

## How to refer

### You can refer yourself or be referred by someone else:

Call us to make an appointment or to speak to an advocate over the phone. You can leave a message on our voice mail service and someone will get back to you as soon as they can. Our offices are open Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm.

## Confidentiality

Everything you say to your advocate is kept confidential within The Care Forum. However, there are rare occasions when we may have to breach confidentiality and are obliged by law to notify other organizations and services. Our confidentiality policy will be explained in full at our first meeting with you.

## Advocacy Service

The advocacy service is free of charge. At times we have more requests for our service than we can meet. This means that sometimes we have to prioritise our service to those clients who most need it. During busy periods we provide self help packs and phone support to all clients.

## Contact us

You can reach us by:

**Phone** 0808 808 5252

**Fax** 0117 965 0200

**E-mail** [cpa@thecareforum.org.uk](mailto:cpa@thecareforum.org.uk)

**Web** [www.thecareforum.org](http://www.thecareforum.org)

**CPA**

**The Care Forum**

**The Vassall Centre**

**Gill Avenue**

**Fishponds**

**Bristol BS16 2QQ**



the care forum

The Care Forum is a Registered Charity No: 1053817  
and a Company Limited by Guarantee in England  
No: 3170666

# CPA

Complaints Procedure Advocacy

**Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset**

Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain the services they need.

Source:  
The Advocacy Charter

Supporting you to complain  
about Adults and Children's  
Social Care Services



se:ap  
Support  
Empower  
Advocate  
Promote



the care forum

## What do we do?

We support people who wish to make a complaint about social care services. Our advocates are fully trained to:

- Explain how the complaints procedures work
- Listen to the problems that you have had with social care services
- Support you through the process of complaining

### Your advocate will:

- Find out about your complaint and not pass judgement on you
- Empower you to take on as much of the complaint as you feel able to
- Write letters, make phone calls and attend meetings if required
- Be on your side

### Your advocate will not:

- Take action without your consent
- Pass on information without your consent
- Act as a counsellor, social worker or legal advisor
- Know everything about social services but if they don't know the answer they will try and find out!

## Adult Social Care Complaints

The Complaints Procedure is structured around three main principles: listening, responding and improving. This will enable services to improve as a result.

### These are some of the things that you might want to complain about:

- The attitude or behaviour of staff
- A care plan, an assessment or review
- Decisions that you do not agree with

The local authority will acknowledge your complaint and a manager will contact you to discuss your concerns. If necessary and appropriate, they will arrange to meet you and talk about it further.

They will work with you to agree a plan for dealing with your complaint which will include the outcomes you are seeking, how the complaint will be dealt with, who will be involved and the expected timescales. You will always receive a written response.

**If you are still not satisfied you can ask the Local Government Ombudsman to review your complaint.**

## Children's Social Care Complaints

### Stage One

Your complaint is usually given to the team manager of the service you are complaining about and they will investigate your complaint.

### Stage Two

Your complaint is passed to an independent investigating officer who will arrange to meet with you and agree what they will investigate and the expected timescales for a response.

### Stage Three

This is a formal hearing by a panel of three people of which at least two are independent of the local authority.

**If you are still not satisfied with the response at stage three you can ask the Local Government Ombudsman to review your complaint.**

## Time Limits

There are time limits for making complaints. Unless there is an exceptional reason why you were not able to complain earlier, all complaints must be raised within one year.