

How to make a formal complaint

We aim to provide the best possible care for people who use our services, their families and carers. We recognise however, that there may be times when you are not satisfied with the service you have received and may wish to make a formal complaint, have it considered and receive a response from the Trust. We use the information from our investigations of complaints to try to improve the standard of care we provide in order that we might prevent similar problems occurring in the future.

We would like to assure you that raising a concern or a complaint will not prejudice the treatment/care or support provided to you and no record of your complaint will be held on your medical records.

Who can complain?

A complaint can be made by a patient or person affected or likely to be affected by the actions or decisions of the Trust. It is preferable if a complaint is made by the person affected however if this is not possible, a complaint can also be made by someone acting on behalf of the patient or person, with their consent. The complaints department will seek written consent from the patient, and once consent has been received, will initiate the complaints procedure.

What is the time limit for making a complaint?

You should normally complain within 12 months of the event(s) concerned or within 12 months of becoming aware that you have something to complain about. The complaints manager has the discretion to waive this time limit if there are good reasons why you could not complain earlier.

To whom should you complain initially?

The first stage of the NHS complaints procedure is called local resolution and your complaint should be made in the first instance to the Trust.

You can make your complaint by letter, email or verbally. If you wish to make a verbal complaint a member of staff in the complaints department will take a summary of your concerns; this summary will be sent to you with the letter of acknowledgement for you to check that it covers the concerns you have. Staff in the complaints department can also provide you with a form to complete if you would prefer to send your complaint this way.

It is preferable if you could indicate what outcome you are looking for and to include a contact telephone number. If you would like help with making a formal complaint, independent advice and support can be obtained from advocacy services; details are given overleaf.

Please send your complaint to:

Complaints and Feedback Manager
Humber NHS Foundation Trust
Willerby Hill
Beverley Road
Willerby
HU10 6ED
Tel: (01482) 303930 or email HNF-TR.complaints@nhs.net

What will happen to your complaint?

Once the Trust has received your complaint, you will receive an acknowledgement letter which will be sent within 3 working days. This letter will include the anticipated completion date for the investigation and response into your complaint. A manager will then be asked to carry out an investigation into your concerns. This manager may contact you to discuss your concerns by telephone or it may be that they consider a face to face meeting would be appropriate.

If it is not possible to send the response to you within the identified timescale you will be contacted and an explanation given as to why we cannot meet the timescale and you will be informed when you may expect the letter of response.

What if you are unhappy with the response to your complaint?

You should contact the Trust within one month of the letter of response explaining why you remain dissatisfied and indicate what you want the Trust to do to resolve your complaint. Staff in the complaints department will discuss your outstanding concerns with the appropriate senior manager and agree with you how to take your complaint forward, if this is possible.

Further information on any aspect of the complaints procedure can be obtained from the complaints department on 01482 303930.

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

If you are not happy with how we have dealt with your complaint, and would like to take the matter further, you can contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman which makes final decisions on unresolved complaints about the NHS in England. It is an independent service which is free for everyone to use. To take your complaint to the Ombudsman visit www.ombudsman.org.uk/make-a-complaint or call 0345 015 4033.

Further advice and information

- You can contact the Trust's Complaints and Feedback team on (01482) 303930 to discuss the complaint procedure or to have a concern resolved informally.
- Free and confidential advice is available from Cloverleaf Advocacy, if you/the patient live in the East Riding who can be contacted on 0300 012 4212 or if you/the patient live in North Yorkshire you can contact 01609 765355.
- If you/the patient live in Hull, the advocacy service is provided by the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service who can be contacted on 01482 499038.
- The Department of Health's website also has information on the NHS Complaints Procedure on www.dh.gov.uk
- The Complaints and Feedback policy is available on the Trust's website