

How to make a comment or a complaint



An easy read guide

Making a comment



We would like you to tell us what you think of our hospitals and the care you have received from us.



Please tell us if you think we can do things better.



If you have had a good experience, we would like you to tell us about it.



To give us your comments, you can speak to someone at the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**.

What to do if you are not happy with the care or treatment you receive



The hospital hopes to offer good support to all patients.



Sometimes things go wrong.



If you are not happy with how you have been treated, you should tell us as soon as possible.



This booklet will tell you:

- how to complain
- the steps you will need to take
- who can give you support.

Step 1: How to make a complaint



If you are not happy you should speak to the hospital staff caring for you. Often things can be put right this way.



If you want to discuss the problem with someone else in the hospital, you can contact PALS – the patient advice and liaison service.



PALS can speak to the ward or department and try to put things right.

Using PALS



Every hospital has a patient advice and liaison service (PALS) team.

They can:

- answer any questions you have about your visit
- help to make things right if you have had any problems during your visit
- speak to a ward or department for you.



We have a patient advice and liaison service (PALS) team at:

- Guy's Hospital
Phone: 020 7188 8803
- St Thomas' Hospital
Phone: 020 7188 8801



You can also email the PALS teams at:

pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Professional advocates



Professional advocates are people who can help with difficult problems or situations.



A professional advocate can:

- help you to understand your health problem or condition
- try to find out what you want
- support you to say what you want
- help hospital staff to support you in a way that works for you
- help you to make a complaint.



The Advocacy Project helps communities to speak up, understand their rights and make choices.

Phone: 020 8969 3000

Email: info@advocacyproject.org.uk

Step 2: Making a formal complaint



If you feel that your concerns have not been put right you can make a formal complaint.

A formal complaint is an official complaint. We will take it very seriously.



You can also contact our complaints department on 020 7188 3514 Or write to them at:

Complaints Department
Guy's Hospital
Great Maze Pond
London
SE1 9RT



You can also email the complaints department at:

complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Here are some ideas about what to include in your letter to the complaints department



Include your name, address, date of birth and your hospital number (if you know it).



Keep it simple:

- Try to write no more than two pages.
- Attach a diary of events or a log sheet if your complaint is long or complicated.



Say how you think things could be improved:

- Say what you expect to happen.
- Be polite but firm.



Keep copies of your letter at home and send your letter by recorded delivery to make sure that we definitely receive it.

If you are writing on behalf of someone else:

- Please include your own name and address, as well as the patient's details.
- The patient will need to agree to the complaint.
- You must include his/her written agreement to the content of the complaint.
- You should contact us for advice if the patient is unable to give their written agreement because of disability or ill health.



Remember: If you need advice about making a complaint, you can contact the patient advice and liaison service (PALS).

Contact details for PALS can be found on page 5.

Healthwatch is an independent national champion for people who use health and social care services.

healthwatch

Phone: 03000 683 000 8.30am–5.30pm Monday to Friday.

Post: Healthwatch England, National Customer Service Centre, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA

Email: enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk

They make sure that those running services, and the government, put people at the heart of care.



If you are thinking about making a complaint

You can find out how to make a complaint about NHS or adult social care services and that your next steps might be by contacting your local Healthwatch

What happens next?



- We will write to you within three working days of receiving your complaint.
- Once we have investigated your complaint properly, the Chief Executive will send you a letter telling you what we think.



If your complaint is complicated, we may want to meet to discuss your concerns.

We call this a **local resolution meeting**.



The letter from the Chief Executive will give you advice on what you could do next.

If you do not feel that the situation has been fixed, please speak to PALS team, who can give you more advice on what to do next.

Where can I find more information?



Mencap provides support, advice and information for people with a learning disability, and their families and carers.

Phone: 0808 808 1111

Email: help@mencap.org.uk



Hft is a national charity providing services for people with learning disabilities.

Phone: 020 8447 0541

Email: hftlondon@hft.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

Phone: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas'

Phone: 020 7188 8803 at Guy's

Email: pals@gstt.nhs.uk

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