Need Information?

A Self-help Pack is available from our website: www.healthwatchportsmouth.co.uk or you can request a copy of one by contacting us.

The Self-help Pack is a detailed booklet on how the complaints system works and includes:

- Identifying the problem
- Taking action &
- Who to complain to.

This may be enough to make a complaint by yourself. Anybody who starts a complaint by themselves can contact Healthwatch Advocacy at any stage in the process for more information or to request the support of an Advocate.

Can the advocacy service support me to make a complaint on behalf of someone else, like a child or a relative? Yes

- You can complain on behalf of a child under 18 years if they are unable to make the complaint themselves. The organisation you are complaining to must be confident the child cannot complain themselves before they consider the complaint.
- You can also make a complaint on behalf of a friend or relative but they will need to agree this in writing.
- If you want to complain on behalf of someone who lacks mental capacity then it is usual that the organisation you are complaining to will check the patient's mental capacity before responding.
- If you want to make a complaint where a patient has died the personal representative, or their nearest relative, can make a complaint and access support from the advocacy service.



For more information or to be referred to our Healthwatch Advocate, please contact us on:

T: 02393 977 079

E: advocate@healthwatchportsmouth.co.uk

Or visit our website

www.healthwatchportsmouth.co.uk



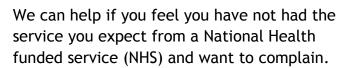


our
Independent NHS
Complaints
Advocacy Service



Your Health. Your Voice.





When your health care is funded by the NHS you are allowed to make a complaint using the NHS complaints process.

An NHS complaint might include something that happened during care or treatment at:

- The hospital
- Your General Practitioner (GP)
- The dentist
- The pharmacist
- The optician
- An NHS funded care home



What is Healthwatch Advocacy?

Healthwatch Advocacy is a free service provided to help support people in Portsmouth, living within the PO1 - PO6 postcode areas, with NHS complaints.

Healthwatch Advocacy is a compassionate and understanding client-led independent service. We can provide you with information, options and practical support to help you make an NHS complaint.

- Free
- Confidential
- Independent of the NHS

This might mean giving you information so you can pursue a complaint by yourself, or providing you with the support of an experienced Advocate who can help to guide you through the complaints process.

Healthwatch Advocacy can lead to systemic change.

How does advocacy work?

Our qualified Healthwatch Advocate can guide you through the complaints process and empower you to speak up and be heard. They can provide you with options for dealing with your complaint.

A Healthwatch Advocate cannot tell you what to do or act on the wishes of others.

How does a Healthwatch Advocate help?

Our Healthwatch Advocate can help you to explore options at every stage of your complaint and can give you information to help you decide what to do. Our Healthwatch Advocate will work with you so that you feel confident to make a complaint.

Throughout the complaints process our Advocate might do some or all of the following:

- help you to compile all the issues you wish to raise in your complaint
- help you to write letters to the right people
- prepare you for meetings and attend these with you
- answer questions to help you make your decisions
- give you the opportunity to speak confidentially with someone who is independent of the NHS
- where necessary, meet you face-to face to discuss your complaint
- provide you with information about how the NHS complaints process works
- help you monitor the progress of your complaint
- help you to understand the responses you receive from your NHS complaint
- put you in touch with other services that might be able to help you.