

# Writing a complaint letter

**Writing a formal complaint letter can feel daunting, but remember we are here to help at any stage.**

**Below are some useful tips, along with a sample template on the next page.**

## Tips for your complaint letter

- Try to keep your letter to no more than two pages.
- Stick to the facts and avoid letting the key points get lost in a long explanation.
- If your complaint is lengthy or complicated, include a separate diary of events with clear details.
- Provide a summary of the specific questions you would like answered.
- Explain what outcome you would like to achieve. For example:
  - An apology
  - An explanation
  - A service improvement

Keep all original documents. Send only photocopies.

## If you would prefer to complain by phone or in person:

Ask to speak with the Complaints Manager, who is often part of the Patient Experience Team. They will make a written record of your complaint, and you can request a copy for your own records.

## Who should you send your complaint to?

- **For complaints about NHS hospitals or ambulance services:**

Send your complaint to the Complaints Manager or the Chief Executive of the relevant NHS Trust or service.

- **For complaints about NHS primary care services (such as a GP, dentist, optician, pharmacist, or health centre):**

You can submit your complaint directly to the practice or service. Ask for the person responsible for handling complaints. If you do not feel comfortable doing this, you may send your complaint directly to the ICB instead.

We are always happy to help you to decide where you should send your complaint.



01924 454875



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[INSERT YOUR ADDRESS]

Private and Confidential

[INSERT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR COMPLAINTS MANAGER]

[INSERT ORGANISATION AND ITS ADDRESS]

[INSERT TODAY'S DATE]

Dear **[insert name]**

I am writing to make a formal complaint about the care and treatment I/my relative received at/from in **[insert organisation]**.

## **[DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED, WHEN AND WHERE]**

As a result, I would like to know **[examples below]**

1. What is the Trust's policy on...
2. Why did the nurse tell me...
3. Why did it take so long to...

In order to resolve my complaint, I would like **[describe your desired outcomes, examples below]**

1. Full and honest responses and explanations to each of the points above
2. An apology for what has happened to me
3. The Trust to explain what it will do to ensure that this does not happen to any other patients in the future

I would like you to carry out a full investigation into my concerns and provide a response in accordance with the NHS complaints procedure.

If you require any further information to assist your investigation, or need to update me on the progress of my complaint, please contact me. **[Add your telephone number, mobile or email address if you wish]**.

Thank you for your attention to this complaint and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

**[Insert your name]**

[If you are sending any supporting documents, please list what you have enclosed here.]

CC: [If you are sending copies of your letter to other people, please give their names and job role here.]

**Always retain a copy of any letter or attachment you send to the NHS for your records.**



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