

## Healthwatch Sunderland Complaints Policy

### Purpose of this document

Individuals and organisations have the right to express their views about the performance of Healthwatch Sunderland and the way in which it conducts its business.

Anyone who is dissatisfied with any aspect of the service received by Healthwatch Sunderland can make a complaint under Healthwatch Sunderland's complaints policy.

We will treat both concerns and complaints in the same way.  
This policy does not cover:

1. Complaints or concerns about the NHS, which should be dealt with through the NHS complaints procedure.
2. Complaints about the provision of social care services which should be dealt with by Sunderland City Council complaints procedure.

We will review this policy on a three yearly basis.

Date Reviewed: 3 August 2023

Next Review Date: 3 August 2026

### How to raise a concern or make a complaint about Healthwatch Sunderland

- 1) In the first instance we would encourage you to raise a concern, or complaint, or to provide feedback on our service informally. Providing information or correcting misunderstandings or misconceptions at this early stage may enable the issue to be successfully resolved. You can discuss with any member of the team, or contact us via:
  - a. Telephone: 0191 514 7145
  - b. Email: [healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net)
  - c. Letter: The Co-op Centre, Whitehouse Road, Hendon, Sunderland, SR2 8AH

- 2) If the concern or complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, then you should notify us via email, letter or via a telephone conversation with the Lead Officer.
- 3) Healthwatch Sunderland will acknowledge the concern or complaint in writing (or in the complainants preferred method of communication) within 3 working days.
- 4) Attempts to resolve the concern or complaint will be completed within 15 working days of establishing the nature of the concern or complaint. Exceptionally, if further time is needed, where possible this will be agreed with you.
- 5) The Lead Officer of Healthwatch Sunderland will review all concerns and complaints. If you are not happy with the outcome you will be able to appeal. The concern or complaint will then be reviewed by Healthwatch Sunderland Board Members who have not previously been involved in the matter. Once the appeal process has been completed, the concern or complaint will be closed.
- 6) If you are still not satisfied and wish to take your complaint further, you can take your concern or complaint to Sunderland City Council (SCC) or Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) (our governance body for funding). You can refer your complaint to SCC/PCP at any time. But they'll need our consent to investigate complaints if we haven't:
  - a) Had the chance to put things right
  - b) Exceeded the handling timescales permitted for your complaint.

SCC can be contacted in the following ways:

- a. Telephone: 0191 561 1078 (or 0191 520 5552 if you call outside of normal office hours).
- b. Email: [complaints.adults@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.adults@sunderland.gov.uk)
- c. Write: Complaint and Feedback Team, City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA.

PCP can be contacted in the following ways:

Write: Pioneering Care Partnership, Carers Way, Newton Aycliffe,  
Co Durham, DL5 4SF.

You may also subsequently take your concern or complaint to the Local  
Government Ombudsman who can be contacted in the following ways:

- a) Via website: [lgo.org.uk](http://lgo.org.uk)
- b) Telephone: 0300 061 0614