
Complaints about health services

Summary

- The role of the Health Complaints Commissioner's office is to help you resolve complaints about health service providers.
 - You can complain about anyone who claims to provide a health service.
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The Health Complaints Commissioner is an independent health ombudsman. The role of the office is to assist health service users to resolve complaints about health service providers and improve the quality of healthcare.

You can complain about anyone who provides a health service

The Health Complaints Commissioner can accept complaints about anyone who claims to provide a health service or anyone who holds health information. This includes:

- general medical practitioners
- dentists
- private and public hospitals
- specialists
- physiotherapists
- nurses
- ambulances
- alternative therapists
- social workers in a health setting
- anyone else who provides a health service.

When can you make a complaint about a health service?

A complaint can be made about a health services provider who has:

- failed to provide considerate, quality healthcare
- denied you respect, dignity or privacy
- failed to provide adequate information on services provided or treatments available
- failed to allow you to make an informed choice about treatment
- denied you access to information about your health care.

Who can make a complaint about a health service?

Complaints can be lodged by health service users (patients). If the user of the health service is unable to complain, the Commissioner can accept complaints from relatives, friends or guardians, a health service provider or anyone with sufficient interest if the user gives consent or is unable to make a complaint themselves.

How to complain about a health service

Before lodging a complaint, your first step should be to try and resolve the complaint directly with the health service provider. The Health Complaints Commissioner is not an advocacy service, but assists in mediating or conciliating complaints. If you have trouble resolving your complaint directly with the provider, they can assist you.

Complaints can be made to the **Health Complaints Commissioner** in writing or by telephone with an assessment officer.

Where to get help

- Office of the Health Complaints Commissioner. Tel: **1300 582 113**

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