

### What to do if you are having difficulty in accessing the health or social care services you think you need?

There are three different routes, at least, that you might choose to use:

#### 1 Complaints

If you have a personal *COMPLAINT* about something, use the **Complaints System**.

Every organisation you deal with has its own complaints system. Just ask to be informed about their complaints system and ask to register your complaint formally

**e.g.** When visiting your spouse in hospital you find them in a state of neglect (perhaps soiled in faeces) and you need to act quickly on each matter of personal, confidential concern.

#### 2 PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service)

If you need *ADVICE* and don't know where to start, try the Patient Advice and Liaison Service, aka PALS

**e.g.** You are trying to get your spouse home from hospital and do not know where to start nor how to arrange support, then ask PALS to help you negotiate the system.

PALS can also be contacted for confidential, impartial help, advice or support or for information about making a complaint on health-related matters and are a point of contact for patients, their families and carers.

PALS will:

- Act impartially when handling patient and family concerns, liaising with staff, managers and where appropriate, relevant organisations to negotiate immediate or prompt solution
- Listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries
- Provide information on NHS Services
- Advise and support patient, their families and carers
- Help sort out problems with you or on your behalf.

You can find officers from PALS in your local hospital or find your nearest PALS office on the NHS Choices website. NHS Choices on [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

On the **Isle of Wight** the PALS Team is now called the **Quality Team**.

It has Patient Experience Officers (PEO's) in the Complaints/PALS team who will be able to offer initial advice and support and guide you through the complaints process.

Direct Tel: 01983 534850 or 01983 534420 or via the hospital switchboard 01983 524081

Email: [quality@iow.nhs.uk](mailto:quality@iow.nhs.uk) or [PALS@iow.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@iow.nhs.uk)

#### 3 Healthwatch

If you have an *ISSUE* you'd like to highlight, approach local Healthwatch; **e.g.** If you have already made several complaints, or you and several others have experienced problems - perhaps you have found parking at hospital tricky and have missed an Out Patients appointment and know of others who have been in the same situation

Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public. It exists in two distinct forms:

Healthwatch England - at national level. [www.healthwatch-uk.org/](http://www.healthwatch-uk.org/)

Local Healthwatch - the aim of local Healthwatch is to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health/social care services are provided within their locality.

You can contact the local Healthwatch in your area through the following:

### **Southampton**

The Voluntary Action Centre, Kingsland Square, Southampton, SO14 1NW

Tel: 023 8021 6018 [www.healthwatchesouthampton.co.uk/](http://www.healthwatchesouthampton.co.uk/)

### **Hampshire**

Write (free) at: Freepost RTHH-KGST-ZRBC, Healthwatch Hampshire, Westgate Chambers, Staple Gardens, Winchester SO23 8SR

Tel: 01962 440 262 [www.healthwatchhampshire.co.uk/content/about-healthwatch](http://www.healthwatchhampshire.co.uk/content/about-healthwatch)

### **Isle of Wight**

Isle Help Advice Hub, 7 High Street, NEWPORT PO30 1SS

Tel: 01983 608608 [www.healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk/](http://www.healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk/)

### **Portsmouth**

Unit 3, St George's Business Centre, St George's Square, Portsmouth PO1 3EY

Tel: 023 9397 7079 <http://portsmouthhealthwatch.blogspot.co.uk/>