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How to make a complaint in the WA Health System

Carly Parry- Advocacy Manager

In the WA Health System, anyone can make a complaint or provide feedback, including.....

- Consumers
- Families
- Carers
- Visitors



Making a complaint, which option is right for you?



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Direct to The Health Service

If you wish to comment on, compliment or complain about, any service received in a hospital or health service, you might want to first raise your concerns with the attending staff, either verbally or in writing.



If you want the service to provide you with a response, you can request this. You can ask the service to provide their response to you verbally and/or in writing.



When providing feedback or making a complaint, let the service know if you are seeking a specific resolution/outcome.

Resolution for you might be....

- An apology
- A change to a service's processes
- A reimbursement or refund
- A second medical opinion



WA Hospitals and Public Health Services.....

Each WA Public Health Service & Hospital has an internal department that manages complaints and feedback.

These departments are often referred to as a Family, Patient or Consumer Liaison/ Experience Service.

You can contact a hospital's main switchboard and ask to be transferred to the Patient Liaison Office.

You can make a complaint over the phone or in writing.

WA Health (Public) Services, must follow the
“Complaints Management Policy.”

Under this policy, a health service should;

- Aim to provide a response to you within 30 working days. If they need more time, they should let you know at 15 day intervals.

There is no time limit on making a complaint to a public health service. However, if you complain about an experience from a long time ago, it might be difficult to for the service to investigate your complaint fully.

How to write a complaint Some Tips.....



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1 Write today's date

2 Write the name & address of the health service that you are complaining to at the top of the page.

3 Address the letter to the service department. For example, "Dear Patient liaison Officer."

4 Introduce yourself! You could say "My name is Ms Jane Doe, and I was a patient at ABC Hospital from 1/1/1111 to 5/1/1111, under the care of Dr Smith. I am writing regarding a complaint I have about the treatment I received during my visit."

5 Write out your story/experience. Try to keep things in the same order as they occurred, and explain what happened. Explain how you felt during and after your experience, and the reasons you felt this way. Use numbers or dot points if that is easier! Your letter can be as detailed as you like, but letters between 1 and 3 pages are usually easier to read.

6 Then include what you hope your complaint/feedback will achieve. What does resolution look like to you? For example, would you like a second opinion, an apology, an explanation, a change to a service's process, a refund or compensation?

7 Explain how you would like to receive a response. Would like a response in writing, or a face-to-face meeting, to acknowledge your complaint and have your voice heard?

8 Close your letter with something like "Kind regards, Jane Doe". Then include your best contact details below. This may just be an email address, or it could be a postal address, email and phone number.

TIP Even though you might feel angry and upset, it's best to avoid swear words or other potentially offensive phrases. This language can make a service feel defensive and may impact the response you receive.

If you need assistance writing a letter of complaint, contact the Individual Advocacy Service at the Health Consumers' Council who will be happy to help! [\(08\) 9221 3422](tel:0892213422) or [1800 620 780](tel:1800620780)



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Do you know your **HEALTHCARE RIGHTS?**

The **Australian
Charter of
Healthcare Rights**

explains the rights that apply to all people in all healthcare settings.

The Charter describes what you, or someone you care for, can expect when receiving health care.

- **Access**
- **Safety**
- **Respect**
- **Partnership**
- **Information**
- **Privacy**
- **Give Feedback**



AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION
ON **SAFETY AND QUALITY** IN HEALTH CARE

For more information
ask a member of staff or visit
safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights

WA Main Hospitals Complaint/Feedback Contacts

(accurate as of 23/09/2020)

- Peel Health Campus on [\(08\) 9531 8580](tel:0895318580)
- Armadale Hospital Consumer Liaison Service on [\(08\) 9391 1153](tel:0893911153)
- Bentley Hospital Consumer Engagement Unit [\(08\) 9224 1637](tel:0892241637)
- Fiona Stanley Hospital Patient and Family Liaison Service on [\(08\) 6152 4013](tel:0861524013)
- Fremantle Hospital Patient and Family Liaison Service on [\(08\) 9431 2787](tel:0894312787)
- Joondalup Health Campus Consumer Liaison Service on [\(08\) 9400 9672](tel:0894009672)
- King Edward Memorial Hospital Consumer Liaison Service on [\(08\) 6458 1444](tel:0864581444)
- Osborne Park Hospital Consumer Liaison Service on [\(08\) 6457 8009](tel:0864578009)
- Perth Childrens' Hospital Child and Family Engagement Service on [\(08\) 6456 0032](tel:0864560032)
- Rockingham Peel Group on Consumer Liaison Office [\(08\) 9599 4323](tel:0895994323)
- Royal Perth Hospital Consumer Engagement department on [\(08\) 9224 1637](tel:0892241637)
- Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital Patient Liaison Service on [\(08\) 6457 2867](tel:0864572867)
- St John of God Subiaco Consumer Liaison on [\(08\) 9382 6323](tel:0893826323)
- St John of God Midland Patient Experience Team on [\(08\) 9462 4000](tel:0894624000)
- WA Country Health Services on [\(08\) 92238500](tel:0892238500)



Hospital Web Contacts (accurate as of 23/09/2020)

- **Armadale Hospital** <https://www.ahs.health.wa.gov.au/About-us/Compliments-or-Complaints>
- **Bentley Hospital** <https://www.bhs.health.wa.gov.au/About-us/Compliments-or-Complaints>
- **Fiona Stanley Hospital** <https://www.fsh.health.wa.gov.au/About-us/Compliments-or-complaints/Patient-and-Family-Liaison-Service>
- **Fremantle Hospital** <https://www.fhhs.health.wa.gov.au/en/About-us/Compliments-or-Complaints>
- **Joondalup Health Campus** <https://www.joondaluphealthcampus.com.au/For-Patients/Consumer-Liaison-Service>
- **King Edward Memorial Hospital** <https://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/en/About-us/FeedbackComplimentsComplaints>
- **Osborne Park Hospital** http://www.oph.health.wa.gov.au/Patients_Visitors/PatientLiaison.html
- **Perth Childrens' Hospital** <https://pch.health.wa.gov.au/For-patients-and-visitors/Compliments-and-complaints>
- **Rockingham Peel Group** <https://www.rkpg.health.wa.gov.au/About-us/Compliments-or-Complaints>
- **Royal Perth Hospital** <https://rph.health.wa.gov.au/About-us/Compliments-and-Complaints>
- **Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital** <https://www.scgh.health.wa.gov.au/About-Us/Feedback-compliments-and-complaints>
- **St John Of God (ALL HOSPITALS)** <https://www.sjog.org.au/about-us/contact-us/feedback> or <https://www.sjog.org.au/about-us/contact-us>
- **WA Country Health Services (WACHS)** <http://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/feedback>



Dissatisfied by a response?

Consider one or more of the following options....

- Submit a complaint to the Health and Disability Complaints Office (HaDSCO)
- Notify the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA)
- Share your experience on Care Opinion
- Write to the Minister for Health



Health & Disability Service Complaints Office (HaDSCO)

HaDSCO is an independent statutory government department offering an impartial resolution service for complaints relating to health, disability and mental health services in Western Australia.

You can lodge a complaint with HaDSCO who offer a complaint resolution service and may be able to help you. They are impartial (on no one's side).

You have two years to make a complaint to HaDSCO following the incident/experience.



HaDSCO may be able to help you if you are seeking....

- an explanation
- an apology
- a refund or compensation
- access to your health records
- change in policy or practice at a hospital, medical/dental practice, pharmacy, ambulance, community health service

You can find further information on the HaDSCO process via their website:

<https://www.hadsco.wa.gov.au/home/> or via telephone on [\(08\) 6551 7600](tel:0865517600)

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)

AHPRA are the statutory body (a body set up by law which is authorised by legislation on behalf of the Australian Government)

AHPRA regulates all health care professionals in Australia

You can submit a complaint to AHPRA if your issue is about an individual health practitioner, and you believe any of the following...

- a practitioner's behaviour is placing the public at risk
- a practitioner is practising their profession in an unsafe way
- a practitioner's ability to make safe judgements about their patients might be impaired because of their health

You can find further information on the AHPRA complaints process via their website: <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/> or telephone on **1300 419 495**



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Care Opinion

Care Opinion is an independent site where anyone can share their stories about their experience of care. The site covers health and aged care, and community services in Australia, giving service users, their families and carers the opportunity to publish their personal experiences, good or bad, of the care system.

There are two ways that you can share your story with Care Opinion:

1. Visit the website

share your experience <https://www.patientopinion.org.au/>

Care Opinion will email you to keep you informed about the difference your story makes.

2. By telephone

If you are unable to write your story on the website, you can speak to a Care Opinion staff member in confidence on the phone. To do this, you can call [1300 662 996](tel:1300662996)



Raise your concern to the WA Minister for Health

Serious issues and concerns about a health care service can be raised with the WA Minister for Health.

A letter of complaint or concern can be forwarded to the Minister via this address:

Honourable Roger Cook MLA
Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Mental Health
Address: 13th Floor, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6005



**If you need help to make your complaint, we welcome you to
contact the Individual Advocacy Service at the Health
Consumers' Council on**

(08) 9221 3422 or FREECALL 1800 620 780



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