

Making your experience count

Your comments, compliments and complaints help us improve the service we provide and ultimately improve patient care.

Had a good experience? NHS staff always value compliments. If you've had a good experience, or received a better service than expected, tell us!

Or if something has gone wrong, we believe you should receive an apology. You deserve to know what happened, have your questions answered and know what's being done as a result.

What should I do before I make a complaint?

You should always talk to your doctor, nurse or another health professional about any concerns or questions you may have about the treatment or service you have received. The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) can also talk you through what to do if you have a problem or think you might want to make a complaint. They will listen to what you have to say and will try to resolve any problems quickly. If they can't help you, they will be a friendly ear and they will point you in the right direction.

You can contact PALS on 01372 201759 or email pals@surreypct.nhs.uk.

What if I'm still not satisfied?

You have the right to make a formal complaint. You can complain for yourself or on behalf of someone else, but if you complain for a friend or relative you must have their consent to do so. It is always best to make your complaint as soon as possible. Complaints should usually be made within 12 months of the incident.

Who should I complain to?

That will depend on the service you wish to complain about and which organisation runs that service.

GPs, dentists, pharmacists and opticians have their own practice-based complaints procedures. If you have a complaint about these services, first you should contact them directly. You can either ask for a meeting or write to the Practice Manager or Senior Partner and ask them to investigate your complaint.

If you wish to make a complaint about a community service (for example community nursing, therapy services, community equipment, or a community hospital) you will need to contact the organisation that covers your area.

If you live in north, west or east Surrey (including Staines, Ashford, Walton, Woking, Chertsey, Weybridge, Redhill, Reigate, Caterham, Oxted, Horley and Lingfield and surrounding villages) you should write to: Complaints Manager, Surrey Community Health, Bournewood House, Guildford Road, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 0QA or call 01932 723855.

If you live in mid Surrey (including Epsom, Ewell, Leatherhead, Dorking, Cobham, Esher and Banstead and surrounding areas) you should write to the: Customer Liaison Officer, Central Surrey Health, Ewell Court Clinic, Ewell Court Avenue, Ewell, Surrey KT19 0DZ or call 020 8394 3843.

If your complaint relates to a service provided by a hospital, mental health or ambulance trust you will need to contact the trust directly. All local hospitals, mental health and ambulance services have their own complaints and, in most cases, their own PALS service too. They can help you with any problems that have arisen and can help with any complaints relating to their services.



To make a complaint about a local policy or funding decision you will need to contact NHS Surrey.

You can write to the Complaints Officer, NHS Surrey, Cedar Court, Guildford Road, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 9AE. Or you can call us on 01372 201661. Alternatively you can write to NHS Surrey's Chief Executive, Mrs Anne Walker at the address above. We will resolve your complaint as quickly as we can and we will be in touch within three working days of receiving your complaint to acknowledge it.

What happens if I am not satisfied with the response?

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint, you can ask for a further explanation or you may be offered other options such as independent conciliation. If, after this, you still feel your concerns have not been resolved, you can ask the Health Service Ombudsman to review your case. You will need to do this within a year of making your complaint.

You can telephone the Ombudsman's office on 0345 015 4033 or write to: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, 11th Floor, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP. You can also see www.ombudsman.org.uk for more details.

Worried about making a complaint?

No-one should be discriminated against because they have made a complaint. It's much more important we hear when things haven't gone well and learn from it so please tell us. Your feedback really will make a difference.

Useful contacts:

Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust - Trust Headquarters, Maple House, East Surrey Hospital, Canada Avenue, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 5RH. Tel: 01737 768 511.

Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust - Egerton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XX. Tel: 01483 571 122.

Ashford & St Peters NHS Hospital Foundation Trust - Guildford Road, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 0PZ. Tel: 01932 872 000.

Epsom & St Helier University Hospital NHS Trust - Wrythe Lane, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 1AA. Tel: 020 8296 2508.

Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust - Portsmouth Road, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 7UJ. Tel: 01276 604 604.

Surrey & Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - Trust Headquarters, 18 Mole Business Park, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 7AD. Tel: 01883 383 838.

South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust - 40-42 Friar's Walk, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2XW. Tel: 01273 897 803.

The Department of Health website www.dh.gov.uk also has information about the NHS complaints procedure.

Independent Complaints Advocacy Service - If you need independent advice or support about your complaint you can contact the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) on 01256 463758.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) - If you have concerns regarding a nursing home the CQC will be able to help. Call 03000 616161 or see www.cqc.org.uk.

www.surreyhealth.nhs.uk