



**NHS**

**London Ambulance Service**  
NHS Trust



# Complaints charter

For urgent and emergency care

Prepared by

**PATIENTS' FORUM**

FOR THE LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE

for the LAS in collaboration with the London Ambulance Service

### The London Ambulance Service is committed to:

- Making urgent and emergency care in London better for everyone.
- Valuing your comments, suggestions and complaints.
- Ensuring all complaints are thoroughly and quickly investigated and result in continuous service improvements.
- Treating you with courtesy, respect and sensitivity at all times.

The London Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service will support people with NHS complaints and promote delivery of the Charter. The service is free and confidential.

The Patients' Forum for the LAS will promote delivery of this Charter, monitor compliance and propose service improvements.



### When you are dissatisfied with healthcare services:

- Tell us as soon as possible if you are unhappy with our services so that we can investigate your concerns and quickly try to put things right for you.
- Tell us if you have any particular needs that we should be aware of (eg an interpreter or other ways of ensuring effective communication with you).

### Our commitment to you – we will:

- Acknowledge your complaint within three working days and explain how we will handle your complaint/s and what information we need.
- Give you the name and contact details of the person or team that will investigate your complaint.
- Keep you updated if it takes longer than we had hoped to respond and explain our progress in the investigation of your complaint.
- Pledge that making a complaint will not adversely affect your ongoing or future treatment in any way.

### We will follow an open and fair process by:

- Listening to you carefully and fully understanding your complaint.
- Requesting all the information we need from you.
- Explaining how we will investigate all of your specific concerns.

## Complaints charter

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- Being open and honest with you throughout the investigation, e.g. by ensuring the Duty of Candour (DoC) is fully complied with and you receive copies of any relevant reports (DoC is defined below).
- Sharing evidence and facts with you by providing a comprehensive response to your complaint.
- Letting you know about local complaints advocacy services or other appropriate advocacy services to support and advise you during any complaints investigation.
- Explaining our decisions and recommendations, and how we have reached them.
- Carefully evaluating all the information we've gathered to make a decision on your complaint, and explaining how you can contact and make recourse to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman if you are dissatisfied with our findings.

### We will give you an excellent service by:

- Treating you with courtesy and respect.
- Aiming to give you a final decision on your complaint within 35 working days – or explain the reason for any delay.
- Making sure our complaints service is easily accessible to you and giving you support and help if you need it.
- Ensuring the information you give us is held securely and confidentially

### Use your complaint to improve services by:

- Listening to your feedback and using it to improve our services
- Apologising if we have made mistakes and aiming to quickly put things right whenever possible
- Sharing with you what we have learned from investigating your complaint and telling you how we have worked to improve services
- With your consent, sharing what we have learnt from your complaint with our front line clinical staff and with commissioners

### What you can expect from the organisation you have complained about

- Giving you a clear final answer to your complaint
- Addressing your complaint as quickly and effectively as possible
- Giving you any information you ask for, relevant to your complaint, within a reasonable amount of time and in accordance with the relevant legislation
- Showing you how we have taken action on the recommendations arising from your complaint
- Consider reimbursement in line with LAS policy if you have suffered loss as a result of our actions.



The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman can investigate and make final decisions on complaints that haven't been resolved locally by the NHS.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsmen can investigate complaints about social care providers.

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Tel: 0345 015 4033

Website: [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

Local Government &  
Social Care

**OMBUDSMAN**

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

### Access for everybody

Let us know if you need the Charter in different languages or formats, e.g. Easyread, large print or any other format. We will comply with the NHS Information Standard.

### Tell us what went well

We want to know what went well for you so that services can be improved by learning from your experiences.

### Contacts:

#### Patient Experiences Department

London Ambulance Service NHS Trust  
Units 1&2 Datapoint Business Centre  
6 South Crescent  
London  
E16 4TL

Tel: 020 3069 0240

Fax: 020 3069 0239

Email: [ped@londonambulance.nhs.uk](mailto:ped@londonambulance.nhs.uk)

Website: [www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/talking-with-us](http://www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/talking-with-us)

**POhWER**  
advocacy, making your voice heard

PohWER provides NHS Advocacy for most London boroughs and provides details of your local advocacy provider.

Helpline: 020 3553 5960

Email: [LondonIHCAS@pohwer.net](mailto:LondonIHCAS@pohwer.net)

Website: [www.pohwer.net](http://www.pohwer.net)

### More information

**Duty of Candour (DoC)** is a legal duty on NHS trusts to inform and apologise to patients if there have been mistakes in their care that have led to significant harm. The DoC aims to help patients receive accurate and truthful information from health providers and to achieve a wholly transparent culture in health provision – being open when errors are made and harm caused.

# healthwatch

Established following the Health and Social Care Act 2012, local Healthwatch are organisations with statutory powers, that champion the needs of patients, service users, carers and the public, covering both health and social care. Each local authority has a statutory duty to commission a local Healthwatch organisation. Statutory powers include inspection of health and social care services, gathering the views of service users and making these known to providers and commissioners, monitoring and scrutinising the quality of provision of local services. They have seat on the local Health and Wellbeing Board.

## PATIENTS' FORUM

FOR THE LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE

Website: [www.patientsforumlas.net](http://www.patientsforumlas.net)

Email: [patientsforumlas@aol.com](mailto:patientsforumlas@aol.com)

The Forum monitors the LAS and raises awareness of the needs and views of patients and the public and places them at the centre of LAS decision-making.

Members are service users and active lay people who examine LAS services by:

- Obtaining the views of service users and local people about ambulance and other emergency services.
- Monitor delivery of ambulance services.
- Influence the design of, and access to, London Ambulance services.
- Provide advice and information to patients and their carers about LAS services.