

Making a complaint

Sometimes things don't always go the way we think they should, and sometimes that's ok. But if you find yourself in a situation which you don't think is right, or has upset you for any reason, it is important to let people know so that they can help. This sheet will help you think about what to do next if you want to make a complaint.

You might want to make a complaint if something has happened which you don't think should have, or if you feel that you have not been treated fairly.

Here are some things to help you think about your next steps.



Think about whatever has upset you with someone you trust.

Sometimes talking things through with someone you trust can help you feel better. They might be able to give you some support, and give you a different perspective on your issue that you haven't thought of. They might also be able to help you think about the best thing for you to do next. You can always write down your thoughts before you talk to someone.



Think about how you think things should have happened differently.

Being able to explain what you think should have happened differently can help you to get your point across, and will help the person you are talking to really understand why you are upset. You may want to consider talking to a few trusted people to gain a different perspective.



Think about what you would like to happen now.

What would make you feel better or put the situation right? You might want someone to reconsider a decision made about your care, you might want to be listened to properly, you might have a real concern about a member of staff, or you might want a simple explanation or apology. In any event, it might be a good idea to think about different alternatives. If you can't get what you're asking for, for any reason, then is there something else you would be happy with instead?

Remember: You have the right to speak to an Independent Mental Health Advocate. It is the Advocate's job to explain to you what your rights are in a way that you understand.



Think about who in your unit will be able to help you achieve your desired outcome.

Is there a nurse you have a really good relationship with who might be able to advise you?

If your complaint is very serious, you should speak to your hospital manager.

If you're not sure who to talk to about your problem, then you can ask a nurse to advise you about your unit's complaints policy. Think about whether you would like:

- to speak with your parent, carer or social worker
- a written record or email of your complaint
- advice on your rights from an independent advocate
- free legal advice from a solicitor via legal aid

Here is a template letter you can use to organise your thoughts. Or you can fill it out and hand it to the relevant member of your care team, or family member, who can support you.

This is what happened [include details like date, time and the names of people involved]:

This is how it made me feel and why...

This is what I think should have happened...

Now that I have made you aware of this, this is what I would like to happen...

[If this cannot happen, I would like this to happen...]

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Tip: If you have a camera phone, take a photo of this so that you have a copy. Or ask for a member of staff to photocopy this and email it to you, or file it in a safe place.