

# Making a complaint about our services



**Your feedback matters, we're here to listen and improve:** We are committed to providing the highest quality services to all who use and commission them. However, we understand that there may be times when a service doesn't meet expectations. If you have a concern or complaint, we would like to hear about it – your feedback helps us identify changes needed to improve.

## What You Can Expect:

- **Thorough Investigation:** Every complaint will be carefully reviewed.
- **Clear Action:** If we find that our services, or those hosted by us, have not met our high standards, we will clearly outline the steps we'll take to make improvements.
- **Continuous Learning:** All complaints are recorded so we can learn from them and enhance our services where needed.

If your complaint relates to a service commissioned by a Local Authority, you can also refer it to your local council at any stage.

## Key Principles

We follow these four principles during all stages of the complaint procedure:

- **Independent investigation:** To maintain impartiality and transparency, investigations will be carried out by a manager or another senior staff member unconnected to the concern or complaint.
- **Support and Advocacy:** If you wish, you can be supported by an advocate, independent of the investigation, at any stage of the procedure.
- **Timely response:** Our response times to complaints are set out in the 3 Stages of Resolution (right).
- **Protection of confidentiality:** As far as possible, we will maintain confidentiality for the person making a complaint, and for any staff member concerned.

Concerns and complaints about our services or those we host can be made by post, email or telephone to any of our contact details below.

## Contact Us

### The Advocacy People

P.O. Box 375, Hastings TN34 9HU

Tel: 0330 440 9000

Email: [info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk](mailto:info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk)

Web: [www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk](http://www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk)

## 3 Stages of Resolution

### Stage 1 (Informal)

A Manager from our Contact Centre will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time for an informal discussion. Details of the concern or complaint will be sought and recorded; potential ways of resolving the issues will be explored. Outcomes and agreed actions will be recorded and notified to you.

### Stage 2 (Formal)

If the initial informal discussion has not resolved the concerns or complaints and the agreed action plan is for an investigation and response from a relevant Regional/Local Manager (Advocacy) or Area Director/Lead Officer (Healthwatch) - the details will be confirmed with you, passed to relevant Manager/Area Director and a written response sent to you within 20 working days.

### Stage 3 (Review)

If you remain unhappy or dissatisfied with the response, please do contact us again within 20 working days from the date of our response, either verbally or in writing, *clearly stating what aspect of the response you are unhappy with and why* – see complaints procedure.

The formal complaint together with the Stage 1 evidence and response will be escalated to Head of Operations/a member of the Senior Leadership Team or a member of the Board of Trustees who will conduct a review of all stages. They will respond in writing within 20 working days explaining the outcome of their investigation and any actions to be taken.

Complaints can be made at any time  
**within three (3) months of closure of casework**