



SUMMARY OF NHS AND SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PATIENTS

The following information provides a summary of the main features of the NHS and Social Care Complaints Procedure which is used by West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust for patients, relatives and carers who wish to raise a formal complaint or concern about the service they have received. It also outlines the types of action the complainant may need to take during the process. If you need help through this process or wish to discuss your complaint and how to take it forward you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) at pals@wmas.nhs.uk or telephone number 0300 3030996. Alternatively you can contact your local Independent Complaints Advocacy Service; details can be found in your acknowledgment letter or on our website WWW.WMAS.NHS.UK.

	Main Feature	Action to be taken by you
Making a Complaint	<p>Your complaint should be made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 12 months of the event/incident or • Within 12 months of realising you have a complaint <p>In exceptional circumstances these times limits may be waived.</p>	<p>You can make your complaint in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise it directly with the person concerned or their manager who will try to sort things out straight away. • Raise it by telephone with the organisations Patient Experience Team who will look into the matter for you. • Raise it by email by sending your concern to complaints@wmas.nhs.uk • Put your complaint formally to the Chief Executive
Local Resolution	<p>The organisation will look into your complaint and offer a response.</p> <p>This may include one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate ‘frontline’ response • Meeting with staff • Conciliation • Full Investigation • A response agreed between you and the Trust whether it be written, verbal or via a meeting <p>If the complainant is not answered immediately, you will receive an acknowledgment within 3 working days and a full written response within a timescale agreed between both parties normally 25 working days of the Trust receiving the complaint or consent if required from the patient.</p>	<p>Try and keep control of the local resolution process, if you can, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for a meeting if you would like one • Chase up the organisation if they are taking a long time to respond • If you are not happy with their initial response, tell them why and what you would like them to do next. <p>Keep a record of all correspondence, phone calls and meetings during local resolution.</p> <p>If you are not happy with the outcome of the local resolution you can request an independent review.</p>

Requesting an Independent Review	<p>If you remain dissatisfied with the response to your complaint we would value the opportunity of discussing any outstanding issue that you may have.</p> <p>However, if we are not able to resolve the matter to your satisfaction, you do have the right to ask the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman to review your case. This should be done within twelve months of becoming aware of your complaint. The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman is an independent body established to promote improvements in healthcare through the assessment of the performance of those who provide health services.</p>	<p>You can contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman on:</p> <p>Telephone Number: 0345 015 4033</p> <p>or write to:</p> <p>Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP</p> <p>or visit their website at http://www.ombudsman.org.uk</p>
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