

Our own initiative investigation on carers' assessments and complaints

We want to know what you think



This document was written by the **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**. It is an easy read version of 'Proposed Wider Own Initiative investigation – Carers: Needs assessments and complaints'.

January 2023

How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 22**.



Where the document says **we**, this means **Public Services Ombudsman**. For more information contact:

Address: 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ

Website: www.ombudsman.wales

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This document was made into easy read by **Easy Read Wales** using **Photosymbols**. To tell us what you think about this easy read version, [click here](#).

Contents

	Page
Introduction.....	4
About the investigation.....	5
About the law.....	8
Why do we need to look into carers' assessment and complaints?.....	10
How to respond.....	14
Questions.....	15
About assessments.....	15
About making complaints.....	17
How we use your information.....	21
Hard words.....	22

Introduction



We are the **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**.

We deal with complaints about:

- **Public services**



Public services are services paid for by the Government. For example: local councils, the NHS, social landlords.

- Local councillors breaking the **code of conduct**. Local councillors are people chosen to run a council.



Code of conduct means the rules and standards someone must follow in their job.



Our aim is to improve **public services**.

About the investigation



We can carry out **own initiative investigations**.



Own initiative investigations means we can look into some issues even if we have not had a complaint about them.

Investigation means looking into something.



We will usually do it if we think there may be a serious problem.



We are thinking of doing an **own initiative investigation** to find out about difficulties carers go through to get an **assessment**. Or make complaints.

An **assessment** is a check to see what extra help you might need. An **assessment** will look at things like your wants and needs.

We would look into:



- carer's needs **assessments**



- if health services and local authorities deal with complaints from carers in the right way.

If we found that something was not right, we would give **recommendations** to make sure:



- Carers get the right needs assessments in time.



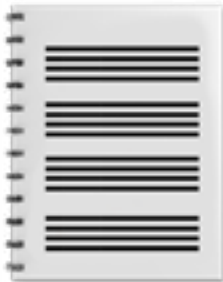
- Health services and local authorities deal with complaints made by carers in the right way.



Recommendation means saying what needs to be done to solve a problem. We would also share ideas about how **public services** in Wales could improve.



We want to know what you think about our own initiative **investigation**.



Please read this document and then answer the questions at the end.



Please send us your responses by **Monday, 6 February 2023** before midnight.



If you need this document in another format, please contact us at: OwnInitiative@ombudsman.wales

About the law

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act is a law that aims to improve the health and well-being of:



- people who need care and support



- carers who need support.



The law says, an unpaid carer is a person who looks after someone and does not get paid for it.



A carer can be a family member, friend or other helper. They may look after a child or a sick, elderly, or disabled person.



If you need support, your local council should **assess** you and the people you care for. This is the law.

They will look at things like:



- your wants and needs,
- your health and
- your other responsibilities. Like children, or work.



Carers Wales has published some important facts showing how many people are affected in Wales:

- According to the information collected in 2011 there are more than 370 thousand unpaid carers in Wales.
- The Office of National Statistics shows that there are 487 thousand carers in Wales in a 2019 survey.
- Every year in Wales 123 thousand people become unpaid carers.
- Carers in Wales save money to services by providing unpaid care and support to their loved ones.

Why do we think we need to look into carers' assessment and complaints?

Before we start an own initiative **investigation**, we must check that:



- The **investigation** will benefit the public.

- We have proof that:



- there is a problem in the way the services are delivered. Or the services do not work properly.
- a person has suffered because of the problem.



- The issue has caused many people suffering.



Carers and people who are cared for depend more on **public services** than others.



We looked at how many complaints from carers we had. We found out that we had very few complaints from carers and people who were cared for.



The reason could be that carers do not know how to make a complaint. Or they have other important things to think about.



Other organisations told us that carers have problems in getting **assessments** and making complaints.



They get less responses to their complaints.



Other organisations also want us to look into this issue.



We believe that it would benefit the public.



We want to know if people think it will benefit the public if we **investigate** this issue.

We want to hear from:



- Unpaid carers or people who are cared for

- People who have had a carers **assessment**



- People who have made complaints to a health service or local authority



- People who have been dealing with carer assessments or complaints



- People who help others with assessments and in making complaints



- Local authorities
- Health boards



- Primary care providers



- **Advocates**

An **advocate** is someone who speaks up for you to help you say what you want to say and get your needs met.



- **Third sector organisations**

The **third sector** is another name for voluntary, charity or campaign organisations.



- People who want to say something about the topic.

How to respond



We want to know what you think about our **investigation** to find out about difficulties carers go through.



Please send your responses by **Monday, 6 February 2023** before midnight.



Please answer the questions in this document and send it back to:

E-mail: OwnInitiative@ombudsman.wales



Post:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ



Phone: 01656 644238 and ask to speak to the Own Initiative Lead Officer.

Questions

About assessments



1. Are **assessments** for carers and people who are cared for being offered? And completed properly in time?



2. Do carers find it difficult to get an **assessment** for them or for the person they care for?



3. Is the care and support agreed and given in the right time?

About making complaints



4. Do carers get information about how to make a complaint. And how to get help from Advice and **Advocacy** organisations?



5. Do carer's find it difficult to talk about the problems they face in providing care?



6. If the problem can't be solved locally do local authorities carry out a formal **investigation**? For example using outside **investigators** to find out more.



7. Do local authorities or health service providers follow their own the rules in dealing with complaints?



8. Are there any difficulties in dealing with complaints about joint services by local authority and a health board?



9. If carers are not happy with the decision they get, do they know that they can take their complaint to the Ombudsman?



10. Are the carer's complaints and feedback used to improve how we work?

How we use your information



We use your information by following a law called **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**.



We normally publish a report or put it on internet showing the kinds of things people said.



Please tell us if you do not want your personal information included.



Read about our privacy notice here: <https://www.ombudsman.wales/privacy-notice>

For more information about how we will use your information click here: <https://www.ombudsman.wales/privacy-notice-consultations-surveys-and-engagement-events>

Hard Words

Advocate

An advocate is someone who speaks up for you to help you say what you want to say and get your needs met.

Assessment

An assessment is a check to see what extra help you might need. An assessment will look at things like your wants and needs.

Code of conduct

Code of conduct means the rules and standards someone must follow in their job.

Investigation

Investigation means looking into something.

Public services

Public services are services paid for by the Government. For example: local councils, the NHS, social landlords.

Recommendation

Recommendation means saying what needs to be done to solve a problem.

Third sector organisations

The third sector is another name for voluntary, charity or campaign organisations.