

# Factsheet



Compliments, comments and complaints  
Adult Services

## **Compliments, comments and complaints about adult social care services**

We take all compliments, comments and complaints about our services very seriously. By listening to users of our services and their carers, and learning from their experiences, we can find out what people really think about the services we provide. We want to hear your views, so we can work together to improve services.

### **Compliments**

You may want to compliment a member of staff or a part of the service that you have found helpful. We will record your compliment and make sure that the people or services you have told us about are made aware of how you feel.

### **Comments**

You may want to comment on how we could do things better. We will record your comment and make sure that it is passed to the relevant manager.

### **Complaints**

You may want to complain when you feel that your expectations of a service have not been met. You can complain about various aspects of our involvement with you such as:

- A service which has been planned for you
- A plan or decision affecting you or someone you care for
- A service you have received
- A lack of service

This is not an exhaustive list and complaints officers can advise further. Complaints about adult social care and health services are sometimes referred to as 'statutory complaints' because the Local Authority is duty bound to consider complaints that qualify under **The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009**. Where this does not apply then complaints are considered under the council's corporate complaints procedures.

Please note that if it has been over 12 months since the subject of the complaint came to your attention and you then tell us about it, the council may not consider your complaint. This is in accordance with recommendations made by the Local Government Ombudsman.

### **Who can make a compliment, comment or complaint?**

Anyone who has received an adult social care service from us can make a compliment, comment or complaint. An individual can also complain where they have been refused an adult social care or health service.

A parent, carer, relative or someone who has sufficient interest in the service user's welfare can also contact us on the service user's behalf. However, if it is to make a complaint, the

consent of the service user may be required if they have the capacity to do so. If they lack capacity then a Best Interests assessment will be conducted.

Your complaint will be investigated and you will be given a full response in a timely way. If you remain dissatisfied after you have received a response the complaints officer will be able to advise you on the next steps available to you.

### **Getting help**

Some people may need help to make their views known. We can offer support for people whose first language is not English, or with a specific communication need such as Braille, large print or audio format.

If you need help in bringing a complaint and would prefer that help to be independent of the council, we can arrange for you to have an advocate, free of charge this is an independent person who can advise and help you to get your views across.

### **How to get in touch...**

- Call a complaints officer on **03000 266 855**
- Write to us at **Complaints Team, Adult and Health Services, Durham County Council, Room 2/130, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UJ**
- Email us at [AHSComplaints@durham.gov.uk](mailto:AHSComplaints@durham.gov.uk)

Use any of the above contact details to arrange to speak to us in person

The complaints officers are your 'link' to adult social care services within the council and will help you to have your say. Their role is to be impartial, independent and to ensure that your complaint is dealt with promptly and responded to appropriately. If you have any queries about making a complaint or our processes in general then please get in touch using any of the methods above.

### **You will need to provide us with:**

- Your name and address
- A contact telephone number
- An email address should you have one
- The name, address, date of birth and your relationship to the service user if you are making a complaint on their behalf
- An explanation of what you are unhappy about - **your complaint detail**
- What you would like to see happen as a result of your complaint - **your desired outcomes**

### **Learning from compliments, comments and complaints**

We are committed to improving our adult social care services as a result of your comments. We want to hear about the areas of our service that you value and understand why. Your ideas about how we can improve our services are welcomed. We are also keen to know when our services failed to meet your expectations, so we can look into why you are unhappy, what we can do to resolve things and identify areas for improvement. We promise to learn from your experiences and to ensure that senior managers and councillors are made aware of your valuable feedback.

Complaints about Adult and Health Services that do not relate to statutory functions are dealt with under the council's corporate complaints procedure. A corporate complaint is an

expression of dissatisfaction about the council's services that requires a response and is not covered by one of our other feedback mechanisms.

Where your complaint has been identified as a corporate complaint, we will try to contact you within 24 hours to discuss your complaint and agree a timescale for a response. If you are unhappy with the response you can contact the complaints officer to ask for an independent investigation. This will be carried out by the council's Feedback Team. If they feel there would be no value to a further investigation they may advise you to go to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

### **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**

PO Box 4771

Coventry

CV4 0EH

Tel: 03000 610 614

Text 'call back' to 0762 481 1595 and someone from the LGSCO will ring you back

Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)



**locate**  
Care and support in County Durham

This free online resource provides a wealth of information and services making it easier for you to make plans now and in the future.

[www.durhamlocate.org.uk](http://www.durhamlocate.org.uk)

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

03000 266 855

**AHS8758018** Adult and Health Services 2018