

Written evidence A2 (PHO12)

Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman Scrutiny 2020-21 inquiry

I am submitting this information in the hope that the PHSO will be held to account in relation to completing its case work per its service charter and meeting its KPIs.

Timelines

21/07/20 -I uploaded a complaint relating to the NHS (GP surgery) on the PHSO website.

I heard nothing.

19/08/20 I contacted the PHSO who initially advised they had no record of my complaint. They looked into and then started the complaints process.

25/2/21 I received a decision letter.

26/2/21 I sent a Review Request

4/3/21 I received a receipt for the Review Request

8/5/21 I sent a formal complaint regarding the complaint handling process

11/5/21 received a standard receipt letter regarding the complaint handling

6/10/21 I received a notification the Review Team has assigned my complaint/review request to a Review and Feedback Team Associate Case Worker. This is ongoing.

My personal experience of the PHSO is that the complaints process is used to take away the voice of service users so that their complaints will not be heard and can be dismissed. The process was carried out by the caseworker in a non-transparent way, with the final report as a fait accompli. The final report came as a complete surprise/ shock as it was only at this stage I knew the caseworker had excluded the majority of my complaint, what had happened and the impact on my life. The case worker/ clinicians had made assumptions about what had happened based on their personal bias and ignored breaches of National Guidelines. The case worker also falsely referred to information she claimed I had included in the written information I submitted (which I had not). The entire process takes a long time.

The service charter advises the PHSO will follow a fair and open process, listen to and understand complaints, be transparent, impartial – in my case this did not happen and it appears there is very little you can do about this. I submitted a Review Request in February 21 but as this will also be carried out by the PHSO have very little hope of being heard and as so much of the final report was incorrect/ full of assumptions/did not reflect my complaint or what happened feel my complaint has been undermined. I simply have no trust/confidence in the way the PHSO carries out its NHS complaints process but am aware there is no alternative.

I write this so that the PHSO may be encouraged to improve/ adhere to its service charter and not let complainants down so badly.

October 2021