

Easy Read

A guide for writing your own complaint letter



This document was written by the **Hywel Dda Community Health Council**. It is an easy read version of '**Writing your own complaint letter**'.

April 2022

How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what all the words in blue mean on **page 12**.



Where the document says **we**, this means **Community Health Council**. For more information contact:

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About this document



This document is a guide for writing your own complaint letter to an NHS service.



You may need to write a complaint letter if you were not happy with an NHS service that you have received.



Making a complaint can help to improve the quality of service that people receive from the NHS.



This document will help you to plan and write your own complaint letter to an NHS service. You may still need help to do this. Ask someone you know to help you.

How to write a complaint letter



When you want to send a letter to complain about an NHS service you need to think and plan what you want to write.



You may still need help with planning or checking your letter. You could ask someone to help you with this.



It can be easier if a letter is written in clear handwriting. You can also type your letter on the computer. If you find this difficult you could ask someone to help you.



When you write your letter you should make sure you write about the facts or **incident**.

An **incident** is another word for something that has happened. Usually this is something that is bad.



Facts are important for the person reading your complaint. It helps them to understand what happened.

You might want to think about:

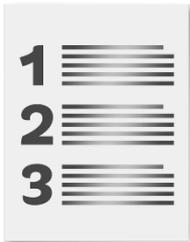
- **Where** the problem happened?
- **Who** was involved in the **incident** or complaint?
- **When** did it happen?
- **What** happened?
- **What** was the end result?



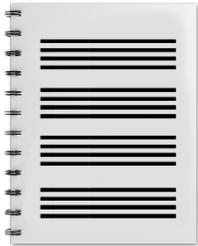
If you are not sure about some of the questions you should ask, you can contact your GP and ask for a copy of your medical records. This may give you information to help you with your questions.



When writing your letter, you need to think about what you want. You may want the NHS organisation to say sorry for something. Or ask them to explain something that has happened.



You may have lots of things to complain about. It may help to list them by how important they are to you.



You should try to keep your letter as short as possible. Try to use short and clear sentences. This can help people understand what you are trying to say.



If you write your letter using a **timeline** it can help people to understand the order of when things happened.

A **timeline** is a list that lets people know the date order in which events have happened.



It can help if you ask the reader exact questions about what you are complaining about. You may find it helpful to number your questions.



You may want to tell the reader how the **incident** made you feel. Try not to use words that are angry or blame the reader.



It is important to make sure you send your letter to the right NHS service or person. Make sure you check you have the correct address or get someone to help you.



You should include the date on the letter. Keep a record of this when you put it in the post. Or keep a copy of the email that you sent.



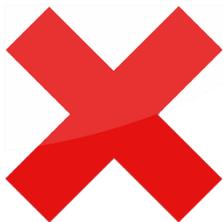
You may need to send other documents with your letter. You should only send photocopies of these.



The NHS service should let you know within 1 week that they have received your letter. If they do not you should contact them to see if it was received.



You might want to put your telephone number or email in your letter. This means that someone may contact you to talk about your complaint more.



You do not have to talk to them if you do not want to.



Sometimes you may not receive an email or phone call. You may need to wait for a response by letter.



The NHS service or person that you are sending your complaint to may need you to fill out a **consent** form. This will allow them to look into your complaint more.

Consent means giving permission for something to happen.



You should try to send your **consent** form in the post as soon as you can. You may want to ask someone you know to help you with the **consent** form.



Below is an example of a complaint letter. This should only be used as a guide to help you:

Example of a complaint letter:

10 Your street
Your town
Your county
Your postcode

Name of person
Name of NHS service
Their address
Their postcode

Date of the letter

Dear sir or madam,

I am writing to you about the service I received at your hospital on 1 January 2022.

I went to hospital at 2pm because I had hurt myself at home. I was in a lot of pain and had to wait for 5 hours with no help.

I was seen by a doctor at 7:30pm. I was very upset when I saw the doctor, but they did not seem to care. I had an x-ray but was not given any pain relief.

I was sent home after my x-ray but did not manage well because of the pain. I also live on my own. This was very difficult for me.

A few days later I went to my GP and had another x-ray. They told me I had broken my thumb and had an infection. My GP told me that my infection could have been avoided if you had treated me properly.

I am very upset about this, and I have had to take time off work to get better. I would like to ask:

1. Why was I not given any medicine for the pain?
2. Who told me that my thumb was not broken?
3. Why was I not told how to look after my thumb or given no medication to take home?

I would like an apology for what has happened. I think that staff should be told about the incident so that it doesn't happen to anyone else.

I would like you to treat this as a complaint and look into why this has happened. If you would like to speak to me my phone number is xxxxxxxxxxxx.

Yours sincerely,

Your name

Hard words

Consent

Consent means giving someone permission to do something.

Incident

An incident is another word for something that has happened. Usually this is something that is bad.

Timeline

A timeline is a list that lets people know the order in which events have happened.