

Compliments, comments, concerns and complaints



How can this booklet help?

As the Adult Social Care service, within the Cumbria County Council Adult and Cultural Services Directorate, this booklet explains what we will do when you make a compliment, comment, complaint, or express a concern, and what further action you can take.

The booklet says who is entitled to use the Compliments Comments Concerns and Complaints Procedure, and how to do this.



We regularly ask people who have used our Compliments, Comments, Concerns and Complaints Procedure to give us their feedback on how well it worked. Throughout this booklet are examples of some of the comments we have received.

How can I contact Adult Social Care?

Complaints Team

Adult and Cultural Services Directorate
 Cumbria County Council
 3rd Floor, Civic Centre
 Carlisle CA3 8QG
 Telephone 01228 227140
 Email: socialcare.complaints@cumbriacc.gov.uk

Adult Social Care Customer Services:

Carlisle

Civic Centre
 Rickergate
 Carlisle CA3 8QG
 Telephone 01228 227000

Allerdale

New Oxford Street
 Workington
 CA14 2LW
 Telephone 01900 706325

Eden

Friargate
 Penrith
 CA11 7NX
 Telephone 01768 242242

Copeland

Somerset House
 Duke Street
 Whitehaven CA28 7SQ
 Telephone 01946 506352

South Lakeland

County Offices
 Kendal LA9 4RQ
 Telephone 01539 713377

Barrow-in-Furness

Market Street
 Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LH
 Telephone 01229 407894

For emergencies outside office hours, at the weekend or during bank holidays, the Out of Hours Services can be contacted on 01228 526690.

What is our policy?

We recognise all feedback both positive and negative as an important way of improving services for older and disabled people, and their carers. While our aim is to provide good quality services, there will be times when things are not done as well as they should be. We want you to tell us if you disagree with our decisions or think we have acted unfairly so that we have the chance to put things right. We also want to hear from you if we have done a really good job.

We will **listen** carefully to complaints, concerns or comments and treat them **fairly**. When a complaint is shown to be reasonable and justified, we will try to **put right** anything that is wrong. We will, if possible, **improve** the services concerned as soon as we can so that other people do not have the same problem.

"I spoke to the manager who was very pleasant and understanding. I felt as though she did care, and took her job seriously and looked into the matter"

Ms J, Kendal



Making a compliment, comment or suggestion?

Your views are important to us so we want to hear your **comments** and **suggestions** about how we might improve things.

Also if you think we are providing a good service, please tell us so we know when we have got things right. Staff appreciate being told when they are doing things really well. **Compliments also** help us improve.

"Quick and efficient"

Mr G, Workington



You can make your compliment, comment or suggestion in whatever way you prefer:

- by completing the enclosed form;
- by telephoning;
- by letter;
- by telling any staff member; or
- online at www.cumbria.gov.uk

Who can complain?

You can use this procedure to make a complaint if you:

- receive a service from us
- have been refused services
- have been affected, or are likely to be affected, by our action or lack of action, or by a decision we have made

You can also complain on behalf of a service user if:

- you get their agreement first
OR
- the person is not capable of giving consent, providing that we agree that you have sufficient interest in their welfare and are acting in their best interests

If we decide that you are not eligible to complain we will tell you why in writing. We will also tell you if we think there are other ways for you to sort the problem out.

Can I get help to express my concerns or to make a compliment, comment or complaint?

We recognise that it can be difficult and stressful to make a complaint or raise concerns. If you need help or if you want to find out more about the complaints procedure, our staff will be able to help you.

You may ask a friend, relative or a local councillor to help you. Alternatively you may prefer to get help from an advocate from an organisation such as People First, the Citizens Advice Bureau, Age Concern or other local agency or voluntary organisation. You can get their addresses from the phone book, your local library or Adult Social Care office. Anyone you ask to act for you has the same rights as you have.



"I was pleased with the outcome and also very grateful to the lady who was dealing with the complaint for being so considerate at a very stressful time for me and my father."

Mrs H, Penrith

What do I do if I have a concern or complaint?

If you have a concern or complaint about Adult Social Care then, if you feel comfortable, please tell a member of staff or a manager. There will often be times when we can sort out your problem straight away and you might not need to make a complaint at all.

If we are able to resolve your problem to your satisfaction by the end of the next working day, we will consider the matter closed.

If you decide to make a complaint, you can tell us about your concern or complaint in whatever way you prefer:

- by completing the enclosed form;
- by telephoning;
- by letter;
- by telling any staff member; or
- online at www.cumbria.gov.uk

We can arrange an interpreter if you need one.

Please note that complaints will not normally be accepted about events that occurred more than 12 months earlier unless we accept that there are good reasons for the delay. If we refuse your complaint we will tell you why.

What can you expect from the complaints procedure?

We will work with you to find an appropriate solution to your complaint.

We will be honest, open and accountable.

Complaining will not guarantee that you get the outcome that you want, but you will get an explanation of the services provided and about any decisions made.

You can choose to withdraw your complaint at any time. However, if we consider your complaint is about a serious matter, we may still want to follow it up.

Your complaint could help us to improve our services in the future.

The Complaints Team welcome feedback on your experiences of making a complaint in order to make improvements. We have produced a questionnaire which you can complete and return to us. We will send this to you at the end of the complaints process.



"I feel my views were taken into account."

Mr W, Whitehaven

How does the complaints procedure work?

1 The Complaints Team will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. This letter will tell you who will be the Lead Manager for your complaint and what will happen next. It will tell you how to get support to make your complaint and about your right to take your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman

2 The Lead Manager (usually the team manager) will normally contact you within five working days to arrange to discuss your complaint in more detail.

3 At a mutually convenient time, the Lead Manager will discuss your complaint with you and what actions they can take to resolve things for you. Together you will draw up a Complaints Resolution Plan. This will include:

- a. A list of your complaints and how you think it can be resolved.
- b. A list of actions to be taken by the Lead Manager.
- c. An agreed, reasonable timescale to complete these actions.

You will receive a copy of this plan.

4 You and the Lead Manager will decide what action needs to be taken. Examples include:

- A review of a support plan;
- An investigation by the Lead Manager; or
- An independently chaired meeting.

In exceptional circumstances, where the facts are in dispute, an external independent investigation can be commissioned.

We also welcome any suggestions that you may have.

The Lead Manager will keep you updated on their progress.

5 Once the Lead Manager has completed the action agreed in the Complaints Resolution Plan, they will pass your complaint to a senior manager. They will sign off your complaint by checking that everything possible has been done to resolve your complaint.

They will write to you to confirm this. This is the end of the council's complaints procedure but you may still complain to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Other procedures that may apply

Sometimes we will deal with issues you raise under a procedure other than the Adult Social Care procedure for compliments, comments, concerns and complaints.

Corporate Complaints Procedure

If the council service you are complaining about is not a service that Adult Social Care is required by law to provide, such as the Blue Badge service, your complaint may be dealt with under the council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. You should receive a written response to your complaint within 10 working days of your complaint being received.

Safeguarding Procedure

The safeguarding procedure is used to protect vulnerable adults from all aspects of abuse. If we feel that your complaint suggests that a service user may be at risk of being abused or is in danger of harm then we will deal with the issues through the safeguarding procedure. For more information on safeguarding please talk to a member of staff or alternatively visit our website www.cumbria.gov.uk.

Provider Complaints

If your complaint is about a care service such as home care or a care home, which is independently run rather than owned by the council we usually expect you to complain in the first instance to the service or care provider.

If you are unhappy with the response you get or if you would like the council to help then we can get involved to help try to sort things out and to look at possible solutions.

Complaints about other organisations

Sometimes the service you are complaining about is not provided by Adult Social Care but is provided by another organisation such as the NHS or a Housing Authority. If we receive a complaint that is for another organisation then we will contact you to ask for your permission to pass your complaint on to the relevant organisation to respond.

"I was very satisfied with the way my complaint was dealt with. No further action by anyone was required."

Mrs V, Appleby

Local Government Ombudsman

You may, at any stage, refer your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. Normally the Ombudsman will expect you to have given the council an opportunity to deal with the complaints you make.

The Local Government Ombudsman investigates complaints about councils and certain other bodies. It is an independent, impartial and free service. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about how the council has done something, and whether you have been treated fairly.

More information about the Local Government Ombudsman can be found on their website: www.lgo.org.uk

The Local Government Ombudsman can be contacted at:

PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH

Telephone: 0845 602 1983
Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. Their aim is to make sure better care is provided for everyone, whether that's in hospital, in care homes, in people's own homes or elsewhere.

They regulate health and adult social care services, whether provided by the NHS, local authorities, private companies or voluntary organisations. They also protect the rights of people detained under the Mental Health Act.

The Care Quality Commission do not usually become involved in individual complaints, but they inspect our services, including how we deal with complaints.

More information about the Care Quality Commission can be found on their website: www.cqc.org.uk

You may also contact them at:
CQC National Correspondence
PO Box 1258
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE99 5AU

Telephone: 03000 616161
Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Complaints about social care and NHS services



If your complaint is about an NHS health care service (eg. your GP or hospital) as well as about an adult social care service, we have arrangements in place with the following organisations which allow us to work together to sort things out for you:

- Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Cumbria Health On Call (CHOC)
- North West Ambulance Service
- North Cumbria University Hospital NHS Trust
- University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust
- NHS Cumbria

You can contact any of the organisations listed above or the Adult Social Care complaints team to make a complaint which involves both adult social care and one or more NHS service.

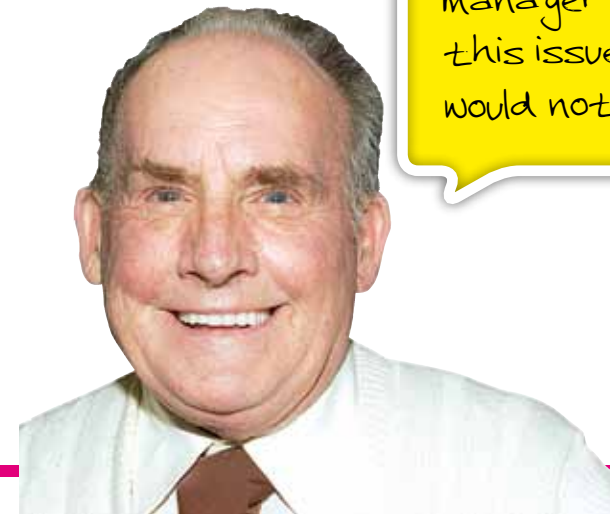
Recording Complaints

Information on all complaints will be kept on computer. This will help us monitor and improve our services. You have the right to see records we keep about you. Please ask us if you want to see the records held by the Complaints Team.

Please be aware that we may not be able to discuss personal information with you if you are not the service user yourself, or you do not have the consent of the service user.

Your information will be held securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

"I am now satisfied my complaint has been sorted out and the manager has assured me that this issue I complained about would not happen again."



Mr B, Carlisle

More information

You can find more information about Adult Social Care services at www.cumbria.gov.uk/adultsocialcare



Envelope stuck here

How to get this leaflet in another language or format

If you require this document in another format (eg. CD, audio cassette, Braille or large type) or in another language please telephone 01228 606060.

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে **01228 606060** নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

如果您希望通过母语了解此信息，
请致电 **01228 606060**

**Jeigu norétumète gauti šią informaciją savo kalba,
skambinkite telefonu 01228 606060**

**W celu uzyskania informacji w Państwa języku proszę
zatelefonować pod numer 01228 606060**

**Se quiser aceder a esta informação na sua língua,
telefone para o 01228 606060**

**Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde görmek istiyorsanız lütfen
01228 606060 numaralı telefonu arayınız**