

Help us to get better at what we do

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01392 402093 or at rduh.pals-eastern@nhs.net (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services) or on 01271 314090 or at rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net (for North Devon services)

Help us improve

We know sometimes we don't get things right. That is why we take complaints very seriously and welcome feedback in all forms to help us improve our services. We will make time to listen to you and act on what you say.

It is absolutely fine for you to ask us a question, raise an issue or ask us for something at any time. We will do our best to answer you. Talk to a member of staff that is caring for you or your loved one.

Resolving issues as soon as we can

If we cannot answer your questions and/or you would like to make a complaint or give us feedback, please speak to the ward manager or team manager of the service in the first instance. If you are unable to resolve your concern, you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) team:

- Northern services – on 01271 314090 or at rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net
- Eastern services – on 01392 402093 or at rduh.pals-eastern@nhs.net

for advice and signposting. If they are unable to resolve your concern, they will also be able to direct you to a member of the Patient Experience team to make a formal complaint.

You should do this as soon as possible after a problem or issue arises. Speaking up will not affect the care you receive from us.

If it is not possible to raise your complaint immediately, please do so as soon as you can. This should be within 12 months of when you became aware of the problem. We may not be able to help you after that.

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. If your complaint is straightforward and easy to resolve, we will try to do that as quickly as possible, however complex cases may take longer to investigate.

If we need to take a closer look

If your complaint is more complex, we will need time to take a closer look at it and carry out an investigation. We will arrange a time to speak to you to make sure we understand your issues and the outcome you would like.

We will explain how we will investigate your complaint and tell you how long that is likely to take. We will agree with you how and when you will be involved and kept updated as we carry out this work.

During our investigation we will:

- keep you updated on our progress
- gather and consider any relevant evidence from you and anyone else involved - this may include looking at any records about the care or service provided to you
- make sure we have your permission to look at any personal information
- compare what happened to you with what should have happened - using the right standards, policies and guidance
- give you an open and honest answer and make impartial decisions based on the facts
- write and tell you what we have found
- apologise if something has gone wrong and put things right for you as soon as we can
- make sure we learn from what you have told us, particularly if it could affect other patients or service users.

Making sure you have help and support

If you would like help making your complaint, then you should contact our local NHS advocacy provider. Their service is free. They are independent and they are there to help you every step of the way. If you would like to talk to the Devon Advocacy Consortium about helping with your complaint, you can contact them by emailing devonadvocacy@livingoptions.org or calling 01392 822377.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

You can complain on behalf of somebody else. We will need their consent so we can look at their personal records and share what we find with you. A member of the Patient Experience team can post or email a consent form to you for you to complete and return. In some cases, the person may not be able to provide their consent, for example if they are a young child. If that is the case and you are not legally allowed to see their personal information, we may still be able to look into the matter for you. We may be able to give you a response but we will not be able to share any of their personal information with you.

If you need help with this issue, please speak to our local NHS advocacy provider, Devon Advocacy Consortium or email the Patient Experience team.

Northern services

Email: rduh.complaints-northern@nhs.net

Tel: 01271 335760 / 01271 314185

Eastern services

Email: rduh.complaints-eastern@nhs.net

Tel: 01392 402093

Taking your complaint further

Once we have sent you our final response, if you're not happy with how we've dealt with your complaint and would like to take the matter further, you can contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman makes final decisions on complaints that have not been resolved by the NHS. The service is free for everyone. To take a complaint to the Ombudsman or to find out more, go to www.ombudsman.org.uk or call 0345 015 4033.

This leaflet was adopted from Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) resources.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact:

PALS Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter

- call 01392 402093 or email rduh.pals-eastern@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital in Wonford, Exeter.

PALS North Devon

- call 01271 314090 or email rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at the North Devon District Hospital in Barnstaple.

Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

Tell us about your experience of our services. Share your feedback on the Care Opinion website www.careopinion.org.uk.

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