

General Practitioners Factsheet

Introduction

This Fact sheet is about complaints about General Practitioners (GPs). It should be read together with our '[How to Complain](#)' webpage, available on the 'Making A Complaint' tab.

There is a separate fact sheet which covers other independent primary care providers like community dentists, opticians, or pharmacists. You should note that we can only consider complaints about care provided under the NHS; we cannot look at treatment provided on a private basis.

Practice staff, such as nurses or receptionists, are employed by GPs, who are responsible for their actions. Any complaint about practice staff should be directed to the GP practice in the first instance.

What we can do

We can:

- Consider complaints about the standard of clinical care provided to you, your child, or someone you represent;
 - Consider complaints about administrative failure or other poor service you have received from your GP Practice;
 - Consider complaints that you have been incorrectly removed from a GP Practice list;
 - Consider complaints about out-of-hours services (usually these are provided by private companies on behalf of the relevant Health Board).
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What we cannot do

We cannot:

- Stop your GP from practising – although if our investigation suggests that there are serious concerns about professional competence, we may notify the relevant regulatory body;
 - Intervene in your current treatment, obtain a second opinion for you, or arrange for you to be given an alternative treatment if the treatment you are currently receiving is reasonable;
 - Reinstate you on to the Practice list if you have been removed.
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Issues to bear in mind

When considering complaints about clinical care, we will assess whether the standard of care was appropriate (information available on the [‘Clinical Standards’](#) page, under the ‘For Service Provider’ tab) in the circumstances at the time, rather than of a “gold standard”. More information can be found on the ‘Clinical Standards’ page, under the ‘For Service Providers’ tab.

There are a number of circumstances where GPs are entitled to remove patients from their list for example, when a patient moves away from the Practice's area, or when the professional relationship between doctor and patient has broken down. You should normally be given a written warning before being removed from the list and given reasons for why you are being removed. You should not normally be removed from a Practice list simply because you have made a complaint.

Complaints about NHS out-of-hours services should normally be directed to the relevant Health Board in the first instance (see below for contact details).

Further information

Llais can provide free help and support with making your complaint. You can contact them via their helpline on **02920 235 558**.

Your **local Health Board** may also be able to help you. Contact details for the Health Board for your area can be found at www.wales.nhs.uk/ourservices/directory.

Examples of cases that we have looked at can be found on our website, under the 'Publications' tab on the '[Our Findings](#)' page.

Contact us

If you are unsure whether we would be able to look into your complaint, please [contact us](#) on 0300 790 0203 or ask@ombudsman.wales

Also available in Welsh.

This document is available in Welsh and English. You can write to us in Welsh and we will reply in Welsh. This will not lead to a delay in responding.

ask@ombudsman.wales

0300 790 0203 Our phone line is open 10am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-4pm Monday – Friday