

# Unhappy about a care service?

Find out what you can do



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

# What is the Care Inspectorate and what do you do?

We are the official body responsible for inspecting standards of care in Scotland. That means we regulate and inspect care services to make sure they meet the right standards. We also carry out joint inspections with other regulators to check how well different organisations in local areas are working to support adults and children. We help ensure social work, including criminal justice social work, meets high standards.

Everyone is entitled to safe, high quality, compassionate care that meets their needs. It is against the law for care services to operate unless they register with us.

Our 600 staff work across Scotland. Specialist inspectors visit thousands of care services every year. We grade their quality, require them to improve if necessary, and investigate complaints. Teams of our inspectors work with colleagues from health, education and justice to carry our joint inspections across local areas.

## What are care services?

We regulate around 14,000 individual care services. The main types are:

- childminders
- children's nurseries
- care homes for older people, adults and children
- care at home
- housing support
- playgroups and out of school clubs.

We also regulate specialist services like daycare, adoption and fostering agencies, childcare agencies, nurse agencies, school accommodation, secure accommodation and respite care.

## What you can do if you are unhappy

If you are unhappy about a care service there are a number of things you can do.

First, we would urge you to raise any issues directly with the service. Often, things can be resolved quickly once the service is aware of the problem and you can agree how it will be solved. We would encourage this wherever possible.

Or you may wish to make a formal complaint to the service using its complaints procedure. All registered care services must have a clear complaints procedure that you can access. You may choose to complain directly to the service or to us, or both.

If you complain to us, you can choose to give us your name and contact details, or you can choose to be anonymous.

## What we investigate

If your complaint is about the standard of care being provided, you can complain to us and we will investigate.

We can't deal with complaints about matters that don't fall within our responsibilities as a regulator. If your complaint is not appropriate for us, but it can be dealt with by another organisation, we will let you know.

If complaints involve child or adult protection, we work closely with Police Scotland and social workers to safeguard people. If you want to complain about us, we have a clear and rigorous way to help you do that and ensure your concerns are dealt with fairly and independently.

If you make a complaint to us, you can be sure that:

- all complaints are taken seriously and handled thoroughly
- all complaints are dealt with on an individual basis
- if we think there will be a delay, we will let you know and give you a revised timescale and the reasons for the delay.

## What we don't investigate

There are some matters we don't have the authority to investigate. Depending on the nature of your complaint, it may be the responsibility of another organisation. If you are unsure, please contact us for advice.

Matters we cannot investigate include:

- cause of accident or death
- the practice of local authority social workers
- the practice of doctors and nurses
- the charging and billing policies of services
- contractual issues relating to employment in the care sector.

## Who can complain?

Anyone can complain to us about a registered care service.

## When to complain

If you wish to complain to us about a registered care service, or about us, there is a time limit of six months. Unless there are exceptional circumstances we will not investigate complaints more than six months after the cause for complaint has arisen.

## Our procedure

We will acknowledge your complaint by writing to you within 3 working days. Once we have agreed the matters we will investigate, we aim to complete the investigation within 40 working days.

You can find out more by downloading our complaints procedure from the Complaints section of our website [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com) or, if you would like us to send you a paper copy, please let us know.

## How to raise a concern, or complain

If you want to raise a concern, or complain, either about us or a care service that we regulate, you can:

- call our national enquiries line on **0845 600 9527**
- fill in our complaints form online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

You can find the addresses and telephone numbers of our headquarters and main offices at the back of this leaflet.

If you think that you need independent help to make your complaint, an independent advocacy service may be able to help. You can find out more about advocacy services in your area by contacting:

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance  
69a George Street  
Edinburgh EH2 2JG  
website: [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)  
telephone: 0131 260 5380  
fax: 0131 260 5381



## What to do if you are still not satisfied

If you are unhappy with how we investigated your complaint, you can write to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. They can consider matters related to public services in Scotland. The Chief Executive of the Care Inspectorate will monitor all complaints against the Care Inspectorate which involve the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman decides we need to make changes to the way we work, the Care Inspectorate Chief Executive will ensure they happen.

You can contact the Ombudsman:

SPSO  
FREEPOST EH641  
Edinburgh  
EH3 OBR  
website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)  
telephone: 0800 377 7330  
fax: 0800 377 7331

## How we publish our decisions

Once we have reached our decision, we put information about upheld complaints on our website: [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

To get more detailed information about a complaint you should contact us on **0845 600 9527** or email [enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com) or by use our online information request form.

We publish outcomes of complaints against the Care Inspectorate in our annual reports.



## Headquarters

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We have offices across Scotland. To find your nearest office, visit our website or call our Care Inspectorate enquiries line.

Website: [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

Email: [enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

Care Inspectorate Enquiries: 0845 600 9527

This publication is available in other formats and other languages on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànanan eile ma nithear iarrrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੈਨੜੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.

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