0300 061 4298 if you are deaf or have problems using a standard telephone
Address: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP
Web: www.ombudsman.org.uk

Complaints Pathway - NHS Funded Health

