

Your guide to  
**making comments,  
compliments and complaints**



## Your views are important

Our values and behaviours framework brings together everything we believe about the importance of kindness and compassion, including people as genuine partners in their care and recovery, developing respectful partnerships and providing safe and reassuring services.

We are always pleased to hear from people who feel we have provided a good service and we welcome suggestions on how we can make improvements. But, we also like to hear from people if they are not happy with the standard of service, care or treatment we provide and we encourage our staff to help deal with any concerns or complaints in a friendly, sensitive manner.

We recognise that some people may feel they have experienced discrimination and we work to ensure that people from all backgrounds are able to raise concerns and are not disadvantaged when doing so.

## You can speak to a member of staff

You can speak to the person providing your care or to the person in charge of the ward/department. Speaking to someone in the Trust who is supporting or has supported you gives us the opportunity to sort things out more quickly. However, we do appreciate that people will sometimes find this difficult. The following sections talk about other ways to speak to us.

## You can speak to PALS

The Trust has a Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service set up to listen to your concerns and issues and help you sort things out as quickly as possible.

PALS can also help by putting you in touch with other services and organisations to support you, respond to enquiries and provide advice about our services.

You can speak to one of our PALS co-ordinators by calling 01707 253916 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 3pm).

# You can make a complaint

If, after speaking with a member of staff or PALS, you feel that your concern has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you can contact us by telephone or write us a letter or e-mail, or complete the online form. It will help if you do this as soon as possible after the event. Please be assured that making a complaint will not impact negatively on the way you are treated.

Where a complaint involves other health or social care organisations every effort will be made to provide a joint response to the complaint.

## Time limit for making a complaint

It is important to make your complaint as soon as possible after the event, while it is fresh in your memory. A complaint should be made:

- no more than 12 months after the event, or
- within 12 months of realising that you have something to complain about.

However, complaints exceeding these time limits may still be considered by the Trust, if there are good reasons why you could not complain earlier and if it is still possible to investigate the complaint fairly and effectively.

## Consent

If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, we may need to obtain their consent before we can investigate and respond to your concerns. To do this we will normally need to send them a copy of your complaint.

## Data Protection

Your personal data will be recorded and retained in accordance with the current Data Protection legislation and government record retention guidelines.

## Send your complaint to

The Chief Executive c/o the Complaints and Service Experience Manager  
Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust  
Head Office  
The Colonnades  
Beaconsfield Road  
Hatfield  
AL10 8YE

Or you can telephone our complaints co-ordinators on 01707 253916

If you would like help and support to make a formal complaint you can contact the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service. POhWER, is the independent body who offer advocacy support to people in our area. The service is free, independent and confidential. POhWER can be contacted on 0300 456 2370.

## What happens after I make a complaint?

- We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days of receiving it
- We will deal with your complaint honestly, politely and in confidence
- We will review the relevant records and speak to the people involved
- We will write a full and thorough reply within 35 working days, whenever possible
- We may offer a meeting where you can discuss your concerns with the relevant managers
- We will contact you if the investigation of your complaint is delayed
- The CEO will write to you when the investigation is complete
- You will receive an apology if we have made a mistake
- You will be advised what the Trust is doing to put things right.

## What happens if I am not satisfied with the Trust's response?

Most complaints are resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant. However, if you remain unhappy with our response please contact the manager responsible for investigating the complaint (details are provided on the response letter).

Please let us know as soon as possible so that we can:

- further investigate your concerns and/or
- meet with you for further discussions

Once every attempt to resolve your complaint has been made locally, you can ask the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (The Ombudsman) to review your complaint, contact details can be found on page 7. The Advocacy agencies listed overleaf or the Complaints and Service Experience Manager can help you contact the Ombudsman.

## Principles for handling complaints

We aim to deal with concerns and complaints in accordance with the Ombudsman's principles which are:

1. Getting it right
2. Being customer focused
3. Being open and accountable
4. Acting fairly and proportionately
5. Putting things right
6. Seeking continuous improvement

## Who else to contact

Although we encourage people to complain directly to HPFT you may choose to complain to the Clinical Commissioning Group that commissions our services.

### For East and North Hertfordshire the address is:

NHS East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group  
Patient Experience Team  
Charter House, Parkway, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6JL

Tel: 01707 361251

Email: [enhccg.quality@nhs.net](mailto:enhccg.quality@nhs.net)

Website: [www.enhertsccg.nhs.uk](http://www.enhertsccg.nhs.uk)

### For West Hertfordshire the address is:

The Quality Team  
NHS Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group  
Hemel One, Boundary Way,  
Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 7YU

Tel: 01442 898865

Email: [hvccpatientfeedback@nhs.net](mailto:hvccpatientfeedback@nhs.net)

Website: [www.hertsvalleysccg.nhs.uk](http://www.hertsvalleysccg.nhs.uk)

### Or you can contact HealthWatch at:

Douglas Tilbe House  
Hall Grove, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 4PH

Tel: 01707 275979

Email: [info@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk)

Website: [www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk)

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*If you receive services in Norfolk or North Essex please contact the HPFT PALS and Complaints team on 01707 253916 and we will provide details of which Clinical Commissioning Group you can write to.*

# Useful contacts

## HPFT Complaints Team

Tel: 01707 253916

Email: [hpft.complaints@nhs.net](mailto:hpft.complaints@nhs.net)

## HPFT Patient Advice and Liaison Service

Tel: 01707 253916

Email: [hpft.pals@nhs.net](mailto:hpft.pals@nhs.net)

Website: [www.hpft.nhs.uk](http://www.hpft.nhs.uk)

## Hertfordshire County Council Client Relations Team (social care)

Health and Community Services,  
Room 164, County Hall,  
Hertford, Herts, SG13 8DF

Tel: 01992 556685

Email:

[hcs.complaints@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:hcs.complaints@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Website: [www.hertsdirect.org/hcs](http://www.hertsdirect.org/hcs)

## Carers in Hertfordshire

The Red House,  
119 Fore Street, Hertford,  
Herts, SG14 1AX

Tel: 01992 586969

Website: [www.carersinherts.org.uk](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk)

## Patients Association

The Patients Association,  
PO Box 935  
Harrow, HA1 3YJ

Helpline: 020 8423 8999

Website: [www.patients-association.org.uk](http://www.patients-association.org.uk)

## Viewpoint (working for mental health service users in Hertfordshire)

56 Bridge Road East,  
Welwyn Garden City,  
Herts, AL7 1JU

Tel: 01707 328014

Email: [info@hertsviewpoint.co.uk](mailto:info@hertsviewpoint.co.uk)

Website: [www.hertsviewpoint.co.uk](http://www.hertsviewpoint.co.uk)

## NHS Complaints Advocacy – Independent Complaints Advocacy Service

PO Box 14043,  
Birmingham,  
West Midlands, B6 9BL

Tel: 0300 456 2370

Fax: 0300 456 2365

Minicom: 0300 456 2364

Email: [pohwer@pohwer.net](mailto:pohwer@pohwer.net)

Website: [www.pohwer.net](http://www.pohwer.net)

*East of England including Norfolk and North Essex*

## Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower, Millbank,  
London, SW1P 4QP

Tel: 0345 015 4033

Website: [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust works toward eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

We are a smoke free Trust therefore smoking is not permitted anywhere on our premises.

[www.hpft.nhs.uk](http://www.hpft.nhs.uk)  
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