

# Patient's Help

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A guide to how to complain about doctors

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## Why did we develop Patients' help?

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- We receive around 5,000 complaints a year
- A high proportion end up getting referred to other organisations
- Existing web content was fairly thorough, but not very engaging

# The Primary Aims of Patients' Help

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1. To help people to complain to the right organisation first time round
2. To make our processes more transparent
3. Managing expectations

# Welcome Page

Extra Information

- GMC Phone details
- Feedback form
- Printouts
- Complaints form

General Medical Council  
Regulating doctors  
Ensuring good medical practice

## Patients' Help

### Patients' help

Welcome to the GMC's Patients' complaints help section. We understand it can be a stressful time if you feel you have cause to complain about a doctor.

This help section aims to make the process as painless as possible. One of the biggest problems can be understanding which organisation to complain to. We suggest you start by clicking on **'Who to complain to'** below.

Click to hear intro

?	Who to complain to	➔
	Case studies	➔
	Handling complaints	➔
	Local help services	➔
	Useful links	➔

# Who to complain to?

The screenshot shows the 'Patients' Help' page on the General Medical Council website. The page has a navigation bar with tabs: 'Extra Information', 'Who to complain to', 'Case studies', 'Handling complaints', 'Local help services', and 'Useful links'. The 'Who to complain to' tab is active. The main content area is titled 'Complaining locally' and includes a list of five options for where to complain, each with a right-pointing arrow icon. Below this list is a vertical menu with icons and text for 'Clinic/GP/Hospital', 'GMC', 'Help and advice', 'Other complaints', and 'Home'. The 'Home' option is highlighted in blue. On the left side of the page, there is a photograph of a pregnant woman sitting on a bench, with an 'Emergency' sign and a 'More +' button above her. The General Medical Council logo and tagline 'Regulating doctors Ensuring good medical practice' are in the top right corner.

Extra Information

Who to complain to

Case studies

Handling complaints

Local help services

Useful links

General Medical Council  
Regulating doctors  
Ensuring good medical practice

Emergency →

More +

**Introduction** →

- 1 NHS care in England →
- 2 NHS care in Scotland →
- 3 NHS care in Wales →
- 4 Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland →
- 5 Private Healthcare →

## Complaining locally

Most complaints are dealt with locally at the place where you received care. The process for making a complaint may vary depending on which of the four countries you received treatment in and whether you received NHS / national healthcare or private healthcare.

If you received NHS / national healthcare, please click on the country in which you received care.

If you received private healthcare, please click on 'Private Healthcare'.

📍 Clinic/GP/Hospital →

👤 GMC →

📄 Help and advice →

🏠 Other complaints →

← Home 👤 👤

# How did we develop Patients' help?

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We worked with

- Patients complaints groups across the UK
- Accessibility and user testing experts
- An award-winning web agency

to produce Patients' help.

# Who is the audience for Patients' help?

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## Primary audiences

- Patients
- Advisors working in Patients' help and advice organisations

## Secondary audiences






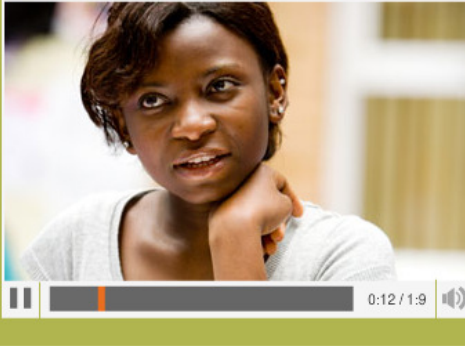


- Complaints managers in the NHS
- Complaints handlers from private healthcare


# Case Studies


Extra Information | Who to complain to | **Case studies** | Handling complaints | Local help services | Useful links


General Medical Council  
Regulating doctors  
Ensuring good medical practice

## Patients' Help

-  **NAME: Eileen AGE: 69**  
A disagreement with a hospital doctor led to the doctor refusing to continue treatment.
-  **NAME: Sarah AGE: 35**  
A family was removed from a surgery's list following a series of disputes.
-  **NAME: Mai AGE: 42**  
A complaint after a problem with medical fees.
-  **NAME: Andrew AGE: 46**  
Complaint about comments in a medical report for an insurance company.
-  **NAME: Keisha AGE: 24**  
A doctor started Keisha on a trial drug without explaining the possible side effects.  
[Listen to case study 5](#)  
  
[Transcript](#)
-  **NAME: Paul AGE: 31**  
Paul received bad medical advice on a website run by a doctor.
-  **NAME: Rajesh AGE: 53**  
Rajesh was in dispute with a neighbour, who is a doctor.

[Home](#) 

[More](#) 



# What happens to your complaint?

The screenshot shows the 'Handling complaints' section of the General Medical Council website. A navigation bar at the top includes 'Extra Information', 'Who to complain to', 'Case studies', 'Handling complaints', 'Local help services', and 'Useful links'. The main content area features a 7-step process diagram for handling complaints, set against a background of a hospital ward. The steps are:

- 1 First contact
- 2 What we will need
- 3 What will the GMC do when it receives my complaint?
- 4 Investigation stage
- 5 The case examiners
- 6 Interim Orders Panel
- 7 Fitness to Practise panel

A callout box titled 'The GMC process for handling complaints' provides further details:

**The GMC process for handling complaints**

This section tells you what to expect if you make a complaint to the GMC, breaking down the process stage by stage. Click on each stage to learn more.

Please note the GMC deals with only the most serious complaints. Read the 'Who to complain to' section to ensure you complain to the right body.

The page also includes a 'Home' button with a person icon, a 'Patients' Help' section, and the GMC logo with the tagline 'Regulating doctors Ensuring good medical practice'. An elderly woman is seated in a chair on the right side of the page.

## Patients' help – Useful links

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This is where we link to supplementary information, such as

- Patients complaints leaflet
- Complaints guide for Health professionals
- FAQs on the website
- Foreign language translations
- Links to other patients' organisations

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# Accessibility

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- Phone details – some people just want to phone and speak to someone
- Feedback form – to allow people to comment on the information provided, so we can learn and improve
- Printouts – advisors often print out advice for members of the public to take away
- Flash and HTML versions of the website
- Welsh language