



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Listening to People

How to raise a concern  
about NHS Wales

NHS Wales aims to provide the very best care and treatment. But sometimes things may not go as well as expected. When that happens, you should raise your concerns with the staff involved with your care or treatment, so that they can look at what may have gone wrong and try to make it better. In NHS Wales this is done through a process known as Listening to People.

## What is the Listening to People process?

Listening to People is the national approach for handling complaints, incidents and redress in NHS Wales. It aims to make it easy for you to share your experiences, ensuring you are treated with dignity, fairness, compassion and respect at every step.

## Who should I contact?

The best place to start is by contacting the staff involved with your care or treatment as soon as possible. They will try to resolve your concerns immediately. If this does not help, or if you would prefer, you can contact the organisation's concerns team.

Each health board or trust has their own concerns team.

To find details for your health board or NHS Wales trust, visit

**[www.nhs.wales/hpb/local-services](http://www.nhs.wales/hpb/local-services)**



If you have a concern about services that you have received from a primary care provider like your general practitioner (GP), dentist, pharmacist or optometrist you should normally ask the practice to look into it for you. If you would prefer, you can ask your health board to do so. Although primary care providers such as those named above cannot offer NHS Wales redress through the Listening to People process, they must still listen, investigate what happened, explain their findings, apologise where appropriate and learn from the concern.

The concerns team will:

- **listen to your concerns to try to resolve them as quickly as possible**
- **look into your concerns and speak to the staff involved in your care or treatment**
- **put you in contact with the right person to help you**
- **let you know what they have found and what they are going to do about it.**

Please tell the concerns team if you require support for any particular language and communication needs. For example: if you are deaf or have hearing impairments, if you are blind or have visual impairments.

## Who can raise a concern?

You can raise the concern yourself. If you prefer, a carer, friend, or relative may represent you, but you will be asked to agree to this.

## How soon should I tell someone about my concern?

It is best to contact someone about your concern as soon as possible, but you can take up to 12 months to do so.

### Can I get support to raise my concern?

Yes. Llais, an independent body, provides free and confidential complaints advocacy and support locally.

To contact Llais:

visit their website [llaiswales.org](http://llaiswales.org)  
email [enquiries@llaiswales.org](mailto:enquiries@llaiswales.org)  
phone 02920 235558



or write to

Llais, Crown Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ.

## What happens once you have raised your concern?

- The concerns team will contact you and will offer a listening discussion where you can share your concerns.

Depending on the nature of your concern, you may be offered early resolution, which can be a much quicker process than a formal investigation. Early resolution consists of:

- fact and records checking to understand what has happened and what caused it
- a focus on actions and solutions to meet your desired outcomes
- an apology for any distress or harm you have experienced
- a response to you, checking if your desired outcome has been achieved.

- The concerns team will look into your concerns and talk to the staff involved in your care or treatment.
- They will aim to respond to you within 30 working days of receiving your concern. If they cannot reply to you in that time, they will explain why and let you know when to expect a response.
- Some concerns may take longer to look into. More complex concerns can take up to six months or longer to resolve, but you will be kept informed of progress and timescales.

**There are some things the concerns team cannot look into, such as:**

- private healthcare or treatment (including private dental treatment)
- usually, a concern that occurred over 12 months ago (if a longer time has passed and there are good reasons for the delay, the concerns team may still be able to look into it).

## What if you are not happy?

If you are not happy with the response to your concern, you can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW). PSOW will be unable to look into your complaint until after you have gone through the Listening to People process. If you choose to contact PSOW, you should do this within 12 weeks of receiving the response.

### Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Phone: 0300 790 0203

Website: [www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk)

Address: 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed CF35 5LJ

E-mail: [ask@ombudsman.wales](mailto:ask@ombudsman.wales)

