



What to expect from a Local Resolution Meeting

A Local Resolution Meeting (LRM) is often offered as part of the complaints process, to provide an opportunity to answer any questions or allow further discussions or explanations face to face.

Some people can find these meetings a daunting prospect, so the points in this leaflet are intended to provide you with a short guide of what to expect from your meeting.

What an Advocate can do:

- Check you understand the answered given and all of your points are covered
- Provide support
- They can speak on your behalf should you want them to
- Ask for simpler information if necessary
- Act only on your instructions
- Discuss their role in the meeting and agree what you want them to do

Meetings can be distressing, should you get upset or frustrated, the advocate will ask for a break.

What can I expect from the NHS body?

In most Local Resolution Meetings, a member of the Complaints Department will attend. Their role will vary depending on the way their organisation deals with complaints meetings - you should check what they will be doing when the meeting starts.

They may:

- Take detailed minutes - although this is very rare, and it can take time for these to be typed into a transcript
- Take a summary of the complaint - this is more common and simply provides brief details of what was discussed and any action points agreed on
- The meeting may be recorded (on audio) - in this instance you might be provided with a copy of this (e.g. an audio CD)
- Someone from the NHS body should chair the meeting and ensure that it runs smoothly

Points to remember:

- We can help you to prepare for your LRM.
- We can sit with you in your LRM but will not take any notes or minutes or speak on your behalf. Our role is to act as a support for you and to help you to say what is most important to you.
- Please give the individuals from the NHS organisation time to answer. You want them to listen to everything you have to say - it's reasonable for them to expect you to listen to everything they have to say too.
- Try not to recap too much of the information you sent the trust in your complaint letter(s). It might be useful to go over the most important points quickly (as a summary) so that everyone in the room is clear about the key issues for you.
- If it's useful, decide on a spokesperson in your family who will raise your issues. It can be confusing if different people keep saying different things - if you want a clear resolution you need to paint a clear picture to start with

Should I prepare an agenda?

Most complaints teams will ask for an agenda or a list of points which you would like to discuss.

This can seem like an enormous task, especially if your complaint is very complicated, or involves multiple clinicians or departments. However, your agenda doesn't need to be too big and there are some benefits to drafting an agenda:

- The complaints team can make sure the right people attend the meeting
- Detailed answers or explanations can be given, and medical records referred to as there has been time to prepare
- An agenda can be used to keep the meeting focused

Your Advocate can help you to draft an agenda for any meetings which might be arranged.

This help can include:

- Meeting with us in the weeks before a LRM to go through your file and the letters you have sent and received.
- Looking at the answers or explanations you already have, and identify the issues that you remain unhappy with.

If you can't produce a list of specific points or questions, you could simply list any topics or themes you want to discuss as well as any specific incidents.

Without an agenda or some idea of the issues you wish to discuss, any detailed questions or points may not be answered in the time available at the meeting. Quite some time may have passed since the care or treatment was provided, and as memories fade clinicians may need to consult the medical records. If you don't tell them in advance, they may not have all the information conveniently to hand when you meet.

Next steps

- If everything is resolved at the end of the meeting, this gives you a chance to thank them for listening and taking your complaint seriously.
- If your complaint has not been fully resolved, this gives everyone a chance to talk about what happens next.
- They may want to do some more investigations or ask you for more information.
- It may be that you can't agree. If they say the complaint is closed and you are not happy, you can tell them that you're considering whether or not to take it to the Ombudsman.



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