

Complaints

about a health service, health service provider,
and/or health practitioner

Contents

Complaints	Page
Directly to a health service provider:.....	2
Directly to the Health Complaints Commissioner:	3
Directly to Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency	4

Complaints about a Health Service, Health Service Provider, and/or Health Practitioner

It is your right to complain about the service/s that you have received from a health service provider and/or a health practitioner.

Complaints processes vary depending on who you complain to, what your complaint is about, and the information that you are able or willing to provide.

You are allowed to have a support person with you when you make a complaint (for example, a family member, friend or other person that you feel comfortable with and supported by). Consider whether you would like to have a support person with you when you make a complaint.

You have different options available to you if you wish to make a complaint about a health service that you have received from health service provider and/or health practitioner:

Directly to a health service provider:

All health service providers - including those provided by public and private hospitals, community health services, specialist services and GP clinics - should have a complaints or feedback process.

You can obtain information about a health service provider's complaints process by checking their website or by contacting them.

If you also make a complaint to a regulator such as the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (**Ahpra**) or the Health Complaints Commissioner (**HCC**), it is likely they will ask you whether you have also made a complaint to the health service provider. You do not have to make a complaint to a health service provider if you do not want to.

Directly to the Health Complaints Commissioner (HCC)

You can make a complaint to the HCC about health services provided in Victoria, or health services requested in Victoria but not provided in Victoria.

Complaints to the HCC can be completed online (<https://hcc.vic.gov.au/make-complaint>), or over the phone on 1300 582 113, between 9.30 am and 3.00 pm, Monday to Friday.

To make a complaint to the HCC via phone or online, you will need to provide the HCC with the following information:

- Health service provider details, such as:
 - Full name
 - Contact details
 - ABN/ACN - you can often get this information from the health service provider's website
- Incident details:
 - date of the incident
 - information about whether you tried to resolve the complaint yourself, and if so, information about the health service provider's response
- Your information:
 - your contact details
 - a summary of the incident
 - your desired outcome – that is, what do you want to happen after you make a complaint?
- Supporting documents:
 - your original complaint letter, if you made one, and the health service provider's response
 - referrals, photographs, invoices, medical reports (that is, documents that help support your complaint)

- When submitting your complaint:
 - Make sure that you have all of the required information (described above). If you are submitting online, the complaint form will time-out after 30 minutes.
 - You may want to consider preparing answers to the questions in the complaint form in advance to make sure you have everything ready. If you prepare your answers in a separate document, you may be able to copy and paste most of your answers into the complaint form. This is because you are not able to save the HCC's online complaint form as you go.

Directly to Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) regulates health practitioners and students in 16 professions (for example, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, paramedics, medical radiation practitioners etc).

It works in partnership with the 15 National Boards (such as the Medical Board, the Nursing and Midwifery Board, etc), to ensure that Australia's registered health practitioners are suitably trained, qualified and are safe to practice.

You have a right to make a complaint to Ahpra about an individual health practitioner's behaviour, and/or about the care, and/or information that they have provided.

Ahpra can consider complaints about unsafe care, unprofessional conduct, the health practitioner's health, and/or criminal offences allegedly committed by the health practitioner. For more information, see AHPRA's website (<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/Concerned-about-a-health-practitioner.aspx#complaint-type>).

You can make a complaint to Ahpra online via the Ahpra website (<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/Concerned-about-a-health-practitioner.aspx>), or over the phone on 1300 419 495.

When making a complaint to Ahpra, you may want to consider providing Ahpra with the following information:

- Your details (unless you would prefer to report anonymously)
- The details of the registered health practitioner that you have a concern about (name, information about where they were practicing etc.)
- Detail of the incident, including what happened, where it happened and whether there were any witnesses
- Date and time of the event
- Information about whether you have made a complaint to the health service provider or the health practitioner, and any response that you received from them
- Supporting documentation: a complaint letter if you made one, referrals, photographs, emails, invoices, etc.

You can also search the Ahpra Register of Practitioners, located on Ahpra's website to check if a particular health practitioner has been disciplined, or has conditions on their registration (see <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registers-of-Practitioners.aspx>)