

Other Useful Agencies

While making your complaint, you might find that you want to consider other avenues or outcomes which lie outside the NHS Complaints process, such as disciplinary action.

This guide will act as an index of the agencies to approach and give you a brief outline of their role.

Contacting these organisations or making a submission is not normally something we can help you with.

The contact details for all the organisations that follow (and some other useful organisations) can be found at the end of this leaflet.

- **The General Medical Council – GMC**
- **The Nursing and Midwifery Council – NMC**
- **The Health and Care Professionals Council – HCPC**
- **General Dental Council**
- **General Optical Council**
- **The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**
- **AvMA – Action against Medical Accidents**
- **Other Useful Contacts and Addresses**

The General Medical Council – GMC

The primary role of the GMC is to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public and ensuring standards of practice in medicine are met. They are the regulator of all doctors practicing in England, and maintain a register with details about behaviour, health or performance that could prevent them from doing their job. They will deal with concerns raised by members of the public who have doubts over a doctor's fitness to practise, and you can approach them if you feel that a doctor requires disciplinary action.

They also work with medical schools to help devise the right curriculum and set the standards and values of doctors, so they know how to behave with patients. All doctors must be familiar with and follow 'Good Medical Practice' and the explanatory guidance.

This can be found at

www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/good-medical-practice

If you feel you need to make a complaint and want to contact the GMC direct, in addition to the telephone number shown later, they have a webpage with relevant information at **www.gmc-uk.org/concerns**

Teaching materials relating to dealing with patients with learning disabilities are produced for doctors, however GMC are keen for patients with learning disabilities and their carers / families to know what to expect from their doctors, and to make their feelings known if they don't think their doctors are treating them appropriately.

Easy read guidance can be found at **www.gmc-uk.org/easyread**

The Nursing and Midwifery Council – NMC

The NMC provide a similar role to that of the GMC. They set the standards for nurses and midwives to meet in their work and have a code of conduct which states how they must behave. Like the GMC, they also keep a register of all nurses and midwives

in the UK and it is illegal to work as such without being on the NMC register. All nurses must prove annually that they fulfil the requirements for keeping their skills and knowledge up to date, and all midwives are supervised throughout their careers to ensure this. Any concerns about a nurse's capabilities should be made to the NMC, they will investigate and if necessary, remove a nurse from the register for a period of time, or permanently if required.

You can read more about raising a concern about a nurse or a midwife at www.nmc.org.uk/concerns

The Health and Care Professionals Council – HCPC

The HCPC is also a regulatory body set up to monitor a large number of other health care staff which you may come into contact with. They work to ensure a high standard of practice within the following professions:

- Arts therapists
- biomedical scientists
- chiropodists / podiatrists,
- clinical scientists, dieticians
- hearing aid dispensers
- occupational therapists
- operating department practitioners
- orthoptists
- paramedics
- physiotherapists
- practitioner psychologists
- prosthetists / orthotists
- radiographers
- speech and language therapist
- as well as social workers in England

If you have concerns regarding the fitness to practise of any of these, you can raise a complaint to the HCPC. Action can be taken where necessary, including stopping someone from practising should there be sufficient concerns about their conduct.

Details can be found at www.hcpc-uk.org/concerns/

General Dental Council – GDC

The GDC register dental professionals throughout the UK, including dentists, technicians, hygienists, dental nurses and orthodontists. They set the professional standards for them to follow and maintain a register of practitioners similar to the other regulatory bodies. Should you have concerns regarding a dentist's fitness to practise, you can approach them to raise your complaint about this, but they are unable to help with concerns about the costs of treatment.

You can read about raising a concern about a dental professional at **www.gdc-uk.org/raising-concerns**

General Optical Council

The GOC is the regulator for optical professionals in the UK including optometrists, dispensing opticians, student opticians and optical businesses. Their role is also to protect the public by promoting high standards of education, performance and conduct amongst opticians. Any complaint about fitness to practise in this area should be directed to the GOC for investigation, and they will take any disciplinary action necessary.

You can read about raising a concern about an optical professional at **www.optical.org/en/Investigating_complaints**

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – LGO

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman looks at Public Health provision and complaints about council services, such as education admissions, appeal panels and adult social care providers, such as care homes and home care providers. Their role is to investigate complaints in a fair and independent way, after this has been raised with the service provider.

Should you have any queries about making a complaint to their offices, you can contact the LGO on 0300 061 0614.

You can read about raising a concern about a service covered by the LGO at www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint

Action Against Medical Accidents – AvMA

AvMA is a charity which can provide legal advice to people affected by avoidable harm in healthcare. They provide a free and confidential helpline service staffed by specially trained volunteers who are medical and legal professionals.

They can make a referral to an appropriate solicitor for your individual case. You may find it useful to speak to them if this is something you are considering as there are time limits for making a legal claim as there are for making a complaint. They can also provide information about the Coroner and Inquests if you wish to speak to someone impartial about this.

It is possible to go through the official NHS complaints process and the legal route at the same time, although the NHS organisation may choose to put the NHS complaint on hold until the legal challenge has been completed.

You can read more information about the help provided by AvMA at www.avma.org.uk/help-advice/

Useful contacts and addresses

The Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower
30 Millbank, London SW1P 4QP
Tel: 0345 015 4033
W: www.ombudsman.org.uk

General Medical Council

Regent's Place
350 Euston Road, London
NW1 3JN
Tel: 0161 923 6602
W: www.gmc-uk.org

Health and Care Professional Council

Park House
184 Kennington Park Road
London SE11 4BU
Tel: 0800 328 4218
E: ftp@hcpc-uk.org
W: www.hcpc-uk.org

General Dental Council

37 Wimpole Street
London
W1G 8DQ
Tel: 020 7167 6000
E: information@gdc-uk.org
W: www.gdc-uk.org

General Optical Council

10 Old Bailey, London EC4M 7NG
Tel: 020 7580 3898
E: ftp@optical.org
W: www.optical.org

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

Tel: 0300 061 0614
W: www.lgo.org.uk

General Pharmaceutical Council

25 Canada Square, London
E14 5LQ
Tel: 0203 713 8000
W: www.pharmacyregulation.org

Nursing & Midwifery Council

1 Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN
Tel: 020 7681 5248
E: newreferrals@nmc-uk.org
W: www.nmc-uk.org

Optical Consumer Complaints Service

6 Market Square,
Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire,
CM23 2UZ
Tel: 0344 800 5071
E: enquiries@opticalcomplaints.co.uk
W: www.opticalcomplaints.co.uk

The Law Society of England & Wales

Find a Solicitor service Tel: 020 7242 1222

W: <https://solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk>

Civil Legal Advice

Tel: 0345 345 4 345

W: www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice

Action Against Medical Accidents (AvMA)

Freedman House, Christopher Wren Yard

117 High Street, Croydon

CR0 1QG

Tel: 0845 123 2352

W: www.avma.org.uk

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Wycliffe House Water Lane

Wilmslow, Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113

W: www.ico.org.uk

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

CQC National Customer Service Centre

Citygate

Gallowgate

Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA

Tel: 03000 61 61 61

E: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

W: www.cqc.org.uk

