



Health Information and Quality Authority

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte



We want to hear from you

How to provide feedback or make a complaint about
residential services for older persons



2024



an independent organisation

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is an independent organisation that promotes safety and quality in the provision of health and social care services for the benefit of the health and welfare of the public.



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Health and social care services

- should welcome the opportunity to learn from the experience of people using their service, both good experiences and experiences that could have been better.
- should respond to feedback and try to put things right where people using their service communicate concerns to them.

About this booklet

This booklet explains what to do if you, a family member or someone acting on your behalf wants to give feedback or make a complaint about care or treatment in a nursing home.

If you have had a good experience in a health or social care service or you have a concern about a service, we would like you to tell us. While HIQA is unable to investigate individual complaints about a health or social care service under the Health Act 2007, we listen to what you have to say and use your feedback to establish if a service is safe, effective, caring, and well managed.



For many, the thought of making a complaint can be off-putting, but this booklet aims to help make the process easier for you.

This booklet gives advice on:



How to
make a complaint
or provide feedback



What to do
if you are not happy
with the response

It also provides information on organisations that can support you, free of charge, see [section 4](#).

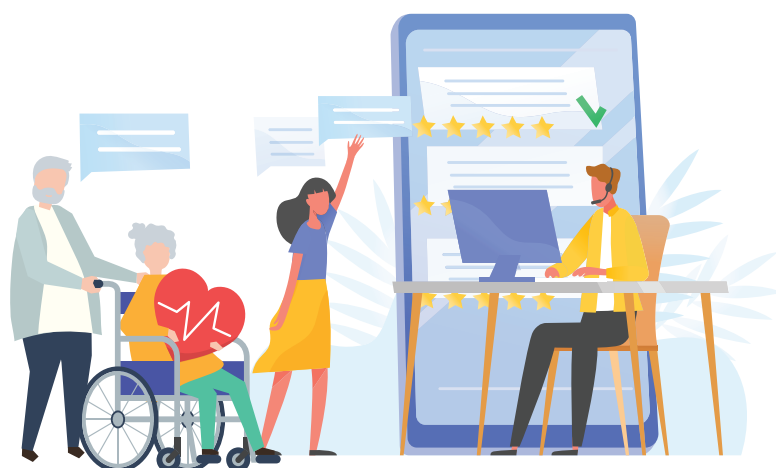
1 | Sharing feedback on your care with HIQA

Phone
021 240 9646

Online
www.hiqa.ie

Email
concerns@hiqa.ie

Post
HIQA, George's Court,
Smithfield, Dublin 7,
D07 E98Y



We would like you to tell us about

your experience of health and social care services, both good experiences and experiences that could have been better.

[The privacy notice](#) on our website sets out how we process all personal identifiable information that we generate and hold in the course of our work.



While HIQA is unable to investigate individual complaints about a health or social care service under the Health Act 2007, we will listen to what you have to say. We can use your feedback in a number of ways to establish if a service is safe, effective, caring, and well managed.

What do we do with your feedback?

Your feedback will be reviewed by an inspector, which allows us to:



Register and renew

Make decisions when we register and renew registration of nursing homes



Complaints

Consider how well providers handle complaints and concerns and use them as an opportunity for improvement



Track

what is happening in health and social care services



Identify

any trends or patterns that indicate something unacceptable may be happening



Ensure

services continue to meet essential standards of care

If we believe that those responsible for providing a service may not be compliant with the necessary regulations or national standards, we can take a number of actions in response:

Planned inspection

Use the information at the next inspection planned for the service

Look for more information

Ask the responsible person for more information on the general issues of concern (not related to an individual person, patient, resident or child)

Request a plan

Request the responsible person to provide a plan on how they will address any identified issues

Risk-based inspection

Carry out a risk-based inspection or a focused inspection to assess the quality and safety of care provided to those using the service.



In serious cases, we may consider using our legal powers where there is strong evidence that people are at immediate risk.

2 | Sharing feedback on residential services

If you are unhappy with care or treatment you have received you have the right to make a complaint, to have that complaint investigated and to be given a full and prompt reply.

By law, all health and social care services must have a procedure for dealing efficiently with complaints. The person or organisation that is providing a service is responsible for investigating your concern.

If you have a complaint, you could first:



Speak with the staff providing the care who may be able to resolve your concern at this point



Ask the service for a copy of their complaints procedure



This booklet also gives information on what to do if you are not happy with the response to your complaint.

Keep a record of your complaint



It is usually a good idea to keep a record by writing down who you spoke with, what you said, and what they said. The service you complain to should let you know how long it will take to investigate your complaint and respond to you (no later than 30 working days after receipt of complaint).

When you make a complaint or communicate your concerns to a health or social care service, they must:

Acknowledge

acknowledge your complaint or concern

Look into

look into and investigate your complaint or concern

Update

let you know what they found

Respond

Provide a written response in a timely manner



See [section 4](#) for organisations that can provide you with support and advice free of charge.

Sharing feedback on publicly-funded residential services

Some residential services for older people are provided by the HSE. If you would like to provide feedback about the care or treatment you have received from a publicly-funded service you can contact the service directly, talk

to the person delivering the care or ask to speak with a manager. This gives them the chance to try and put things right for you, listen to your concerns and identify any areas that can be improved upon.

You can contact the HSE in the following ways:



Phone

FREEPHONE 1800 424 555
FROM 9AM-5PM
MONDAY TO FRIDAY

+353 1 642 4555
FROM OUTSIDE IRELAND



Email

yoursay@hse.ie



Online form

[Your service, Your say feedback form](#)

The HSE Confidential Recipient



This is an independent person appointed by the HSE to receive concerns and allegations of abuse, neglect or bad practice concerning adults with disabilities who receive services funded by the HSE or their Providers.

However, the Confidential Recipient cannot respond to concerns regarding patients or hospitals – unless the concern involves a person with a disability who happens to be in hospital at the time of making contact with the Confidential Recipient.

You can contact the Confidential Recipient by:



Phone

Office: 087 1880523 /
Mobile: 087 665 7269



Email

grainne.cunningham@crhealth.ie

Website

[Office of the Confidential Recipient](#)



Post

Grainne Cunningham O'Brien,
Confidential Recipient for
Vulnerable Persons, HSE
Vocational Training Centre,
Dooradoyle, Limerick



The Director General of the HSE appointed Leigh Gath as the Confidential Recipient.

Office of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman can examine complaints from people who feel they have been unfairly treated by a public service provider.

The Office can examine complaints against most organisations that deliver public services, including publicly-funded health and social care services and private nursing homes.

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint or how it was dealt with, you can contact the Office of the Ombudsman.



Before you contact the Ombudsman it recommends that you should first try to resolve your complaint with the relevant service provider.

the ombudsman



The Ombudsman cannot look into a complaint if it is made more than 12 months after you initially complained of the action or you became aware of that action, unless there are very special circumstances.

You can contact the Ombudsman in the following ways:

Phone

01 639 5600

Email

info@ombudsman.ie

Post

The Office of the Ombudsman,
6 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2,
D02 W773

Website

www.ombudsman.ie



While the Office of the Ombudsman can examine complaints about private nursing homes it is unable to investigate claims relating to private health services.

3

Providing feedback to other organisations

Matters of a suspected criminal nature should be reported to An Garda Síochána.



An Garda Síochána
Ireland's National Police & Security Service

You can contact the Gardaí in the following ways:

Phone

your local garda station or via the
Garda Confidential line
1800 666 111

Website

www.garda.ie

For details of how to contact your local Garda Station visit
www.garda.ie/en/Contact-Us/Station-Directory



In emergency situations always dial 999 or 112.

Mental health services



If you have a concern in relation to mental health services you should contact the Mental Health Commission, as they regulate and monitor mental health services. Under the Mental Health Acts 2001- 2018, the Mental Health Commission does not have a statutory remit to manage individual complaints about mental health services.

They will use this information when inspecting services, and also endeavour to signpost individuals to the relevant agency who can best manage their complaint or can support or advocate for them while their complaint is being investigated.

You can contact the Mental Health Commission in the following ways:

Phone

01 636 2400

Post

The Mental Health
Commission, Waterloo
Exchange, Waterloo
Road, D04 E5W7

Email

info@mhcirl.ie

Website

www.mhcirl.ie

4 | Support with providing feedback or making a complaint



Making a complaint can be a difficult experience

There are a number of organisations that can give you helpful advice and support. Having an advocate may be helpful. An advocate is someone who can represent your views or act on your behalf when seeking information or making complaints.



**Patient
Advocacy
Service**

Patient Advocacy Service:

The Patient Advocacy Service is an independent, free and confidential service that provides professional advocacy services to residents and their families in both HSE operated and private nursing homes if they have a complaint or an issue they wish to be addressed.

The service can be contacted Monday-Friday 10am-4pm
by phone **0818 293003** or by email info@patientadvocacyservice.ie.
Further information can be found at www.patientadvocacyservice.ie



Inclusion Ireland:

Promotes advocacy for people

with an intellectual disability, particularly self-advocacy. Further information can be found at: www.inclusionireland.ie



Citizens Information:

Is the statutory body

which supports the provision of information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public and social services. Further information can be found at: www.citizensinformation.ie



Irish Patients Association:

Advocates for the needs of patients

to be paramount, while working in partnership with health providers. Further information can be found at: www.irishpatients.ie



Legal Aid Board:

Provides legal advice

and representation in court. The Legal Aid Board also provides family mediation services. Further information can be found at: www.legalaidboard.ie



Sage Advocacy:

Is a support and advocacy service

for vulnerable adults, older people and healthcare patients. Further information can be found at: www.sageadvocacy.ie



National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities:

Provides an independent, confidential and free representative advocacy service

that works exclusively for the person using the service. Further information can be found at: <https://advocacy.ie>

How to

5 | Contact us

HIQA has an Information Handling Centre who can assist you with providing feedback to HIQA.



HIQA's Information Handling Centre

Our dedicated Information Handling Centre will also advise you on other organisations or supports, as outlined in this booklet, which may be able to help you.



You can contact HIQA's Information Handling Centre in the following ways:

Phone

021 240 9646

Email

concerns@hiqa.ie

Post

Information Handling Centre,
HIQA, George's Court,
Smithfield,
D07 E98Y

Website

www.hiqa.ie

Online form

www.hiqa.ie/get-touch/report-concern-or-give-feedback



Thank you

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