

Compliments, feedback and complaints about adult social care

About this guide

This guide is for adults who use social care services, their unpaid carers, family and their representatives.

It explains what you should expect when you give compliments and feedback about a service or member of staff. It also explains how to make a complaint.

About compliments, feedback and complaints

It is important to give feedback to practitioners about your experiences of adult social care. This helps organisations to know what they are doing well and where they need to improve.

You don't need to make a formal complaint to comment on your experiences.

Feedback can be positive, negative or neutral. Compliments and feedback are just as important as complaints.

A complaint can cover any concerns you have about a service or member of staff that have not met the standard you would expect.

What is adult social care?

You may not know whether the help you get is an adult social care service. Adult social care includes all types of care and support including personal care and other practical help. It is assessed under the Care Act 2014 when a local authority is involved. It also includes care and support arranged and funded privately and care and support funded by the NHS. It is for people aged 18 and over who need help because of age, illness or disability. Here are some examples:

- > provision of equipment
- > help in your home with daily living
- > community support and activities
- > day centres
- > residential care
- > home adaptations
- > information and advice
- > advocacy
- > support for carers
- > social care assessments and funding

If you need to make a complaint

Not happy with your care?

It is usually best to tell the organisation that provides or pays for the service.

Do this as soon as possible to give them a chance to put things right.



Problem not fixed?

Ask the organisation for a copy of their complaints process and make a formal complaint.



Still not happy?

Ask the Ombudsman for an independent investigation of your complaint

What you should expect when giving compliments or feedback or making a complaint

If the organisation has handled your concerns in the right way, you should be able to answer yes to these statements:



Fairness

- > I was encouraged to give feedback and compliments or make a complaint
- > I know how to give compliments and feedback or make a complaint
- > I was not treated unfairly because I chose to do this
- > I felt reassured that by making a complaint the service I receive or others receive will not be affected



Customer first

- > I was fully involved in the process
- > I was listened to and treated with respect
- > The organisation was not defensive, kept me informed and explained what happened and why
- > The problem was dealt with as quickly as possible
- > I was offered the right support to make a complaint including independent advocacy where appropriate
- > The organisation involved my chosen representative



Valuing and encouraging feedback, compliments and complaints

- > I was encouraged to talk to practitioners about my experiences and I felt it was easy to share them
 - > I felt the organisation and staff had the skills to listen and understand what it feels like for me
 - > my compliment/feedback/complaint was dealt with in an open and transparent way
 - > the complaints process was clear and easy to find
 - > the organisation welcomed my complaint and saw it as an opportunity to learn and improve the quality of services for others
 - > the organisation shared the outcomes with me and explained what action it was taking
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Accepting something went wrong

- > my compliment/feedback/complaint was taken seriously
- > the organisation took responsibility, apologised to me and explained what steps it will take to fix the problem
- > the organisation improves its services by working with people that use them, their families, carers and representatives, listening to and learning from people's experiences



One complaint, one response

- > there was more than one organisation involved in my care and I did not have to contact each one separately
- > I could give compliments and feedback, or complain to any of the organisations involved in my care and support
- > the organisations worked together and gave me one joint response
- > I was signposted to the right organisation and was given the right contact details



Clear signposting to independent redress

- > I was told about my right to contact the Ombudsman after the complaints process so I could ask for an independent view.
- > I was given information on how to contact the right Ombudsman.

Help and advice

- > Find out about [the NHS complaints process](#)
- > Find your [local council's complaints process \(local council post code finder\)](#)
- > For advice and help to give compliments or feedback or make a complaint contact your local [Healthwatch](#)
- > For an independent investigation of your complaint contact the [Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)
- > Another source of information on complaints is [Citizens Advice](#)