



Complaints about health services

Complaints to the National Health Service (NHS) can be made in relation to all health services which a child or young person receives under an Education Health Care (EHC) Plan.

Where there are concerns about the service provided a complaint may be made direct to the service provider (e.g. the NHS Hospital Trust), or where there is a concern about the way in which a service is commissioned or provided you can complaint to the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group).

It is always best to raise any concerns or queries as soon as possible so speak to a member of staff, your health professional, or ward manager in the first instance. They may be able to resolve your problem, or give you the information that you need.

NHS Hospital Services are run and managed by NHS trusts, if you are not happy with the care you receive from the hospital and would prefer to speak to someone else or take your complaint further, each trust will have a Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). This service was introduced to ensure that the NHS listens to patients, their relatives, carers and friends, and to answer questions and resolve concerns as quickly as possible.

Most hospitals have a PALS Office, you can usually contact PALS via the hospital switchboard or information will be on the hospital website - [Local Hospitals](#)

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation, the majority of their services are delivered in patients' homes or at locations close to where they live, such as clinics, health centres, GP practices, community centres and schools. Their services will include health visiting, school nursing, child development centres, complex needs, safeguarding, child and adolescent mental health and children's community therapy. You can contact their Patient Services for advice about making a complaint.

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – [Patient Services](#)

5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust also provide services within Halton, they provide Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and therapy services for adults with learning disabilities. [Patient Advice & Liaison Service \(PALS\)](#) and [Complaints Team](#)

If you are unsure who the service provider is check your appointments letter, this will help identify the trust and have contact numbers.

If you disagree with the way your GP wants to medically treat you, or you're unhappy about the service provided by your GP surgery, tell them openly. However, if you feel unable to do so or you're unhappy with the response you receive, you may wish to make a complaint. All GP surgeries should have a written complaints procedure, and you will find this at reception or on the practice website. As a first step, speak to the practice manager. You can also complain to the practice in writing, or by email. However, if you feel too uncomfortable to complain to the practice manager directly then you can make a complaint to the commissioner of the services instead.

[Halton CCG](#) - if you have already complained to your service provider then the CCG will not be able to reinvestigate the same concerns.

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) and the Local Government Ombudsman, which covers local authorities, have the same status. The role of the PHSO is to investigate complaints that individuals have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from government departments and other public organisations in the UK, and the NHS in England.

The PHSO can investigate complaints about the commissioning and provision of healthcare and can conduct joint investigations with the LGO where a complaint includes concerns about the delivery of the health provision in EHC plans. They will normally investigate a complaint only once the NHS organisation has had a chance to resolve the issue first.

The PHSO can also investigate a number of other organisations: Ofsted, the Education Funding Agency, the Skills Funding Agency, and the Department for Education (including its School Complaints Unit and the Secretary of State for Education). The PHSO will generally expect the individual to have completed the organisation's own complaints procedure first.