

Written evidence Mr D. Brown (PHO35)

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

There is more than a little irony when an organisation whose job it is to investigate maladministration and poor service, is itself **guilty** of unforgiveable maladministration & poor service.....

Had I known how PHSO deals with complaints, I would not have approached this not fit for purpose organisation in the first place.

This is just a snapshot of my dealings with PHSO – I could go into much more detail.

Timeline of catastrophic failures

1. June 2018 - I sent a complaint to PHSO about East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust, (EMAS).
2. Having received an acknowledgement of my complaint , it was *17 weeks* before I heard from the caseworker.
3. I was initially advised by the PHSO caseworker to take legal action (for negligence), because I could *achieve* what I wanted through the Courts. However, PHSO later agreed to look at my complaint because legal action was not a viable financial option.
4. I later found out that the caseworker recorded details following our phone conversation. Some details were not just incorrect, they were also upsetting. I pointed this out, however, the caseworker failed to correct the errors...
5. Having gone back to PHSO, a decision was made not to investigate since EMAS' offer of £300 (for everything I complained about, the most serious issue being the ambulance technician's failure to recognise Red Flag Sepsis and convey my father to A&E) "falls in line with our view.."
6. Very oddly, I was then informed that EMAS did not consider the complaint handling aspect, and PHSO proposed to look into that.
7. However, when I asked for a review of the decision not to investigate the other issues (Jan 2019), the complaint handling aspect PHSO was going to look at, was also closed down. This was later questioned by the Asst. Director of Casework and the Deputy Ombudsman. However, their views as to what should have happened were very different.
8. Having acknowledged receipt of my request for a review, I heard nothing more, so 18 weeks later, I emailed requesting an update, This email was not even acknowledged, though documentary evidence shows it was received.
9. Following no response, I wrote a letter to PHSO around 8 weeks later. It was only then that my request for a review was finally "dealt" with. It turned out that my request got lost in the system, so those who should have been aware of it did not even know about it...
10. Unsurprisingly, the review response (Sept 2019), stated, that the £300 offered was for the distress caused to me – totally different to the initial response, which stated it was for "service failure".

11. I was also informed in that response, that a new case would be set up to consider EMAS complaint handling.
12. A further 18 weeks down the line, having heard nothing, I wrote an email to Ombudsman Rob Behrens.
13. I later found out that the Dep. Ombudsman sat on an email from a colleague for 6 weeks, further delaying the new case.
14. The new case was finally allocated to new case worker (Jan 2020). He had already been asked to prioritise this because of the poor service I had already received.
15. However, having written to me in January 2020, I did not hear from him again until October, some 37 weeks later, and then it was only to ask if he could ring me to discuss the case! I informed him that he had more than enough information and asked him to get on with it.
16. Another 20 weeks passed, so I requested an update, (March 2021).
17. I was informed that his provisional views were being quality checked, which was far too coincidental!
18. Having received his views, I submitted further very significant information. However, this was dismissed within just 17 minutes of receipt.
19. It is very significant that my irrefutable documentary evidence was ignored, yet EMAS unsubstantiated claims were accepted.
20. I requested an extension to give a full response to the provisional views. This was not acted upon until *after* the deadline, by which time I had sent my very hurried response, which caused me further considerable distress.
21. I was later informed in an email from the caseworker's manager, "I will update you next week....."
22. 3 weeks later I emailed her because I had not received any further communication from her.
23. Despite a final decision being made there is no "Final Decision" Form.
24. Though PHSO "found" two EMAS maladministration errors, other issues were ignored despite the evidence. PHSO recommended EMAS pay £100 for those administration errors.

Following this debacle over almost 3 years, which has been very detrimental to my physical health and wellbeing, to the point that I could have easily taken a "one way walk", I complained to Rob Behrens about PHSO's own maladministration and poor service.

Suffice it to say, though my complaints were not properly and fully investigated, PHSO did admit failings and offered "£250 for the inconvenience you have experienced and the frustration that the delays in our service caused you.", which I considered totally inadequate, considering this fiasco left me feeling suicidal on more than one occasion...

PHSO investigates maladministration and poor service. When PHSO itself is of guilty of poor maladministration and poor service, that maladministration and poor service is **aggravated**....

After 5 months, I am still waiting for my NHS Continuing Healthcare complaint to be allocated to a caseworker. Despite the overwhelming irrefutable documentary evidence, I have no doubt that PHSO will ignore that evidence, and I know without doubt my complaint about PHSO will have a serious and detrimental impact on the outcome...

This organisation is *not* independent. It is not open, honest or fair.....

There is no doubt, PHSO is a complete waste of time, and public money.

TrustPilot.com and “What’s the point of the Ombudsman? PHSOtheFacts”, tells you everything you need to know about PHSO.... I have a story to tell and I WILL be telling that story.....

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