

COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS, CONCERNS OR COMPLIMENTS

IMPROVING THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)



The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS - We are here to help you.

As a patient, relative or carer you may sometimes need to turn to someone for help, advice and support. This is where the PALS service come in. We provide confidential advice and support, helping you to sort out any concerns you may have about the care you receive at NHS Brent, and guiding you through the different services available from the NHS. The Patient Advice and Liaison Service focuses on improving the patient's experience at NHS Brent.

PALS is not part of the complaints procedure itself but they might be able to resolve your concerns informally or tell you more about the complaints procedure and independent complaints advocacy services. You can contact NHS Brent's PALS in the following ways:

PALS also likes to encourage patients to let us know what we are doing right in NHS Brent- so if you have a compliment about an NHS service or member of staff let us know by e-mail, letter or phone.

You can contact NHS Brent's PALS in the following ways:

Phone: **020 8795 6771/ 6753**

e-mail: **pals@brentpct.nhs.uk**

Fax: **020 8795 6770**

Or by writing to:

**Wembley Centre For Health & Care
116 Chaplin Road, Wembley, Middlesex
HA0 4UZ**



How to complain about services in Brent

If you are unhappy with the treatment or service you have received from the NHS in Brent, you are entitled to make a complaint, have it considered and receive a response from either NHS Brent, or the Primary Care Practitioner (i.e. GP, Dentist, Pharmacist or Optician) or the hospital concerned. Please be assured that making a complaint should not affect the care which you receive.

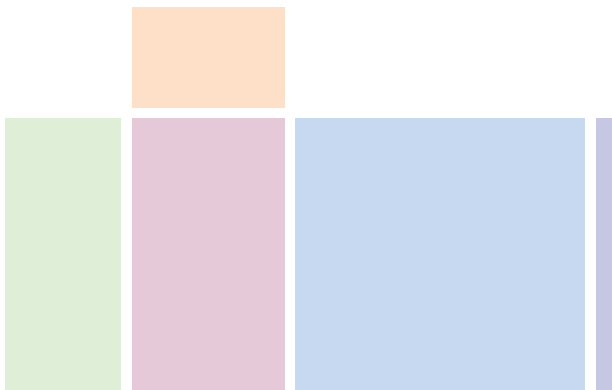
The Complaints Procedure

Who can complain?

A complaint can be made by a patient or person affected, or likely to be affected, by the actions or decisions of an NHS organisation or Primary Care Practitioner. A complaint can also be made by someone acting on behalf of the patient or person, with their consent.

What is the time limit for making a complaint?

You should normally complain within 12 months of the event(s) concerned or within 12 months of becoming aware that you have something to complain about. Primary Care Practitioners and Complaints Managers in NHS organisations have discretion to waive this time limit if there are good reasons why you could not complain earlier.



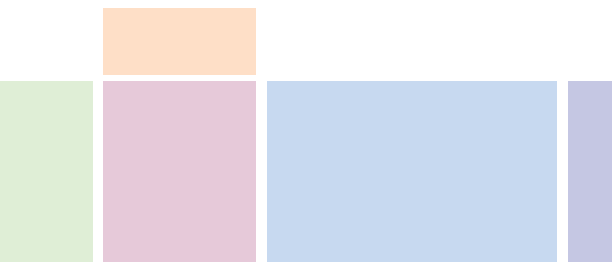
Making the complaint

The first stage of the NHS complaints procedure is called 'local resolution'. Your complaint should firstly be made to the NHS organisation or Primary Care Practitioner providing the service. Local resolution aims to resolve complaints quickly and as close to the source of the complaint as possible.

You can raise your concerns immediately by speaking to the member of staff involved (e.g. GP, Dentist, or District Nurse) or to PALS. They may be able to resolve your concerns without you having to make a formal complaint. If, however, you do want to make a formal complaint, you can do this orally or in writing (including e-mail) to the Primary Care Practitioner or NHS organisation concerned. If you make your complaint orally, a written record should be made by the Complaints Manager. You will be invited to sign your statement of complaint to be sure that you agree with it.

*The Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) can help people to make a complaint and can provide advice about the NHS complaints process. ICAS can provide useful assistance such as helping to write letters on your behalf or attending meetings with you. In Brent, you can contact your local ICAS office on **0845 120 3784/3061**. Further information about ICAS can be found on their website, **www.pohwer.net**.*

If English is not your first language, the Complaints Department at NHS Brent can arrange for letters to be translated into your first language and/or from your first language into English. Interpreters can also be booked for any meetings held about your complaint.



Where to send your complaint

If your complaint is about any service managed, or about a decision made, by NHS Brent, then your complaint should be directed to NHS Brent's Complaints Manager at 116 Chaplin Road, Wembley Middlesex HA0 4UZ. NHS Brent Complaints Department can also be contacted in the following ways:

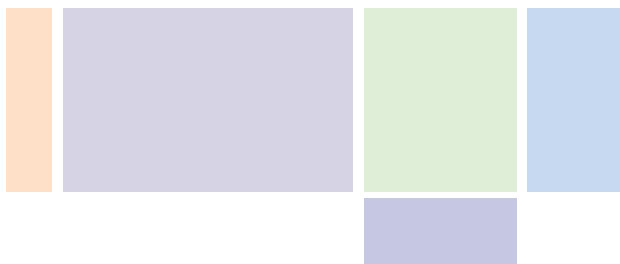
Tel: **020 8795 6771** or **020 8795 6753**

Fax: **020 8795 6770**

e-mail: **pals@brentpct.nhs.uk**

If your complaint is about a Primary Care Practitioner, then your complaint should be sent directly to the practice, pharmacy or optician. If your complaint is about hospital treatment, then your complaint should be sent directly to the hospital. Some complainants prefer to send their complaint about a Primary Care Practitioner, or a hospital, to NHS Brent. This is fine, however, in most cases, Primary Care Practitioners and hospitals will have to be given the opportunity to respond to the concerns raised in the complaint and NHS Brent's Complaints Department will, with your consent, need to forward your complaint to the Practitioner or hospital concerned.

If you have a complaint about social care such as that provided by an independent organization on behalf of the London Borough of Brent, you should complain to the social care organisation. If your complaint covers both health and social care, the relevant organisations will work together and provide you with a joint response.



What happens after I make a complaint?

If your complaint is sent to NHS Brent, a member of the Complaints Department will acknowledge your complaint within three working days after the complaint has been received.

If your complaint is about NHS Brent, we will contact you, or invite you to contact us, to discuss how you would like us to manage your complaint. Some people prefer to come and discuss their concerns with the manager of the service they are complaining about while others will prefer to receive a written response to their concerns. As part of this discussion, we will also agree the appropriate timescales for organising a meeting or providing a written response.

If your complaint is about a Primary Care Practitioner or a hospital, we will normally contact you asking you for your consent for us to forward a copy of the complaint to the Primary Care Practitioner or hospital so that they can investigate and respond to the issues raised.

What if you are still dissatisfied with the response that you receive from NHS Brent or a Primary Care Practitioner?

NHS Brent wants to ensure that all complaints are handled well and that all appropriate action is taken to resolve your concerns. We will do everything that we feel is appropriate in order to try and resolve matters to your satisfaction.

If, however, you are still unhappy with how your complaint has been managed, you can ask the Health Service Ombudsman for an independent review of your case within 12 months from the date on which the subject matter of the complaint occurred. The Ombudsman can carry out independent investigations into complaints about poor treatment or service provided through the NHS in England.



You can contact the Ombudsman via their helpline on **0845 015 4033**, by email at:

phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

or by writing to:

The Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman

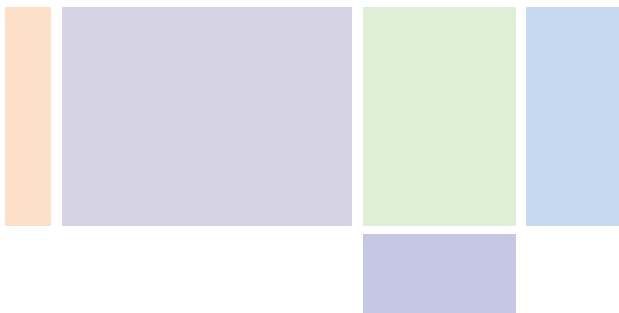
Millbank Tower

Millbank

London

SW1P 4QP.

Further information about the Ombudsman is also available at their website **www.ombudsman.org.uk**.



To make a comment or suggestion:

Please fill in one of the comment cards and leave it in one of the boxes. The comments or suggestions will be fed back to the service managers. You may leave a number or contact details so that we can follow up with you.



Useful telephone numbers:

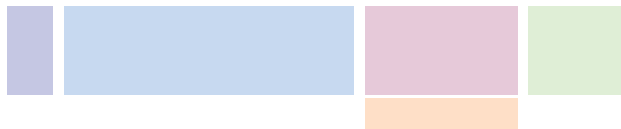
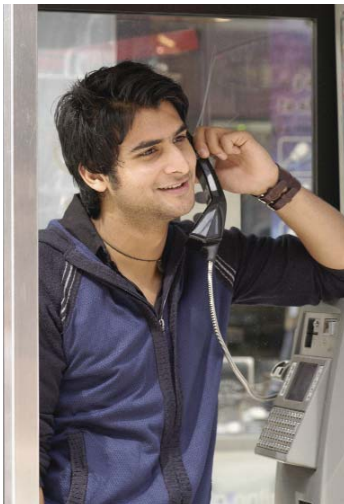
GP/Dental registration in Brent:
020 8427 7888

NHS Direct for medical assistance:
0845 46 47

Help, advice and information about hospital services in Brent
Teaching Primary Care Trust - North West London Hospital Trust
PALS

- Northwick Park Site **0800 783 4372**
- Central Middlesex Site **020 8453 2569**

If you need a copy of this leaflet in another language, in Braille or on audio tape, please contact the PCT's Complaints Department on **020 8795 6771** or **020 8795 6753**



**INTERESTED IN HELPING AND SHAPING SERVICES
IN NHS BRENT?****PATIENT PARTICIPATION and INVOLVEMENT (PPI) FROM YOU:****Helping and shaping the patient experience**

Please indicate if you would like to join the patient participation group of service users to get actively involved with service development and redesign at NHS Brent. Please tick the box below if you would like one of the team to contact you to be an active member and leave a phone number in the next box to contact you on:

Yes I am interested in the PPI team to contact me about being part of the service user bank.

Telephone me on:

Name & address

Please hand this form back to reception who will pass it to Patient Services at NHS Brent to follow up. Alternatively you can post it to:

**The Patient Services Department,
Wembley Centre for Health and Care
116 Chaplin Road
Wembley
Middlesex
HAO 4UZ**

COMMENTS, CONCERNS or COMPLIMENTS

We welcome your comments and compliments.....Please use this card to tell us what we could do to improve our services, and also to tell us what we are doing WELL. Please give us your name, address and telephone number so that we can tell you what we have done.

Name & address _____

Comments

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