Meeting your needs

Please let us know if you have particular needs. Advocates will communicate with you in the way that best suits you. This might include any of the following:
- using an interpreter or translator
- using alternative formats for written correspondence. For example, EasyRead, larger prints, community languages or audio
- using British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters.

What if I only need information?

Our website has information and guides to help you to make your complaint yourself. Alternatively, you can contact our helpline and we can send a pack to you. If you decide later on that you need support, contact us. Advocates can assist you at any stage of your complaint.

The self-help information pack includes:
- a detailed booklet on how the complaints systems work
- guidance on how to make a complaint and who you need to contact
- essential tips on how to write a letter of complaint
- a guide to accessing medical records.

NHS Complaints Advocacy is part of our wider Health Advocacy service, which also includes Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) and General Health Advocacy. For more information, visit our website.

Do you need support to make a complaint about the NHS?

0300 222 5947

General enquiries:
CWAdvocacy@voiceability.org
voiceability.org/Coventry&Warks
@VoiceAbilityCW
/VoiceAbilityCW

Need this leaflet in another format? Contact the VoiceAbility team and we will help you to get the information you need.
We can help if you or someone you know has not had the care or treatment you expect to receive from your NHS services and you want to complain.

When your health care is provided or funded by the NHS you are entitled to make a complaint using the NHS complaints process.

Can I complain on behalf of someone else?

You can complain on behalf of a child (under 18) if they are unable to make a complaint themselves. You will need to provide a reason why the child cannot make a complaint themselves. If the organisation you complain to does not accept your explanation they must write to you detailing their reasons why.

You can make a complaint on behalf of a friend or relative if they give you written agreement. If the person is very ill or does not have the capacity to give permission, due to an impairment or disability, you may complain on their behalf.

Making a complaint about NHS care in Warwickshire

An NHS complaint might include something that happened during care or treatment provided by:
- a hospital
- your General Practitioner (GP)
- a dentist
- a pharmacist
- an optician
- an NHS funded care home
- specialist services
- a paramedic or ambulance staff member
- NHS community staff
- other NHS staff or clinicians.

How can an advocate support me?

Advocates will support you to feel empowered and confident so you can make your complaint.

This might mean giving information so you can pursue a complaint by yourself or giving you the support of an experienced advocate who can help you to make your complaint.

We will give you information about how the complaints process works and what your rights are. We will talk to you about how you want us to support you.

Your advocate can support you to:
- understand what you can expect to achieve from the NHS complaints process
- compile the issues you want to raise
- write a letter to the right people
- explore the options available to you at each stage of the complaints process
- prepare for a meeting and attend it with you if you want us to
- monitor the progress of your complaint
- get in touch with other people or services that might be able to help you.

Your advocate can support you to express your own thoughts and feelings when things are difficult. As advocacy is about helping people to speak up for themselves, your advocate will not tell you what to do or act on the wishes of others.

NHS Complaints Advocacy is:
- independent of the NHS
- confidential
- free.

We can only give this support to people in Warwickshire. For similar support in Coventry, contact Healthwatch Coventry.