



Driving improvement and learning from NHS complaints information

The signatory organisations have agreed there is a clear need for meaningful, comparable complaints information which can be used to help drive improvement in healthcare and strengthen the quality of services for patients and the public.

This information can contribute significantly to enhanced patient experience and enduring service improvement by enabling:

- Providers to identify possible trends and/or patterns of risk and take appropriate action, compare themselves with others and demonstrate how they have learned from the complaints they have received;
- Commissioners of services to hold their providers to account for doing this effectively;
- Regulators and assessment bodies to identify which providers are failing to learn from complaints and to respond accordingly;
- The signatory organisations, individually and/or jointly to build a shared national profile identifying trends, themes and patterns of significance or risk, and respond accordingly;
- LINKs/Local Healthwatch, specifically, to develop an informed local voice with which to contribute effectively to the assessment and monitoring of areas of concern and local service improvement and hold providers and commissioners of care to account locally;
- HealthWatch England to receive meaningful, comparable information to inform its work and priorities;
- Patients and the public to be better informed to make choices; to benchmark more readily between services and to question providers; and to have confidence in the effectiveness of complaints handling and resolution
- Providers to evaluate the effectiveness of, and user-satisfaction with, their complaint handling systems.

We acknowledge that the current systems for capturing complaints information require significant improvement. We are committed to playing our part in the development of more meaningful NHS Complaints information. We welcome the new statutory role envisaged for the NHS Information Centre and we will look to it to provide the practical and technical support required to bring about the necessary changes.

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