

## **Transfer of primary care complaints to integrated care boards (ICBs) - Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is the current process for making primary care complaints and how will that change on 1 July 2023?**

From 1 July 2023 the way members of the public make a complaint about primary care (GP, dentist, pharmacy and optician) services to the **commissioner** is changing.

Rather than contacting NHS England, they will contact their local integrated care board (ICB). The public can still complain directly to the provider (GP, dentist etc) - this is not changing.

If you have a formal complaint to make, it is always advisable to try and resolve an issue directly with the provider in the first instance.

### **2. What date will ICBs start to handle primary care complaints?**

Operational responsibility for the complaints function will move to ICBs on 1 July 2023.

Members of the public with ongoing complaints received on/after 1 July 2022 will receive a letter from NHS England informing them that the ICB is now handling their complaint with confirmation of their case handler.

Members of the public with any ongoing complaints received before 1 July 2022 will receive a letter from NHS England informing them that their complaint is being retained by NHS England with confirmation of their case handler.

### **3. Where can you find information about how to make a complaint about a primary care service?**

There are many organisations that will help signpost people to information about how to provide feedback or make a complaint about healthcare services. These are some of the main ones.

- Your local ICB website
- The NHS [website](#)
- [Gov.uk](#)

### **4. Does the delegation of the primary care complaints function from NHS England to ICBs on 1 July 2023 include all primary care services?**

In the main, yes. The primary care services that are included are General Practitioner (GP), Dental, Pharmacy and Optometry services.

There are some services that will remain with NHS England. They will continue to manage complaints for the following:

- Specialised Commissioning – such as eating disorder services, gender reassignment services, mental health hospital beds
- Health and Justice – prison healthcare which includes GP and nurse care in a prison setting
- Armed Forces Health
- Section 7a (Public Health Immunisations and Vaccinations)
- PCSE
- Services delivered nationally by NHSE to patients/public (such as Screening Call and Recall, NHS App etc)

**5. Where should information be available in each ICB area about how to make a complaint about a primary care service?**

It should be available on the websites of the ICBs, Healthwatch, providers of primary care services, VCSE organisations, health charities and local MPs.

**6. Do ICBs have to publicise the change happening on 1 July 2023?**

Yes, NHS England expects ICBs to communicate to the public, stakeholders and staff about the changes to the way people can make a complaint about primary care services.

**7. Will the staff currently handling a complaint manage them through to the end or will another member of staff pick them up as part of the new arrangements?**

Staff from the NHS England regional complaints teams are being transferred to ICBs to support the delegation of the complaints function. The transfer of complaints staff from NHS England regions to ICBs will differ from region to region but complainants should be reassured that the information about their complaint will transfer to the ICB and they will not need to repeat their complaint or reshare any information already provided.

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Members of the public with any ongoing complaints received before 1 July 2022 will receive a letter from NHS England informing them that their complaint is being retained by NHS England with confirmation of their case handler.