



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 Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board \(ICB\)](#).
- The commissioner of hospital services, mental health services, out of hours services and NHS 111 services amongst others is the **Integrated Care System**. 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

- After 1 July 2023 if you want to make a complaint about primary care services to the commissioner you will contact [NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board \(ICB\)](#) instead of NHS England.

The contact details are as follows:

Write to:

Patient and Stakeholder Liaison team
NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire,
Kirkham House, John Comyn Drive,
Perdiswell, Worcester, WR3 7NS

Email:

Complaints about dental services:
hwicb.complaints-dental@nhs.net
Complaints about opticians services:
hwicb.complaints-ophthalmology@nhs.net
Complaints about pharmacy services:
hwicb.complaints-pharmacy@nhs.net
Complaints about GP services:
hwicb.complaints-GP@nhs.net
Complaints about all other NHS services:
hw.complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: 0330 053 4356 (ask to speak to the Complaints Team)

Web: [Complaints: Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care System \(icb.nhs.uk\)](#)

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 Integrated Care System 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

- **Integrated Care System** - The local Integrated Care Systems (ICS's) are responsible for planning and paying for all NHS funded hospital and community health services for its residents. Our local ICS is **Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care System**.
- If you are making a complaint regarding hospital or community health services, you can make it directly to the Integrated Care System 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
Email: wah-tr.pals@nhs.net

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.complaints@nhs.net
Web: www.worcsacute.nhs.uk



Community Services & 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
Web: www.hacw.nhs.uk

Or make a formal complaint:

- Write to Chief Executive, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health & Care Trust, 2 Kings Court, Charles Hasting Way, Worcester, WR5 1JR

Tel: 01905 681517
Email: WHCNHS.PALS@nhs.net
Web: www.hacw.nhs.uk

Ambulance Service

West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (Provider)

- Contact Patient Advice & Liaison Service -
Tel: 01384 246370
Email: pals@wmah.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

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 Integrated Care System as the commissioner of the Hospital or Community service you wish to make a complaint about:

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care System

Email: hw.complaints@nhs.net

Address:

The Complaints Team
NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Kirkham House
John Comyn Drive
Perdiswell
Worcester
WR3 7NS



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

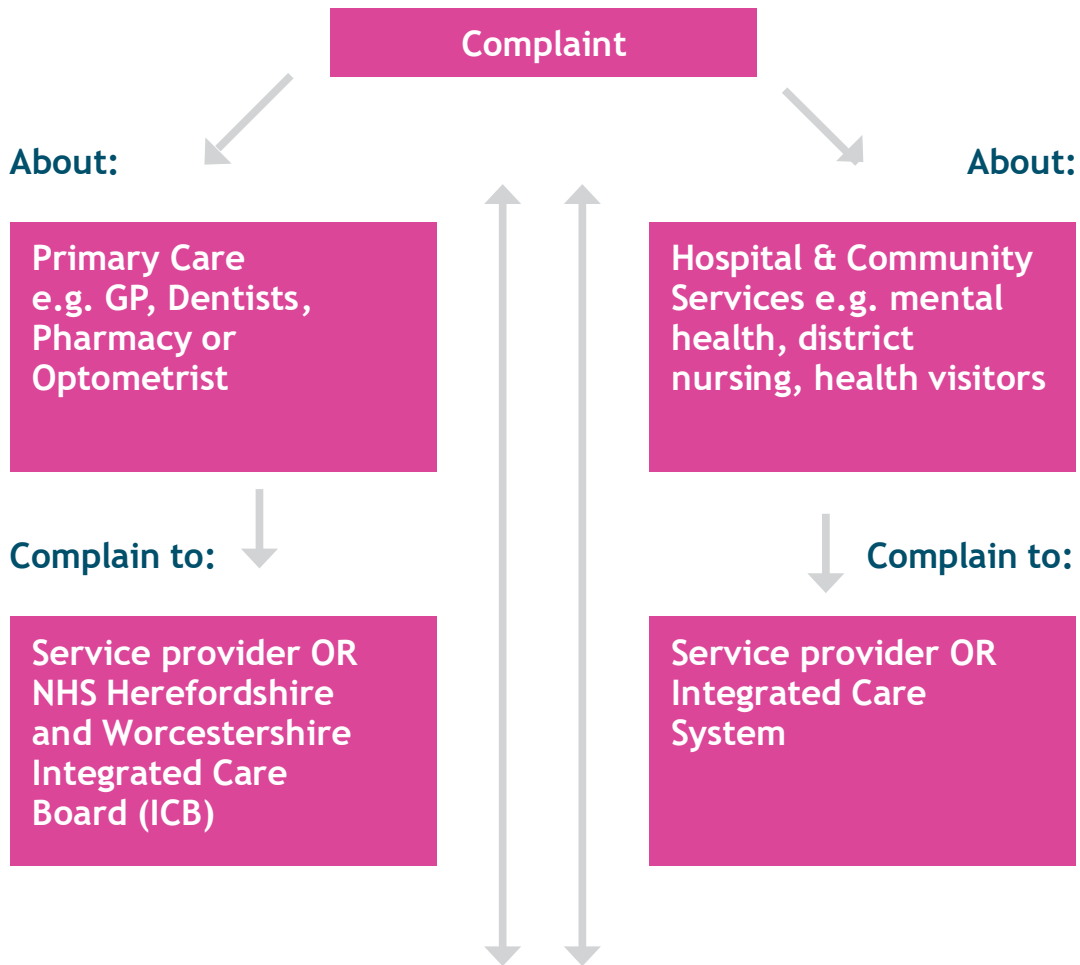
If you are not happy with the response you receive to your complaint you can go to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO), the independent organisation responsible for investigating complaints across the health system. The PHSO will usually only investigate a complaint after the NHS has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



Independent support provided for complaint (if needed) by:

Onside Advocacy

If not satisfied with response go to:

Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman