

Comments, complaints, concerns & compliments

How to make your views known
about hospital services



*Customer care
Making experiences count*

Let us know your views ...

This leaflet is for patients, relatives, carers and friends. It tells you how you can give us feedback on the care or service you or a friend or member of your family has received.

Your views are very important to us as they can help us to improve our service to all our patients. Please take time to bring any issue to our attention. Contact details for everyone mentioned in this leaflet can be found at the end.

Patient and Customer Services (incorporating Patient Advice and Liaison Service):

Patient and Customer Services is a free and confidential service for patients and carers. The team can help answer any questions about your experience with the hospital, listen to your suggestions, queries and concerns and can offer advice and support for you, your family, carers and friends.

We can offer 'on the spot' advice if you have queries or difficulties about health services, provide information about hospital services and help you find other organisations or groups that may be helpful.

Our team are here to listen and respond to your comments. Our opening hours are 10am to 12noon and 2pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday. We are situated in the North Wing, Level 1, Main Entrance.

We value your compliments, comments and suggestions:

If you have any comments or suggestions about how we can improve our services, we would like to know. You can:

- speak to staff
- use the suggestion boxes throughout the hospital
- contact Patient and Customer Services
- send a letter or e-mail to the Chief Executive

Making experiences count

Problem? Concern? Complaint?

If you or your family are unhappy with any aspect of your care please talk to the person in charge of the ward, clinic or department as soon as possible. Very often problems can be sorted out straight away.

If you feel they are unable to help you and you need information, advice or support in resolving a problem quickly and informally you may choose to contact the Patient and Customer Services team.

Your complaint will be treated in confidence, it will not be filed on your health records, it will not affect your treatment and you will not be discriminated against in any way.

Our staff will try to give you help, advice and support in raising your concern or complaint. To help them resolve your concern as quickly as possible it would be helpful if you had the following information available:

- The patient details (name, address, date of birth, telephone number and hospital number if known)
- Your contact details (if different) and your relationship to the patient
- A clear description of your concern or complaint. If you are raising more than one concern, it helps to number each point. This helps us to make sure we answer all of your concerns
- The ward / department where the concern or query relates to or the name of the member of staff involved
- Copies of any relevant documents to assist with the investigation
- If possible, a daytime telephone number on which we can contact you
- What your desired outcome is, i.e. how we can help best resolve your concern or complaint

Consent:

If you are raising concerns or making a complaint on behalf of someone else we may, for patient confidentiality reasons, ask for the patient's written consent to reply to you. This can be obtained by writing a short letter, signed by the patient, confirming that they have given permission for us to provide you with specific details about their treatment or care, or a consent form can be sent to you for the patient to complete. A pre-paid envelope will be provided for your assistance in returning the completed form.

If your concern or complaint involves another Trust or agency, we will need to have your consent (or that of the patient) to contact them and obtain information for a joint Trust/agency response.

Formal complaint:

Despite every effort, we acknowledge that sometimes things go wrong. If your concern cannot be resolved quickly, or you feel it is necessary to make a complaint about our services, please contact Patient and Customer Services in writing if possible or, if not, by telephone or in person if you prefer. Alternatively, you can write to the Chief Executive.

If you need help in making your complaint you may wish to contact Dorset Advocacy. Dorset Advocacy provides support, independent of the NHS and free of charge, in dealing with the complaints process.

Timescales for making a complaint:

A complaint should be made within 12 months of the incident occurring or within 12 months of discovering you have cause to complain. Complaints received outside of these timescales may still be considered if it is clear there are good reasons for complaining and it is still possible to investigate what happened.

Patient and Customer Services:
0800 7838058

Comments, concerns, complaints & compliments

Feedback form

Please use this form to give us your feedback.

Which service does your feedback relate to?

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What are we doing well?

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What improvements would you like us to make?

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What are your concerns?

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Do you have any other comments?

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If you would like us to contact you about your comments please complete the following section

Name

Address

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Telephone

Email

Please tick here if you would be happy for us to contact you to get your views on future service development.

Please detach this form and put it in one of the hospital suggestion boxes or leave with main reception. Alternatively, you can post it back to Patient and Customer Services, Dorset County Hospital, Williams Avenue, Dorchester, DT1 2JY.

What we will do after receiving a complaint:

The Patient and Customer Services team will acknowledge receipt of your complaint by telephone or in writing within three working days of it being received. We will invite you to discuss the way in which you would like your concerns to be investigated and fed back to you and discuss the length of time we expect the investigation to take.

Should there be any delay we will contact you to explain why and agree with you when you can expect to receive a response.

If you choose to meet with staff at any point of the investigation, you are welcome to bring a relative, friend or Dorset Advocacy representative to support you.

Please be aware that staff involved in the investigation of some complaints may need access to your health records or those of the patient concerned and, in such cases, patient confidentiality will be respected at all times.

What you can do if you are not happy with the outcome:

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation please contact Patient and Customer Services, if possible in writing or, if not, by telephone with details of your remaining concerns within 28 days of our response. We may then suggest that we investigate your complaint further or arrange a meeting with you and the staff involved to discuss your concerns.

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman:

If you feel that your complaint has still not been resolved you can write to the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman. This is a free service. The Ombudsman, who is appointed by Parliament and is completely independent of the NHS, will decide whether or not to investigate the complaint. The Ombudsman will not usually take on a case that has not been through the NHS complaints procedure as outlined above.

Contact details:

Chief Executive

Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Williams Avenue
Dorchester
Dorset DT1 2JY

Tel: 01305 251150

E-mail: headquarters@dchft.nhs.uk

Website: www.dchft.nhs.uk

Patient and Customer Services

Address as above

Tel: 0800 7838058

E-mail: pals@dchft.nhs.uk

Dorset Advocacy

13-15 Jubilee Court
Paceycombe Way
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 3AE

Tel: 0300 343 7000

E-mail: nhscomplaints@dorsetadvocacy.co.uk

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP

Helpline tel: 0345 015 4033

Fax: 0300 061 4000

E-mail: OHSC.Enquiries@ombudsman.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk

**If you need this information in large print,
on audiotape or in another language please
call 0800 7838058 or e-mail:
pals@dchft.nhs.uk**
