

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The Ombudsman's Complaint Standards

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Overview



- The Ombudsman - who we are, what we do
- How we investigate complaints
- The NHS Complaint Standards.



Independence



Fairness



Excellence



Transparency

Who we are

Parliamentary
Commissioner Act 1967



Health Service
Commissioners Act 1993

18%

Complaints about UK
government
departments and
public organisations

82%

Complaints about the
NHS in England



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What we do - NHS complaints second and final stage



NHS

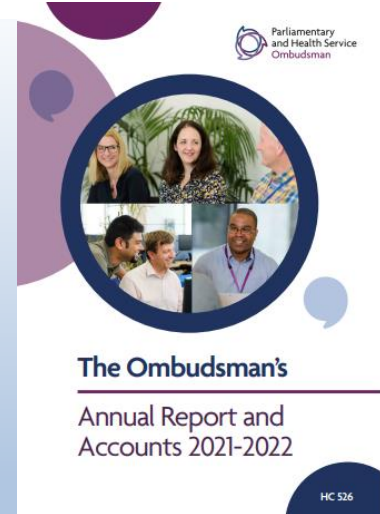
- Under Regulation 14(2)(c) and Regulation 14(2)(d), the local response must tell the complainant of their right to take the complaint to the Ombudsman

The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009



Our numbers - 2021-22

- 122,367 enquiries received
- 26,043 complaints were not ready for us
- 36,614 decisions were made, including:
 - 29,213 decided after initial checks
 - 29 cases resolved through mediation
 - 6,760 decided at primary investigation
 - 612 decided after detailed investigation



Our customers

Who uses the Ombudsman's service	Performance			
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Male	43%	47%	48%	46%
Female	57%	53%	52%	54%
18-34	14%	15%	14%	18%
35-54	42%	42%	42%	37%
55-74	38%	38%	36%	39%
75+	6%	4%	8%	6%
People with disabilities	44%	42%	45%	39%
Non-disabled	56%	58%	55%	61%
Asian, Black, Mixed Ethnicity and Other Ethnic Group	17%	16%	19%	18%
White	83%	84%	81%	82%



Recommendations in 2021-22

We recommended 361 apologies	We made 294 service improvement recommendations
We recommended 85 other actions to put things right	Financial remedy recommendations totalled £265,656

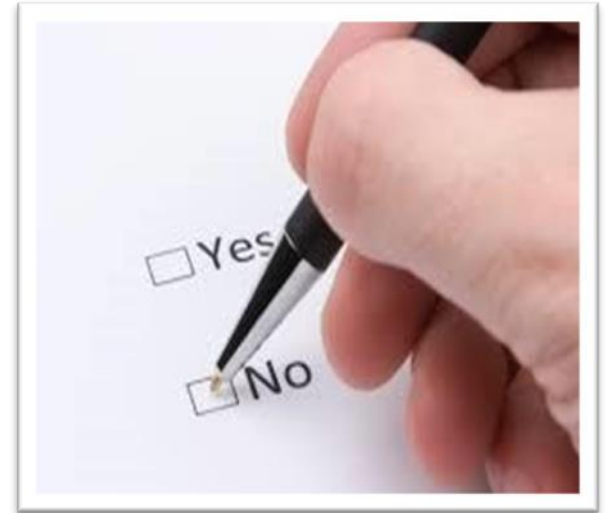
Our casework process - first steps

- - First contact
 - Our staff consider:
 - Has local resolution finished?
 - Is it in remit?
 - Is it properly made?
 - Is dispute resolution appropriate?



Our casework process - should we investigate?

- **Is there a case to answer?**
indication of an injustice or hardship arising from a possible failure in service that has not yet been remedied
- **Can it can be resolved quickly?**
- **Proposal to investigate**



Our casework process - investigation



How we gather evidence

- from both sides
- opportunity to tell us what lay behind clinical decision making
- clinical records
- CCTV, phone records
- Witness statements, visits, interviews

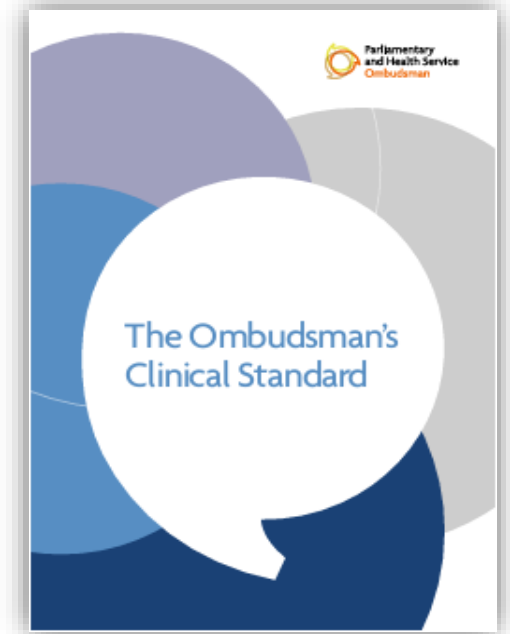
Our casework process - investigation

- **Our approach**

We look to see if what happened was in keeping with relevant regulations, standards, policies and published guidance.

- **Our decision**

If it wasn't, we look to see how significant the shortfall is and what impact it has had and, if it has caused hardship or injustice, has that already been remedied by the organisation.



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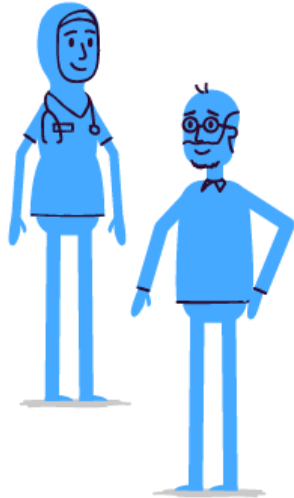
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NHS Complaint Standards

Summary of expectations



Pilot
Spring
2021

The NHS Complaint Standards

Making Complaints Count:

Supporting complaints handling
in the NHS and UK Government
Departments

Research found three core issues:

No consistency

No core training/support

Complaints not valued

My Expectations

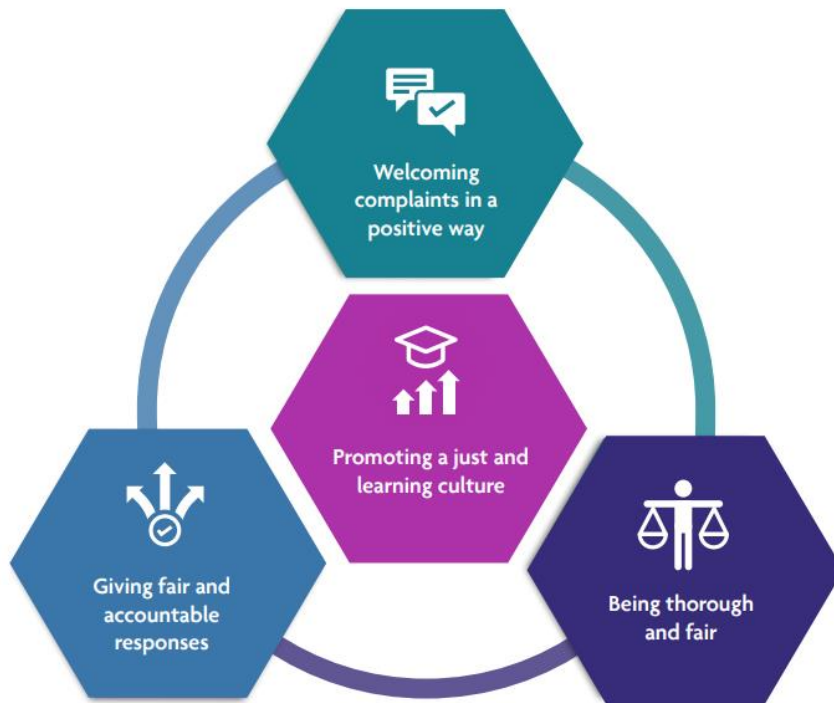
A user-led vision for raising concerns and complaints

- I felt confident to speak up.
- I felt that making my complaint was simple.
- I felt listened to and understood.
- I felt that my complaint made a difference.
- I would feel confident making a complaint in the future.





#MakeComplaintsCount



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Three Steps

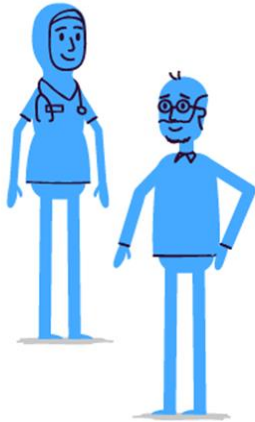


- How to work with your team and resolve complaints early where you can
- If needed, how to carry out a full and fair investigation
- If something has gone wrong, how to put things right and ensure learning is captured, embedded and services improve



NHS Complaint Standards

Summary of expectations



Pilot
Spring
2021



How will this help?

- **One set of Standards** and one procedure for all of the NHS to follow so everyone is clear
- **Focus on working together** and supporting colleagues to resolve complaints as they arise, saving time and resources
- **Focus on learning** and improving services for everyone



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Free Complaint Standards training



CPD certified

**Ombudsman
approved**



Embedding the Standards in our casework

Search complaints about the
NHS in England



Casework trial update

- We are embedding the Complaint Standards into all of our casework
- This is a staggered roll out
- Once finalised, we will share our approach so that organisations will know how we are applying the Standards to the complaints we receive



Casework trial update

- We will use the Standards as a reflective guide for good practice in complaints handling, rather than a stringent ‘rulebook’
- We will refer to the Standards in an advisory way, particularly referring to them in any recommendations we may make on improving complaint handling



Casework trial update

- We will continue to work with stakeholders to determine how PHSO will report on progress in embedding the Complaint Standards ensuring we highlight best practice alongside reporting on broad themes we have seen on complaints handling through our casework.





**Complaint
Standards**
NHS



#MakeComplaintsCount

The NHS Complaint Standards, model complaint handling procedure and guidance set out how organisations providing NHS services should approach complaint handling. They apply to NHS organisations in England and independent healthcare providers who deliver NHS-funded care.

Building on the good practice that already exists, they provide a consistent approach to complaint handling across the NHS. They will:

- help your organisation deliver what service users want when they make a complaint
- support staff to deliver good complaint handling day in, day out.

Here are some [steps to get you started](#) with using the NHS Complaint Standards.

NHS Complaint Standards

Find out more about the NHS Complaint Standards and read the summary of expectations.



Model complaint handling procedure

The model complaint handling procedure describes how the Standards will be put into practice.



Complaint handling guidance

Detailed guidance on how the Complaint Standards can be applied in practice.



Complaint Standards Assessment Matrix

The NHS assessment matrix breaks down the core expectations of the Standards.



You can find the procedures and guidance on our website.

www.ombudsman.org.uk/complaint-standards

Community of practice

- Share experiences with other NHS organisations
- To join, email Liaisonmanagers@ombudsman.org.uk

 The logo for Future NHS, featuring three stylized chevrons in green, purple, and orange pointing to the right, followed by the text "FutureNHS" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.



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Thank you



Website

www.ombudsman.org.uk



Helpline

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8:30 - 12:00 Friday



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@PHSOmbudsman



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