Public Service Ombudsman

How we can help

We are the Public Service Ombudsman. We independently investigate complaints about the NHS in England and UK government services.

We do this fairly, without taking sides.

Our service is completely free and open to everyone.



Complaints we can investigate

From paying taxes to getting healthcare treatment, public services play a big part in our lives. But when things go wrong you might need to complain.

We are the final stage in the process for complaints about:

NHS services in England, including hospitals, GP surgeries and dental practices

UK government services, like applying for a driving licence, claiming benefits or starting up a new business.



"I'm grateful the Ombudsman provided the answers I couldn't get... I don't want another family to go through something like this." Complainant

Make sure your complaint is ready for us

There are a few things you need to do before you can bring your complaint to us.

Complete the complaints process

First, you need to complain to the organisation you're unhappy with so it has a chance to put things right. You should do this as soon as possible.

Check we can look at your complaint

If you're unhappy with the organisation's final decision, visit our website and check to see if we can look at your complaint.

Contact your MP

If your complaint is about a UK government service, the law says you usually need to ask your MP to bring it to us. This does not apply to complaints about the NHS.

Contact us within 12 months

The law says you have 12 months from when you became aware of the problem to bring your complaint to us or an MP.

Our website explains what information you'll need to have ready when you come to us.

What to expect from us

When we get your complaint, we'll check to make sure we're able to look at it. If we can, we'll:



collect the facts to find out what happened



review all the evidence, asking an independent specialist for advice if we need it



make a final decision.

We receive a high number of complaints each year and cannot investigate each one. We prioritise the most serious complaints and those most likely to improve public services for everyone.

If we cannot look into your complaint, we'll tell you why and let you know if there are other options open to you.

Every complaint that comes to us will make a difference, whether we investigate or not. We keep data from all complaints and use it to spot trends and see when service failings might be affecting lots of people.

We help put things right

If we find something went wrong, we'll ask the organisation to put things right.

This could include giving you an explanation, apologising or taking action to learn from the complaint and stop the same thing happening again.

If we decide the organisation did not do anything wrong, or has already done enough to put things right, we'll explain why.



For help with your complaint

Check we are the right organisation for your complaint – visit **ombudsman.org.uk**

or scan the QR code above to see if we can help.

0345 015 4033

Monday to Thursday from 9am to 4pm and from 8.30am to 12pm on Friday

For other languages and accessible formats visit **ombudsman.org.uk/accessibility**

Complaints have the power to improve public services for everyone.

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