



**Patient  
Advocacy  
Service**

INFORMATION | SUPPORT | EMPOWERMENT

# Free, Independent and Confidential Complaint Advocacy

## Nursing Homes



[patientadvocacyservice.ie](https://patientadvocacyservice.ie)



0818 293003

# Guide to Making a Complaint



## Make an Informal Complaint

Raise the issue with the nursing home by phone or in person. The issue might be resolved without the need to make a formal, written complaint. The nursing home will make you aware of their complaints procedure.



## Making a Formal Complaint

If you are unhappy with the response you receive after raising the issue, you can make a formal complaint.

You can do this by writing a letter or an email to your nursing home. You can also check if the nursing home has an online complaints process.

**Time frame:** A nominated complaints officer will investigate your complaint. On conclusion of the investigation, a written response must be provided by the nursing home as soon as possible and in any case no later than 30 working days after receipt of the complaint. In the event that the 30 working day timeframe cannot be complied with, you must be provided with a written response informing you when you will receive a response and the reason for the delay.

## What to Include in your Written Complaint:

- ▶ your name
- ▶ phone number
- ▶ email address
- ▶ name of the nursing home
- ▶ who was involved
- ▶ dates and times of the experience
- ▶ an accurate description of what happened
- ▶ what you want to happen now
- ▶ and you can attach any relevant documentation

## Where to Send your Complaint:

- ▶ **Post/Email:** Send your letter or email to the nominated complaints officer within the nursing home. Your nursing home provider will be able to provide you with contact details for the complaints officer in your nursing home.
- ▶ **Phone:** Your nursing home provider will be able to provide you with their contact details.
- ▶ **Online:** Your nursing home provider will be able to advise whether they have an online complaints process. It is advised that you keep a copy of your online complaint.
- ▶ A complaints officer in the nursing home will be nominated to investigate your complaint. The complaints officer will follow up your complaint.

- ▶ Following a full investigation about the complaint, the complaints officer will either uphold the complaint or not and present the reasons for that decision, any improvements recommended and any details of the review process in a written response.
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## Internal Review of Complaint

If you are unhappy with the decision you receive, you can ask your nursing home to appoint a review officer, who is different to the person who carried out the original investigation, to review the decision. The review officer will present the findings of the review in a written response, as soon as possible and in any case no later than 20 days after receipt of your request. In the event that the 20 working day timeframe cannot be complied with, you must be provided with a written response informing you when you will receive a response and the reason for the delay.

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## External Review of Complaint

If you want an external organisation to look at how your complaint has been handled, you can contact the Ombudsman, or other organisations like the Medical Council or the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland, to consider your complaint.

## What is the Patient Advocacy Service?

The Patient Advocacy Service provides a free, independent and confidential service to help users of public acute hospitals and nursing homes making or intending to make a formal complaint through the relevant complaints process in relation to the care they have received.

The Patient Advocacy Service also provides support to users of public acute hospitals and nursing homes following a Patient Safety Incident.

The Patient Advocacy Service is fully funded by the Department of Health and therefore fully independent of the HSE or nursing homes.

## How we Help

- ▶ We can support you to get information on the complaints process for your nursing home.
- ▶ We can explain how to raise your complaint with your nursing home and support you to write a formal complaint.
- ▶ We can support you to explore your options following a response from your nursing home to your formal complaint.
- ▶ Where appropriate and with your consent, we can support a third party (e.g. family member, enduring power of attorney, decision representative) to make a complaint on your behalf.
- ▶ Where necessary, we may provide you with information on other services and supports that are available.

# How to Contact Us



by post to:

**Patient Advocacy Service**

Level 3 Rear Unit, Marshalsea  
Court, Merchant's Quay,  
Dublin 8, D08 AEY8



Or email:

**[info@patientadvocacyservice.ie](mailto:info@patientadvocacyservice.ie)**



You can also make  
your query online at

**[patientadvocacyservice.ie](http://patientadvocacyservice.ie)**



or by calling the national  
line **0818 293003**

The Patient Advocacy Service provides free, independent and confidential information, support and empowerment advocacy to users of public acute hospitals and nursing homes, making a formal complaint about the care they have received.

The Patient Advocacy Service is provided by the National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities and is funded by the Department of Health.