

BULLETIN

Complaints about a Health Service

This information bulletin explains the process available to allow a complaint to be made when dissatisfied with the medical treatment or the examination received in relation to a workers compensation claim.

Purpose

Each State and Territory has a free, independent health complaints service to help consumers with health service complaints, across all aspects of health in the public and private sector.

Your complaint may be about a private medical practitioner, a nursing home, a hostel or supported accommodation facility, a public or private hospital, or any other person or place providing a health service.

Please note: Issues or concerns relating to the **comments or opinions** contained in a report prepared by a provider for your workers' compensation claim are normally outside the jurisdiction of the complaints service. Where you are aggrieved by the consequences that arise from such a report then this is a matter to be dealt with under the [Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act](#).

Northern Territory

What can you complain about?

The Health and Community Services Complaints Commission (HCSCC) is in place to deal with complaints about health services and community services in the Northern Territory.

A complaint may be made about:

- any aspect of treatment, individual rights, communication, behaviour or administration;
- a hospital, nursing home, supported accommodation, community health centre, health clinic, a private clinic or any other place, or person providing a health or community service; and
- the health care and treatment received from all kinds of practitioners. This includes alternative and natural therapies such as acupuncturists, masseurs and naturopaths, as well as doctors, nurses, dentists, chiropractors, psychologists and counsellors. Carers and home care are also included.

Before contacting the HCSCC

First discuss your concerns with the service provider. Often this is a good way of resolving complaints. It can also help people to maintain a good relationship with their service providers.

The HCSCC is available to help if:

- this approach does not resolve your concerns,
- you would like assistance to approach the provider; or
- you are unwilling or don't think it is appropriate to contact the provider personally.

Who can make a complaint?

A complaint can be made by:

- the person who received the service;
- their nominated or authorised representative;
- an advocacy service or a relative;
- a health or community service provider; or
- a concerned member of the community if the issue is determined to be in the public interest.

How to make a complaint with the HCSCC

A complaint may be made in writing, over the phone, through the internet, or in person. When you contact the HCSCC, staff will:

- discuss the problem and let you know if the HCSCC can help;
- explain what happens when a complaint is made;
- encourage and assist you to resolve the complaint directly with the provider where possible and appropriate;
- help people lodge their complaint; and
- provide special support to help people with special needs, indigenous people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds to access the HCSCC.

It will help HCSCC deal with your complaint promptly if you clarify your concerns by filling in the complaint form and provide records or other information which relate to the situation.

Complaints HCSCC can't accept

Complaints commonly received that HCSCC cannot accept include:

- Complaints about Patient Assisted travel (PATS) – contact the [NT Ombudsman](#).
- Environmental health complaints – contact the [Department of Health and Families, Environmental Health Unit](#).
- Complaints about the quality or preparation of food – contact the [Department of Health and Families, Environmental Health Unit](#).
- Contents of a medical report
- Complaints relating to health insurance – contact the [Private Health Insurance Ombudsman](#).
- Complaints about services provided outside the Northern Territory.

Health and Community Services Complaints Commission (HCSCC)

Tollfree: 1800 806 380

Phone: (08) 89991969

Fax: (08) 8999 1828

Location: 12th floor, NT House, 22 Mitchell St, DARWIN 0800

Postal Address: GPO Box 1344 DARWIN 0801

Email: hcsc.omb@nt.gov.au

Web: www.hcsc.nt.gov.au

Further information including an [online complaint form](#).

Complaints about services outside the Northern Territory

A similar service to that provided in the Northern Territory is available in other jurisdictions:

Jurisdiction	Complaint type	Contact details
VICTORIA Office of the Health Services Commissioner	Takes complaints about both public and private health service providers.	30th Floor 570 Bourke Street MELBOURNE 3000 Phone: (03) 8601 5200 Tollfree: 1800 136 066 TTY: 1300 550 275 Fax: (03) 8601 5219
NEW SOUTH WALES Health Care Complaints Commission	Takes complaints about both public and private health service providers.	Level 13 323 Castlereagh St SYDNEY 2000 Locked Bag 18 STRAWBERRY HILLS 2012 DX address: DX 11617 Sydney Downtown Phone: (02) 9219 7444 (Sydney metro) Tollfree: 1800 043 159 (inside NSW) TTY : (02) 9219 7555 (Deaf and hearing impaired) Fax: (02) 9281 4585
QUEENSLAND Health Quality and Complaints Commission (HQCC)	The HQCC is responsible for the oversight of quality activities in all public and private health services in Queensland. It's also responsible for addressing complaints from any person associated with health service delivery, in a quality improvement context. The HQCC can deal with complaints about hospitals, doctors, registered health professionals (e.g. psychologists, dentists), alternative health practitioners, nursing homes and others.	Level 17 53 Albert St BRISBANE 4000 GPO Box 3089 BRISBANE 4001 Phone: (07) 3120 5999 (Brisbane metro) Tollfree: 1800 077 308 (excluding metro) TTY: (07) 3120 5997 Fax: (07) 3120 5998

Jurisdiction	Complaint type	Contact details
SOUTH AUSTRALIA Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (HCSCC)	The HCSCC covers health and community services across the SA public, private and non-government sectors. It was established by the Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004 proclaimed on 3 October 2005.	PO Box 199 Rundle Mall Adelaide 5000 Phone: (08) 8226 8666 Tollfree: 1800 232 007 (inside SA) Fax: (08) 8226 8620
WESTERN AUSTRALIA Office of Health Review (OHR)	Takes complaints about both public and private health service providers.	Level 12 St Martin's Tower 44 St George's Terrace PERTH 6000 GPO Box B61 PERTH 6838 Phone: (08) 9323 0600 Tollfree: 1800 813 583 (inside WA) Fax: (08) 9221 3675
TASMANIA Health Complaints Commissioner (HCC)	Takes complaints about both public and private health service providers.	GPO Box 960 HOBART 7001 99 Bathurst St HOBART 7000 Phone: 1300 766 725 (cost of local call anywhere in Australia) Fax: (03) 6233 8966
ACT Health Services Commissioner	Takes complaints about both public and private health service providers. Your complaint must be in writing, but Commission staff can assist people to put their concerns in writing, and can arrange for assistance to be provided by interpreters and advocates.	Level 2 12 Moore St CANBERRA CITY 2600 GPO Box 158 CANBERRA CITY 2601 Phone: (02) 6205 2222 TTY: (02) 6205 0525 Fax: (02) 6207 1034 or 6207 0587

For further information please contact NT Worksafe on 1800 250 713 or visit www.worksafe.nt.gov.au