

Patients requesting a change of consultant or second opinion

Patient information leaflet

About this leaflet

This information is for patients, families and carers. It tells you how to request a change of consultant or ask for a second opinion.

How to change your consultant

You can request a change of consultant in writing. Write down your reasons in an email or letter.

Send your request to the Associate Director for your service. You will find contact details at the back of this leaflet. A staff member can help you choose the right details.

If you are unable to write the request yourself, a carer or staff member can help.

You can also get help from an independent advocate. An advocate works with you to ensure your voice is heard. There is a link at the back of this leaflet to help find an advocate near you.

There is a waiting period

After you make your request, there is a two-week waiting period. This time lets you and the team think about your request. The team will see if they can resolve any issues without changing consultants.

If the professionals think a change will not help, your consultant or a staff member will explain why. If you need support, someone will be assigned to help.

If waiting two weeks could cause harm or is not suitable, the manager will help speed this up. They may be able to arrange an immediate change.

What happens next

After two weeks, if the team thinks a change will not help, they will explain why.

If you accept their reasons, you will stay with your current consultant. This will be recorded in your patient record.

If you still want to change, the team will talk to the Associate Director. They will review the situation and make the final decision. You will be kept informed at all stages.

If the decision is yes

If they agree a change **will help**, your consultant will find a colleague to take over your care.

The team may explain any risks or downsides of moving to the new consultant. You can then decide if you are happy with this.

If you and the new consultant agree, they will record the change in your patient record.

The new consultant will usually be in the same team, but you can move to another if needed. If your consultant cannot find a colleague, the Associate Director can help.

A decision will also need to be made about your care team:

- Will just the consultant part of your care change?
- Or does your whole care move to a new team?

You may need to see a consultant in one team, and other professionals from a different team. Staff will explain any risks or downsides. This way, you can make an informed choice.

If the decision is no

The team may agree that a change **will not** be helpful.

If you are not happy with this decision, tell your consultant or a staff member. The Associate Director and Associate Medical Director will then make a decision.

They will discuss this with you.

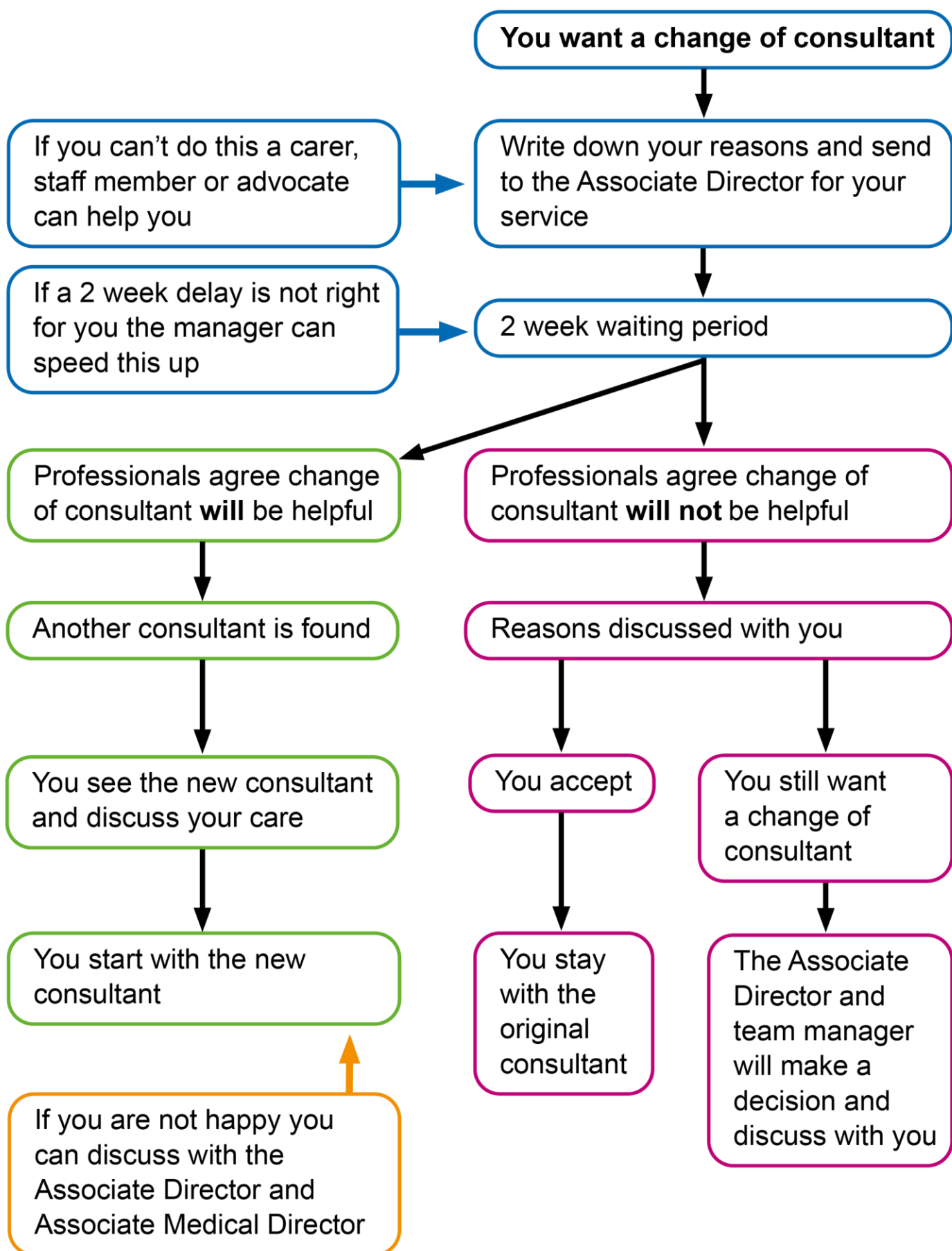
Specialist services

Some specialist services only have one consultant.

This can make changing consultants difficult. If you request a change, the manager will discuss practical solutions with you.

If your care needs to be transferred, the same steps as above will be followed.

Flowchart – How to request a change of consultant



How to get a second opinion

This information tells you how to get a second opinion. You can also ask someone to get one for you.

Your consultant may suggest a second opinion. It is your choice if you want to see another consultant or not.

If you want a second opinion, you can ask your consultant. They may agree and help you find one.

You may find it hard to ask your consultant for a second opinion. You can ask a staff member or an advocate for help.

Your parents may request a second opinion if you are between 16 and 18 years old. The team will ask for your permission.

Your GP (family doctor) can also request a second opinion if they think it is necessary. They will need your agreement and can discuss it with your consultant.

If your consultant thinks a second opinion is not helpful, they may ask your care team. This might include:

- other mental health professionals
- your GP (family doctor)
- carers and relatives

If the decision is no

If your consultant or care team still think a second opinion **will not** be helpful, they will bring in a medical manager.

The team manager and medical manager will decide if a second opinion will be helpful.

If the decision is yes

If the team think a second opinion **will** be helpful, they will find a different consultant. They will record this in your patient record.

We hope you will accept the suggested consultant.

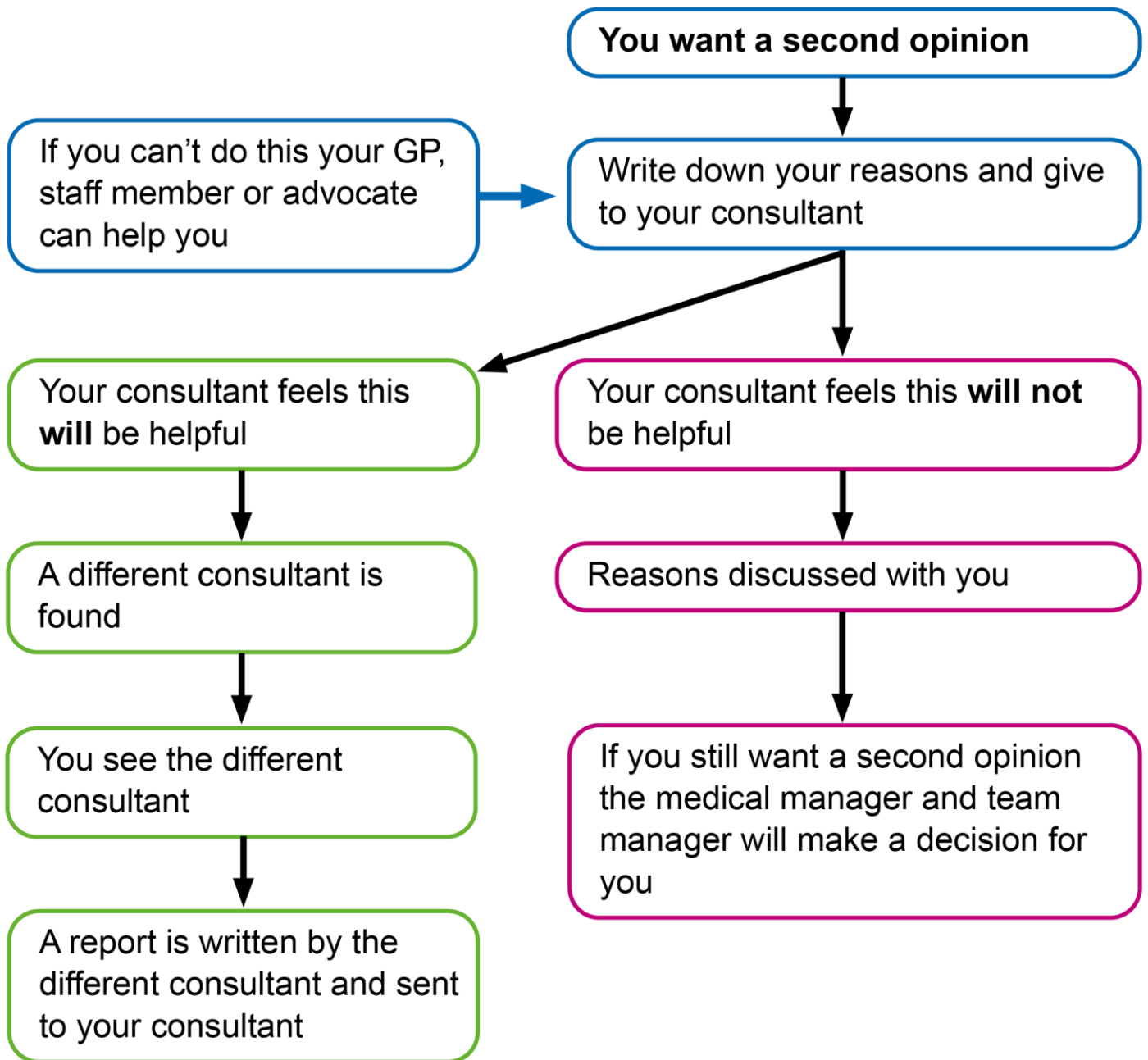
This may be a consultant that usually provides cover for your consultant. Or another professional linked to your care.

If we cannot find a suitable consultant for a second opinion, we will ask a manager for help finding one.

How the second opinion is given

The different consultant will write a report. This will be sent to your consultant. You can view this report if you wish.

Flowchart – How to request a second opinion



Useful contacts

- **Independent advocate**

An advocate is somebody who can work with you to help you have your say about things. A member of staff can provide you with contact details.

For details in your area, visit our website www.cntw.nhs.uk/imha or scan the QR code:



Associate Director contact details

Community Care Group

Email: pa-communitycaregroup@cntw.nhs.uk

Associate Directors, Sunderland and South Tyneside
Community Services, Hopewood Park, Waterworks Road,
Sunderland, SR2 0NB

Associate Directors, Newcastle and Gateshead Community
Services, St Nicholas Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3XT

Associate Directors, Northumberland and North Tyneside,
St George's Hospital, Morpeth, NE61 2NU

Associate Directors, North Cumbria Community Services,
Carleton Clinic, Cumwhinton Drive, Carlisle, CA1 3SX

Services include:

- Crisis and home treatment
- Psychiatric liaison
- Community mental health
- Drug and alcohol
- Older adult day hospital
- Veterans
- Psychological therapies
- Adult neuro diagnostic
- Learning disabilities and autism (community)

Specialist Care Group

Email: SpecialistGroupPA@cntw.nhs.uk

Associate Directors, Hopewood Park, Waterworks Road,
Ryhope, Sunderland, SR2 0NB

Associate Directors, Sycamore, Northgate Park, Morpeth,
Northumberland, NE61 3BP

Associate Directors, Ferndene, Moor Road, Prudhoe,
Northumberland, NE42 5PB

Services include:

- Secure care inpatients
- Recovery and engagement
- Secure outreach transition
- Child/ adolescent wards
- Community eating disorder
- Neurological services
- Perinatal community
- Criminal justice liaison and diversion/courts
- Prison in-reach

Inpatient Care Group

Email: InPatientCareGroup@cntw.nhs.uk

Associate Directors, St Georges Park, Morpeth,
Northumberland, NE61 2NU

Associate Directors, Bamburgh Clinic, St Nicholas Hospital,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3XT

Associate Directors, Hopewood Park, Waterworks Road,
Ryhope, Sunderland, SR2 0NB

Associate Directors, Carleton Clinic, Cumwhinton Drive,
Carlisle, CA1 3SX

Services include:

- Adult mental health and rehabilitation
- Older people inpatient
- Psychiatric intensive care
- Learning disabilities and autism (inpatient)

Comments, suggestion, compliment or complaint?

You can talk to a staff member or contact one of the organisations listed below. Other ways to give feedback are available at www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourfeedback

Your Voice

Email: yourvoice@cntw.nhs.uk

This is a way of sharing your thoughts on the care you received from a service or ward. This could be any type of experience, good or bad. You can ask us to let you know what happens with your feedback.

Comments and complaints

Email: complaints@cntw.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0191 245 6672

Write to: Complaints Department, Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, St Nicholas Hospital, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3XT

When you think something went wrong, let us know. This will give us the opportunity to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

As a patient, relative or carer you may need to turn to someone for help, advice or support. PALS offer a free and confidential service for any care concerns you have.

North of Tyne and North Cumbria

Email: pals@nhct.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0800 032 0202

South of Tyne

Email: pals@cntw.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0800 328 4397



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 (Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre on telephone 0191 246 7288

Published by the Patient Information Centre
2026 Copyright: Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear
NHS Foundation Trust

Ref: PIC/393/0426 April 2026 V11
Review date 2029

Website: www.cntw.nhs.uk

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