

# Writing a letter of complaint

## How to write an NHS complaint letter

This guide may assist you when putting together an NHS complaint.

- ❖ Who do you want to complain about?
- ❖ What happened?
- ❖ Why are you complaining?
- ❖ What outcome are you seeking?
- ❖ Time Limits

### Who are you complaining about?

When writing a complaint you need to consider who to address the letter to. If you want to complain about a Dental Practice or a GP surgery you must address the letter to the Practice Manager of the surgery. You should ask the practice for their complaints leaflet and details of where to send this. Alternatively, if they have a website you may find details on there.

If your complaint is about high street or community pharmacies, you can only use the NHS complaints procedure if they are dispensing NHS prescriptions or providing NHS services.

When writing a complaint about a hospital you must address the letter to complaints department at the NHS Trust which the hospital falls under. For example, if you want to complain about either Huddersfield Royal Infirmary or Calderdale Royal Hospital, you must address the letter to;

Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust  
Patient Advice and Complaints Service  
Acre Street, Lindley  
Huddersfield  
HD3 3EA

<http://www.cht.nhs.uk/services/non-clinical-services/patient-advice-and-complaints-service/>

If you want to complain about Dewsbury and District Hospital, Pontefract Hospital or Pinderfields Hospital (all part of the Mid Yorkshire NHS Trust), you should address the letter to ;

Mid Yorkshire Trust  
The Patient Liaison Manager  
Trust HQ and Education Centre  
Pinderfields Hospital  
Aberford Road  
Wakefield  
WF1 4DG

<https://www.midyorks.nhs.uk/contacting-pals>

## What happened?

When writing a letter about an NHS complaint you need to include certain things.

- ❖ Your details as your name, address, telephone number and date of birth
- ❖ What happened?
- ❖ When the events happened?
- ❖ Who was involved?

## Why are you making a complaint?

In this part of the letter you need to include why you are not happy with the care or service provided and the effect this has had on you.

## What outcome are you seeking?

When writing your complaint you should consider the outcome you would like.

- ❖ An apology or an acknowledgement of what happened
- ❖ An explanation or more information about why something happened
- ❖ Better care or treatment going forward
- ❖ To stop it happening to another person
- ❖ For the organisation to learn lessons from your complaint

Financial compensation – This is **not** something that you can obtain through the NHS Complaints process. If you want financial compensation you would need to seek advice on clinical or medical negligence from a Solicitor. Some solicitors will offer a free initial consultation.

## Time Limits

You should make your NHS complaint as soon as possible. Most organisations will expect you to complain within 12 months of the event you are complaining about. If you delay in making your complaint in a timely manner the organisation could refuse to investigate this matter.

## Link to template letter

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/nhs-and-social-care-complaints/complaining-about-the-nhs/tips-and-tools-to-help-you-make-a-complaint-about-health-services/Letter-of-complaint-about-NHS/>