

What to do if you have a concern about your home support services

Everyone has a right to safe, quality home support services. Never hesitate to voice any concerns you have, or make a complaint, about your home support services. Your right to home support services will not be affected if you raise a concern or make a complaint. If you would like to make a complaint about the service you or your whānau have received, you can follow the steps below.

Support from a Health and Disability Advocate

An advocate can help you identify what the issues are that need to be addressed, how to make a complaint, and what resolution looks like. They then provide support to help you take your concerns to the care provider.

The Nationwide Health and Disability Advocacy Service (Advocacy Service) offers free advocacy support to anyone receiving home support services.

They can be contacted on 0800 555 050 or via [the Advocacy Service website](#).

1: Discuss your concerns with the home support provider

The service coordinator or manager of the home support provider is the first line for response to a complaint. Home support providers can manage any immediate issues or actions required. They can answer questions at the point of care and address care concerns and complaints. You can raise a concern or make a complaint by telephone, in writing or in person.

You can raise a concern or complaint yourself, or you can ask someone else to do so on your behalf, for example, a family member, friend, volunteer, advocate, health professional or carer.

2: Contact your local DHB Portfolio Manager

If you feel that talking directly with the home support provider hasn't resolved the issue, you can contact your local health of older persons DHB Portfolio Manager. They can assist with the management of the complaint. Contact details of DHB Portfolio Managers can be found online at <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/services-older-people/what-do-if-you-have-concern-about-your-home-support-services>.

3: Contact the Ministry of Health

If you feel your concerns haven't been addressed by the provider or DHB, you can contact [Disability Support Services](#) at the Ministry of Health. They can assist with the management of the complaint and information on process. This includes raising your concern with the DHB and/or care service to investigate. Note: This isn't an immediate response to your care questions and gathering information may take time.

Disability Support Services can be contacted by emailing dsscomplaints@health.govt.nz, or by phoning 0800 373 664

4: The Office of the Aged Care Commissioner

A dedicated Aged Care Commissioner has been established within the office of the Health and Disability Commissioner. The Commissioner provides greater oversight of the aged care sector and gives older people and their whānau more confidence in the quality and safety of aged care services.

You can [make a complaint by completing the online form](#). You can also phone on 0800 11 22 33 or email hdc@hdc.org.nz.

Things you can complain about

Any behaviour that you consider to be contrary to your rights under the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights 1996 (the Code of Rights), including your right to:

- respect
- freedom from discrimination, coercion, harassment and exploitation
- dignity and independence
- services of an appropriate standard
- effective communication
- information and informed consent
- receive support
- complain.

Some forms of home support may not be covered by the Code of Rights, for example, housework such as cleaning.

Examples of things you can complain about are:

- your support worker being abusive (physical, verbal or emotional)
- your support worker being dishonest
- your support worker being careless; compromising your safety or the safety of anyone they are working around (eg, by not using equipment properly)

- your support worker consistently managing their time poorly (eg, frequently arriving late at your home or even not turning up at all, without warning or good reason)
- your support worker not respecting your privacy
- your support worker not respecting your culture or what makes you unique or behaving inappropriately (for example, saying things or behaving in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable or just doesn't feel right to you)
- your support worker not supporting you to meet the goals set in your home support plan
- your home support organisation not providing an alternative support worker when your main support worker can't be there
- your home support organisation sending a support worker who isn't able to do the work
- Poor communication, for example, if you feel you are not able to easily talk to someone at the home support organisation.