



Ombwdsmon
Ombudsman
Cymru • Wales

Social Services

Introduction

Social Services provide care and support to meet a range of needs for adults, children and carers. People are usually satisfied with the help they get from Social Services but when things go wrong, information about how to complain and where to get help must be made available. Each local authority must have in place a two stage complaints procedure for people who use Social Services and their carers.

If your concerns have not been resolved by the local authority at the end of the complaints process, or if you think the local authority is taking too long to deal with your complaint, you can complain to us.

What we can do

We can:

- look at the actions of the local authority in carrying out its Social Services functions such as assessment, reviewing, safeguarding and contract monitoring;
- look at complaints about professional judgement and ask our social care advisers whether care provided was reasonable;
- look at whether a financial assessment or an assessment of your needs and eligibility for services have been properly carried out in good time;
- look at how the local authority has handled a complaint.

We can also investigate complaints made by people who self-fund their own care in care homes and through domiciliary care services.

What we cannot do

We cannot:

- look at staff disciplinary or personnel issues or tell the local authority that it must give you a new Social Worker;
- ask for information from a local authority on your behalf;
- look at complaints about matters that have been, or are going, before the courts;
- directly investigate complaints about abuse
- directly investigate a service provider who has been contracted by the local authority to carry out care on its behalf;
- investigate complaints about joint decisions taken by a number of agencies, but we might look at the role of the local authority in the decision-making process;
- assess your social care needs or decide how those needs should be met;
- assess your ability to pay for the cost of your care services;
- normally look at a complaint made on behalf of a child unless it is made by someone with parental responsibility for them;
- always deal with a complaint if you are not a direct user of Social Services or if you are making a complaint for someone else.

Issues to bear in mind

Complaints about the management of safeguarding cases may need to be responded to by more than one agency and should be made to each relevant agency to be dealt with under its own complaints procedure.

If we receive a complaint which contains information about the possibility of abuse or neglect, we will disclose that information to the relevant agencies, if it is in the public interest to do so.

The local authority's stage 2 complaint investigation will be undertaken by an independent professional. We will therefore consider carefully the independent investigation already undertaken and whether we are likely to reach a different conclusion or achieve anything further. We are unlikely to investigate a complaint when we consider the stage 2 investigation was carried out appropriately.

Further information

Further information is available on the Welsh Government's website at:

<http://gov.wales/topics/health/socialcare/?lang=en>

You may want to consider contacting the following organisations for advice:

Age Cymru provides information and advice to older people, their families, friends and carers in Wales. You can contact them by phone on **08000 223 444** or via their website at www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/

Mind Cymru provides assistance for people with mental health problems. You can contact them by phone on **0300 123 3393** or online at www.mind.org.uk/about-us/mind-cymru/

MENCAP Cymru offers advice, information and support on any issue to do with learning disabilities. You can contact them by phone on 0808 8000 300 or online at <https://wales.mencap.org.uk/>

Family Rights Group, which covers England and Wales, provides advice to parents and other family members whose children may require social care services. You can contact them on **0808 801 0366** and their website can be found at www.frg.org.uk

Social Care Wales: If you have a complaint regarding the registration or actions of an individual social worker or care worker, you may wish to contact Social Care Wales:

By phone: 0300 303 3444

Email: info@socialcare.wales

Website: <https://socialcare.wales/>

Care Inspectorate Wales: CIW are the independent regulator of social care and childcare in Wales. It regulates and inspects adult and children's services to improve adult care, childcare and social services for people in Wales.

You can contact them by phone on 0300 7900 126, by email on ciw@gov.wales or on their website at <https://careinspectorate.wales/>

Older People's Commissioner: The Older People's Commissioner for Wales is an independent voice and champion for older people across Wales.

You can contact them on 03442 640670 or online at www.olderpeoplewales.com

Children's Commissioner for Wales: The Children's Commissioner provides help and support to all children and young people up to 18 in Wales, or up to 21 if they have been in care or up to 25 if they have been in care and are still in education.

01792 765600 or 0808 801 100 (freephone)

post@childcomwales.org.uk www.childcomwales.org.uk

Contact us

If you are not sure whether we would be able to look into your complaint, please [contact us](#) on 0300 790 0203.

Also available in Welsh.

Easy Read

Social Services

