



Who can make a complaint?

- Any Somerset resident who requires support to make a complaint about their NHS care.
- Any Somerset resident who wishes to complain on behalf of a friend or relative, provided that person has given written consent where they are able to do so.
- We can also support with complaints about the treatment of someone who has died.
- Young persons (under age 18) are entitled to complain independently.
- The NHS cannot consider a complaint made on behalf of a young person unless they are sure that the young person is unable to complain themselves.

What can I expect from the NHS Complaints Procedure?

- An investigation into the issues raised in your complaint.
- An explanation for when something has gone wrong.
- An apology where appropriate.
- An indication of the lessons the health provider has learned from the complaint and the steps taken to improve services for the future.

For information about our service

You can call us on:

0333 3447928

Monday to Friday during office hours

Email: somerset@swanadvocacy.org.uk

Or visit our website:

www.swanadvocacy.org.uk

www.somerset-ias.org.uk



Postal Address

Swan Advocacy

Hi Point

Thomas Street

Taunton

Somerset

TA2 6HB



Independent Health Complaints Advocacy



Somerset



What can we do?

Our specially trained advocates can:

- Help you to understand the NHS complaints process.
- Refer you to other agencies where appropriate.
- Support you with letter writing.
- Support you in preparation for and attendance at Complaints Meetings.
- Assist with referring cases to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.
- Ensure your views, feelings and concerns are listened to by the appropriate NHS body
- Support you through the complaints process.

Throughout the complaints process we can provide as much or as little support as you need. We will never 'take over' your complaint, or communicate anything that you have not agreed to in advance.

If you'd rather write your own letter, we are happy to talk this through with you and discuss how best to get your points across. Even if you have done all the writing connected with your complaint, you may welcome an advocate on your side in a meeting with NHS professionals.

What can't we do?

- Whilst we will support and guide you through the process of making a formal complaint, we do not investigate NHS complaints ourselves.
- We cannot get involved in the legal process, but we can refer you to the relevant agency.
- We cannot give opinions on medical matters or make decisions for you.
- We cannot get an individual disciplined or struck off.
- We cannot support you with complaints about privately funded treatment.



What are the time limits?

- You should aim to make your complaint as soon as is practical. However, under the NHS Complaints Procedure, you have up to 12 months from the incident in question or from when you became aware of the issue that you wish to complain about.
- If you are not able to complain within this time limit, it is possible to ask the NHS to use their discretion, but they are not obliged to investigate complaints that are out of time

About the process

The NHS Complaints Procedure has two stages:

- **Local Resolution**, where you raise your concerns with the NHS provider responsible for your care.
- **Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)** who you can request to review your complaint if you are not satisfied with the outcome of stage 1.

Swan Advocacy can support you through each stage.

We also have a 'Self Help' pack to guide you through the process, if you feel able to deal with your own complaint