



Have your say

Comments, Suggestions, Compliments,
Complaints

Patient information leaflet



The Trust is always looking at ways to improve its services to service users and their carers.

Your views can help us do this.

It is important the Trust is made aware when things have gone well, so it can promote examples of good practice. In any service, there is always scope for improvements and the Trust would be pleased to receive any comments, suggestions or compliments you may have, which can be considered in the future development of services.

Unfortunately, sometimes things can go wrong and it is equally important that the Trust knows about this so that we can try to put things right and prevent them from going wrong again in the future.

This leaflet tells you how you can make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the Trust's services.

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete on the Trust website www.cntw.nhs.uk/contact/complaints/
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- email complaints@cntw.nhs.uk

We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.

You can provide feedback in the following ways:

- the quickest way for you to do this is to complete our short online survey at www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourvoice
- complete a Your Voice survey, available on wards, reception areas or from staff.
- other options for sharing your feedback and experience www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourfeedback

If you want to make a complaint

Here is some more information that may be helpful to you

If you are unhappy with any of Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust services, you could talk to the staff involved in your care. These could be:

- Nurses
- Doctors
- Your Keyworker
- Support Workers
- The manager of the service

If you feel you are unable to talk to those involved in your care, or are unsure who to talk to, you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** who can help to sort out problems quickly. Their contact details can be found at the end of this leaflet.

Please do not be afraid to say what you think. If you bring concerns to the Trust's attention it will not affect your future treatment or care. The Trust aims to deal with problems openly, welcomes all comments and will do everything possible to put things right.

Who can raise concerns?

- A current or former service user may raise a concern about the Trust's services.
- A relative, carer or advocate can raise a concern about services on behalf of a service user if the service user has given their consent.
- A relative, carer or advocate can raise a concern on behalf of a service user after the service user has died.
- A relative, carer or advocate can raise a concern on behalf of a child who is a service user or on behalf of someone who is unable to raise a concern themselves because of their mental or physical condition.
- Relatives, friends or other visitors may raise a concern about the service they themselves have received.

Confidentiality

The Trust has a responsibility to respect the confidentiality of all service users. It cannot share clinical information about a service user with relatives or friends, without the service user's permission. The only exception would be if the service user is a child or is unable to make their own decisions because of their illness.

How soon do I raise a concern?

It is important that you raise a concern as soon as possible after the event has occurred. However the Trust will look into any concerns or complaints raised and will investigate if there is enough information still available regarding the circumstances to provide you with a response.

How do I raise my concern?

Wherever possible, you should tell the ward/department manager about your concern, or you may wish to contact PALS to support you to do this. In many cases it should be possible to sort out the problem straight away. If PALS staff are unable to resolve your concern, or you do not feel able to raise your concerns with them, you can contact the Complaints Team to discuss your concern.

You can write with details of your complaint to:

Complaints Department
St Nicholas Hospital
Jubilee Road, Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 3XT

Alternatively, you can telephone the Complaints Department on 0191 245 6672.

If you need help to write your concerns down, the Complaints staff will arrange for someone to help you.

You may also wish to contact an **Independent Complaints Advocate** for support and assistance with your complaint. You will find contact details listed at the end of this leaflet.

What happens next?

Once your concerns are received, they will be acknowledged in writing and the Trust will deal with your concerns as quickly as possible.

- **One option is for PALS to try to resolve your concern.**

If you have not already contacted PALS, the Complaints staff can refer you to PALS who can help to find a quick solution to your concerns. They can arrange meetings with members of staff and talk to other people on your behalf. If you agree that you would like PALS to work with you to look into your concern, a PALS Officer will contact you and talk to you about your concern, what you would like to happen and when. They will keep in regular contact with you whilst they are resolving your concern and will let you have the answers as soon as possible.

- **Another option is for the Trust to try to resolve your complaint.**

This means that a member of Trust staff will contact you to discuss your concerns and explore various options to address the issues effectively. They will be in contact with you regularly throughout this time and will agree a mutually convenient date to discuss the outcome of your concerns. You will receive a summary of their findings in writing.

Sometimes concerns involve more than one Healthcare organisation (for example Social Services or another NHS Trust). If this is the case, the Trust will check with you to ensure that you are happy that your concerns are shared with the relevant organisations. Then the organisations will work together to respond to your concerns.

What do I do if I am not happy with the outcome?

If you are not happy with the response please let us know and we can discuss your concerns to see if we can find a way forward. Following this, if you are still dissatisfied you can ask the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman to review this. The Ombudsman, who is independent from both the NHS and the Government, will look at your concerns about NHS services.

It is important to remember that you need to go through the Trust complaints procedure (as outlined above) **before** the Ombudsman can investigate your case. They are not obliged to investigate every case.

Where can I get help and advice?

- PALS can be contacted on 0800 032 0202, for Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland and North Cumbria.
- South of Tyne PALS can be contacted on 0800 328 4397, for Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Lotus Ward at Acklam Road Hospital, Middlesbrough.
- North East NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy – ICA
Adrian House, Sunderland Road, Gateshead, NE8 3HU
Tel: 0808 802 3000
Email: ica@carersfederation.co.uk
Website: www.nenhscomplaintsadvocacy.co.uk
- Independent Complaints Advocacy Northumberland – ICAN
(for Northumberland residents)
Adapt (North East)
Burn Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3HN
Tel: 01434 600 599
Email: generaloffice@adapt-tynedale.org.uk
- People First (for Cumbrian residents)
Helpline: 0300 303 8037
Email: admin@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk
<https://wearepeoplefirst.co.uk>
- The NHS website has information about the NHS complaints procedure at www.nhs.uk Search for NHS Complaints.
- The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP
Tel: 0345 015 4033
Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk
Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk

References

- CNTW(0)07 – Complaints Policy, Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, BSL, easy read or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre
Tel: 0191 246 7288

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