

Your concerns and complaints

East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH)



EACH is committed to providing high quality care wherever it is delivered. An important part of this is listening to the views of children, young people and families, and putting right any situations where the care or support was not as expected.

We encourage anyone who has worries about the care of their child or family member to talk about their concerns with the nurse in charge, the Head of Palliative Care Services or the Palliative Care Manager. This will help us rectify the situation as soon as possible.



This leaflet tells you what you should do if you are unhappy about any aspect of our work.

How EACH will deal with your concerns or complaint

Our system is based on national guidance and has three stages:

1. Local resolution
2. The EACH Review Panel
3. The Ombudsman.

Who can complain?

Anyone who has used or tried to use EACH services wherever they have been delivered.

If you're unable to make your concerns known to us directly, then someone can do this on your behalf – usually either a relative or close friend.

When should you complain?

You should tell us about your complaint as soon as possible after the event that's caused your concern.

EACH will only usually look into complaints that are made within six months of the event, or if you realise that you have grounds for complaint within 12 months of the event. However, if there was a very good reason why you could not complain sooner, these time limits may not apply.

How do you complain?

You can make your complaint to a Palliative Care Manager by:

-  Telephone
-  Email
-  Letter
-  Fax
-  In person.



Alternatively, if you feel unable to speak with someone at EACH or you consider the complaint to be too serious in nature, you can make a complaint directly to the Primary Care Trust (PCT) for the area in which you live. Your GP surgery can tell you which PCT area you live in and how to contact them.

What will happen next?

First, the staff concerned will try to resolve your complaint. This is called 'local resolution'. Many complaints can be sorted out straight away – for example, it may be that we can offer you an explanation or an apology, which answers your concern immediately.

If you write to us, we'll aim to give you a full written answer within 20 working days of receiving your complaint. We'll always acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receiving it.

What happens if you're not happy with local resolution?

You can ask for a review by an EACH Panel, which is made up of:



A complaints convenor (the EACH Chair of Trustees)



An independent Chair who does not work for EACH but has a background in children's hospice care



An independent person who does not work for EACH but has experience relevant to the subject of the complaint.

The Panel will review your complaint, gather information from everyone involved and ask for specialist advice if this is needed.

The Panel will provide a short report of its findings and you will be given a copy of this report.

The report will include:



Results of the investigation



Conclusions



Appropriate comments or suggestions.

Please be aware that the whole process can take up to six months to complete.

Can you take the matter further?

Yes. You can ask **The Health Service Ombudsman** to look at your complaint. The Ombudsman is completely independent and can be contacted at:

The Health Service Ombudsman for England
Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP
Telephone 0845 0154033 or via www.ombudsman.org.uk.

You can also contact the **Care Quality Commission (CQC)** to tell them about your experiences. Whilst the CQC can't investigate complaints, they are able to use your information when they review the services that EACH provides to make sure that we meet the required care standards. You can contact the CQC by calling 03000 616161 or via their website at www.cqc.org.uk

EACH is committed to continued development and improvement of services and will view any complaint seriously.

We'll endeavour to take any necessary action to resolve your complaint amicably and without detriment to you.

Our family information leaflets are always being improved. Visit www.each.org.uk/familyinfo to view the latest versions or contact your local hospice for printed copies.