We know how worrying it can be when your loved one is living away from you, and when your child has a learning disability or autism, the concerns are much greater.

There are times when, as relatives, you know when something is wrong and will want to get it sorted straightaway. It’s not easy to stay calm when things aren’t working, so at Dimensions we will make it our priority to work with you to resolve the issue, as quickly as possible.

Facts for Families: When things go wrong – how to make a complaint

From small concerns to major issues...

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Day-to-day issues

Please tell us as soon as smaller, day-to-day issues arise. We would like to work with you to get things right for your relative and it is usually easier to sort things out straight away, rather than waiting for the annual review, when the situation may have become worse.

In the first instance, speak to your relative’s locality manager about your concerns as they have the information and authority to take things forward.

It’s not always possible to deal with situations immediately if it is not an emergency, but you will be offered a meeting or a phone call with the locality manager within a couple of days.

Major issues – when to make a complaint

If there is a serious problem and you have major concerns about the health, safety and wellbeing of your relative or an informal approach hasn’t worked, you should follow our complaints procedure, which has very clear timescales and processes that we make sure all our employees adhere to.

Always make a complaint as early as possible as problems are easier to fix before they have become established.

Emergencies

If you have immediate concerns for the health and safety and wellbeing of your relative phone our head office on 0300 303 9001.

Alternatively, if it is an emergency, you can call 999 or you can call our whistleblowing hotline: 0800 169 7121, which is independent and confidential.
Ask Listen Do

We are part of NHS England’s Ask Listen Do project, which aims to make it easier for people with a learning disability or autism and their families to give feedback, raise a concern or make a complaint about their health care, social care or education. This improves people’s lives and the services they receive, and helps to keep people safe.

Ask, Listen Do – what does this mean at Dimensions?

We will:

- **Ask** so you can raise a compliment, concern or make a complaint.
- Make it easy for you to tell us, in a way that works for you, what is good or bad about the support for your relative.
- **Listen** so we understand what needs to change.
- Listen to what you are saying and thank you for telling us.
- **Do** so we can make the right changes and improve support for your relative and others.
- Do something about what you have told us.
- Tell you what we have done, in a way that works for you.

More information about Ask Listen Do can be found on the NHS website: [https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/about/ask-listen-do/](https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/about/ask-listen-do/)

How to make a complaint

You can make a complaint in person, over the phone, online or in writing.

You need to tell us:

- What the problem is.
- When it happened or if it is ongoing.
- Who was involved.
- What you would like to be done about it.

If you complain verbally, the member of staff who takes the complaint must record it.

You can make a complaint to your Locality Manager or Operations Director. If you prefer, you could raise your concerns with the central complaints service on **0300 303 9024** or email: complaints@dimensions-uk.org

Alternatively you can visit: [https://www.dimensions-uk.org/contact/making-complaint/](https://www.dimensions-uk.org/contact/making-complaint/) and fill out our online form.

Or you can post your complaint to:

**Dimensions, Complaints, Building 1430, Arlington Business Park, Theale, Reading RG7 4SA**
Dealing with a complaint flowchart

**Within 48 hours of complaint**
We will acknowledge your concern or complaint verbally and log it on our system. If you are raising a complaint we will send you a letter acknowledging your concern or complaint within 5 working days.

**Formal or informal?**
If your issue was raised informally or as a suggestion about improvements we will let you know the outcome and record action taken and the outcome on our system before closing. If your concern or complaint is serious or needs further investigation the person you have raised it with will notify their manager and an investigator will be appointed. You will receive a letter from us acknowledging your complaint. It is very helpful to inform the investigator what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint.

**Within 15 – 20 working days of complaint**
We hope to investigate and resolve your complaint within 15 working days and will write to you to let you know the outcome we will upload our actions and outcomes to our system. If we haven’t been able to resolve the issue within 15 working days a senior manager will have a look at the issue and advise the investigator. We will write to you and advise you of any new timescale we are working to. At this point we may refer the complaint to our quality and compliance team, to support the investigation. As soon as we have resolved the complaint we will write to you and let you know the outcomes. We will also update our system to record actions and outcomes.

**Learning**
Once we have concluded our investigation we will make sure we identify our learning as an outcome from the concern or complaint and use this to support improvements in the way we work.

**Appeals**
If you are not satisfied at the outcome of your complaint let us know as soon as possible, ideally within 2 weeks and we will appoint a new investigator to look at your appeal. We will keep you informed and let you know the outcome of your appeal within 20 days. If we cannot do this within the time, we will write to you to explain why. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint appeal you can contact the Ombudsman to ask them to review your complaint.

The ombudsman’s contact details will be included in the letters you receive from us.

We continually learn from feedback provided by families. At the end of the complaints process you will be invited to complete a short questionnaire about the way we handled your complaint. Please help us by completing this.

We expect all our employees to come to work to do a good job and working well with families is an important part of their daily work. Please let people know when they are doing a good job as well as when things are not working – everyone responds well to praise.

To speak to a member of our Families team about your concern please phone our Family Helpline available 10am – 12pm Monday – Friday on 0300 303 9161 or email family.helpline@dimensions-uk.org