

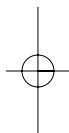
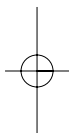


North East Ambulance Service **NHS**
NHS Trust



Complaints & Appreciations

Listening... Acting... Improving



Introduction

Our staff will do all they can to make sure you are treated properly and promptly.

However there may be times when things go wrong or you are dissatisfied with the service we provided. When this happens we will investigate your concerns as quickly as possible with those who are directly concerned with your care.

This booklet tells you what to do if, for some reason, you wish to complain and explains the procedure, which is now the same for all parts of the NHS.

To whom should I complain?

Front line staff

In many cases, concerns can be resolved straight away if you talk to someone who is close to the cause of your concern. This may be an ambulance or Patient Transport Service person or a control officer.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

You may wish to raise your concerns with someone who is not involved in your care. The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) aims to:

- Advise and support patients, their families and carers
- Provide information on NHS services
- Listen to your concerns, suggestions and queries
- Help sort out problems quickly on your behalf

This service is confidential and can be contacted on :

Freephone 0800 032 02 02

If you decide that you would like to make a formal complaint, PALS can provide you with information on how to do so. You can also access independent advocacy (ICAS) for support - PALS can put you in touch or you can contact ICAS directly - see details on page 11.

In Writing or by Telephone

If you wish to make a formal complaint you can telephone or write to the complaints section at North East Ambulance Service (see page ten for contact details).

You can also contact ICAS (Independent Complaints Advocacy Service) which will be able to help you make your complaint and can provide support through the process - details on page 11.

The following explains the formal complaints procedure. If you are unsure whether or not you wish to make a formal complaint you can contact PALS or the Trust's Complaints Officer to discuss your concerns.

Who can complain?

Anyone who is receiving or has received care in the NHS.

If you are unable to complain yourself a relative, carer or close friend can do so on your behalf. However the Trust may need your written permission to provide information to other parties.

Your Information

When you register a concern or make a complaint you may be asked to provide some information about yourself such as details of gender, age and ethnicity. This will help us monitor the complaints/concerns of patients to see if there are any issues affecting certain sectors of the community so we can address them more effectively.

The NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential unless you give permission for it to be shared.

How soon should I make a complaint?

It is important to make the complaint as soon as possible after the event. We normally investigate only those complaints that are either:

- Made within six months of the event.
- Made within six months of you realising that you have something to complain about.

These time limits can be extended in exceptional circumstances.

How soon should I get a response?

Under the NHS guidelines you have the right to receive a full and prompt written reply from the Chief Executive to any written formal complaint against a Trust or Health Authority. The North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) tries to do this within 25 working days of receiving the complaint, or longer with your agreement. Where there are good reasons for delay, you will be kept informed of progress.

What can I do if I am not satisfied with the response?

The Trust will remain committed to resolving your complaint at a local level. If you are not satisfied with the response made to your initial complaint, there are further options that you may pursue:

- a) You may wish to write once more to the Chief Executive explaining the reasons why you remain dissatisfied. Any additional concerns will be investigated and you will receive a further response.
- b) You may be offered or request a local resolution meeting to meet with staff from the Trust to discuss your concerns in person. It is often beneficial to attend such a meeting accompanied by a family member or friend, or by a representative of the ICAS (see page 11 for details).
- c) If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting and/or the further response from the Chief Executive, you can then ask the Healthcare Commission to consider your complaint further. You should do this within two months of the date of the letter telling you about the outcome of local resolution, or where that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practical. The letter will include advice on how to proceed.

What can't be dealt with by the procedures?

There are some things which cannot be dealt with under the NHS Complaints system. These include:

- Complaints about private treatment
- Complaints about Local Authority Social Services
- Events requiring investigation by a professional disciplinary body
- Events about which you are already taking legal action.

Talk to the Complaints Officer or your GP/Doctor if you are unsure whether your complaint is definitely about the NHS.

Complaints about other NHS services

If you have a complaint about another NHS service you should contact the Complaints Officer in the organisation which provides the service.

If you are unsure about who provides the service you can check with your local Strategic Health Authority whose contact details are on page 12.

What if I'm still unhappy?

If you are still dissatisfied after the NHS complaints procedure has been completed you can ask the Health Service Ombudsman to investigate your case.

The Ombudsman is completely independent of both the NHS and of the Government. As well as complaints about NHS services, the Ombudsman can investigate complaints about how the procedure is working.

If you want advice on whether to ask the Ombudsman to investigate, you can write or telephone his office. The address and telephone number are provided on page 10 of this booklet.

The Ombudsman is not obliged to investigate every complaint put forward, and will not generally take on a case which has not first been through the NHS complaints procedure nor a case which is being dealt with by the courts.

And finally

We want to know when things go wrong so we can quickly put them right for you and can learn from your experience how to improve our services to other people.

As an organisation we would like to encourage patients and callers to comment on any aspects of the services they have experienced.

You can write to the Chief Executive or the Complaints Officer with your comments, complaints or compliments – see contact details on page ten.

Trust contact address and telephone number:

Chief Executive

Mr. S. M. Featherstone, Chief Executive
North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Bernicia House, Goldcrest Way, Newburn Riverside,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 9RT
Telephone: (0191) 430 2000

Complaints Officer

Mrs G. Summers
North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Bernicia House, Goldcrest Way, Newburn Riverside,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 9RT
Telephone: (0191) 430 2000

Other useful contact, addresses and telephone numbers:

The Ombudsman

The Health Service Ombudsman for England,
Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP
Telephone: (020) 7217 4051

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: 0800 032 0202

Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)

If you need help with making a complaint, your local ICAS can help you. ICAS is independent and can provide information, advice and support to members of the public who wish to make a complaint about the NHS.

ICAS can be contacted on 0845 120 3732 or you can write to your local office:

For Newcastle

ICAS
Churchill House
12 Mosley Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1DE

For Billingham

ICAS
Belasis Business Park
Belasis Hall Technology Park
Coxwold Way
Billingham
Teesside
TS23 4EA

Strategic Health Authority

North East Strategic Health Authority
Riverside House
The Waterfront
Goldcrest Way
Newburn Riverside
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE15 8NY

NHS Direct

NHS Direct can also provide up to date information about the NHS Complaints Procedure. Call (0845) 4647 - calls are charged at local rates.

Appreciations

If you would like to pass on your thanks to a member of North East Ambulance Service staff, please complete and return this form to Gillian Summers (address pg.10)

From: Name:

Address:.....

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Telephone No:.....

Details: (i.e. date of incident, location, attended)

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आपके आवेदन करने पर यह जानकारी बड़े प्रिंट, ब्रेल, ऑडियो टेप या दूसरी भाषाओं में भी उपलब्ध करवाई जा सकती है। इसके लिये कृपया पब्लिक रिलेशन्स डिपार्टमेंट को 0191 430 2000 पर फोन करें या 0191 430 2299 पर फैक्स करें।

ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ, ਬ੍ਰੇਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂ ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ 'ਤੇ ਇਸਦਾ ਦੂਜੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ 0191 430 2000 'ਤੇ ਜਾਂ ਫੈਕਸ ਨੰਬਰ 0191 430 2299 'ਤੇ ਪਬਲਿਕ ਰਿਲੇਸ਼ਨਜ਼ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

এই প্রকাশনাটি বড় ছাপার হ্রস্বে, ব্রেইলে বা অডিওটেপে, এবং অনুরোধ করলে অন্য ভাষায়ও এর অনূবাদ পেতে পারেন। দয়া করে পাবলিক রিলেশন্স ডিপার্টমেন্ট এর সাথে 0191 430 2000 নম্বরে বা 0191 430 2299 নম্বরে ফ্যাক্সে যোগাযোগ করবেন।

此單張備有 大字、凸字、或錄音帶版本，亦備有其他語言翻譯本，查詢詳情請電公共關係部 (Public Relations Department) 0191 430 2000 或傳真 0191 430 2299

یہ دستاویز بڑی چھپائی، بریل (ڈبٹیوں کی لکھائی) یا آڈیوٹیپ پر بھی فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔ درخواست کرنے پر اس کا ترجمہ دوسری زبانوں میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ اس کے لئے پبلک ریلیشنز ڈیپارٹمنٹ سے فون نمبر 0191 430 2000 یا فیکس نمبر 0191 430 2299 پر رابطہ قائم کریں۔

امکان عرضہ این نشریہ با حروف چاپی درشت و یا به صورت بریل و کاست موجود میباشد و در صورت نیاز، به زبانهای دیگر هم ترجمه خواهد شد. در این مورد میتوانید با دفتر روابط عمومی با تلفن 0191 430 2000 و یا فکس 0191 430 2299 تماس حاصل نمایند.

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Tel: (0191) 430 2000 or by Fax: (0191) 430 2299 or via email: publicrelations@neas.nhs.uk

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