

# Patients requesting a change of consultant or second opinion

Patient Information Leaflet



## About this leaflet

This leaflet is for patients who are requesting a change of consultant or would like a second opinion.

## How to change a consultant

If you want to change your consultant you should make a request in writing giving your reasons. If you are unable to make a request in writing you should ask a member of staff, who will help you. You can also get help from service user and carer organisations or other professionals. There is a list of useful organisations at the back of this booklet.

- The request should be addressed to the relevant Associate Director. Associate Director contact details are listed at the back of this booklet.

## Changing your consultant

- Once you have made your request there is a two week waiting period. This gives the consultant, yourself and anyone else involved time to consider your request, and the reasons why you wish to change your consultant, and decide whether or not this can be resolved without changing consultant.

If it is considered that a delay of two weeks is unacceptable or undesirable bad for either you or your consultant then the Assistant Medical Director and Clinical Manager will ensure an immediate change will go ahead.

The two week period is also to make sure that when you made this request you had the capacity to do so. (Capacity is a legal term, which takes into account your ability to make decisions). If it is thought that you do not have the capacity to make the decision to request a change of consultant then you will be found help to make the request.

## What happens next

- After the two week period if the professionals involved in your care do not think that changing your consultant would be helpful to you, these reasons will be discussed with you by your consultant or other member of the team. If you accept these reasons then you will stay with your original consultant and the consultant will make a record of this in your patient record.

If after this discussion you still want to change your consultant, then the consultant will discuss this with the appropriate Clinical Manager and Associate Medical Director, who will make a decision whether or not your care will be transferred to another consultant. You will be informed at every stage of the decision making.

- If after the two week period it is decided that a change of consultant is appropriate then your consultant will transfer your care to a consultant colleague who will take over the management of your care. The new consultant is likely to work in the same area or with the same Community Mental Health staff, which makes changing easier. However, other consultants can be chosen. If for any reasons your consultant cannot find a colleague, who can take over your care the appropriate Clinical Manager and Associate Medical Director will find one on your behalf.

A decision will be made at this time about whether it is just the consultant's part of your care that will be transferred or whether all of your care will be transferred to a new team. You will be consulted about this. In the circumstances where you see a consultant in one team but professionals from a different Community Mental Health Team the advantages and disadvantages of this will be discussed with you and you will be able to make a decision about whether this is acceptable to you.

- Once a new consultant is identified they will discuss with you any disadvantage or risk of you moving to their care if this exists. You will be able to make a decision if this is acceptable to you. If the new consultant is happy to take over your care, this decision will be recorded in your patient record and you will be informed.

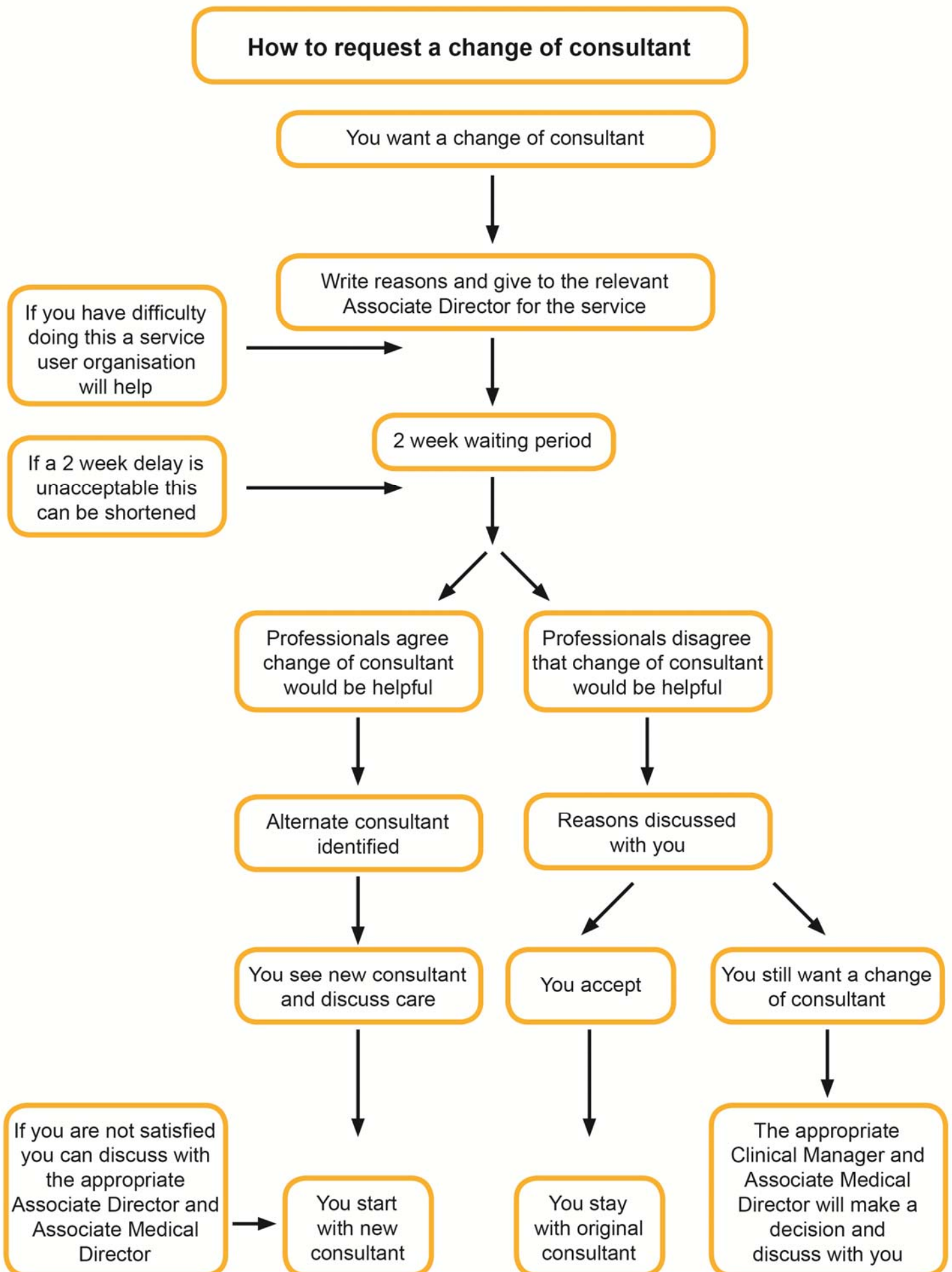
### **Specialist Services**

In certain specialist services, for example the mother and baby service, there is only one consultant in the service with no alternative consultant locally to change to. In these services it may be difficult to change consultant. If a request is made to change consultant in one of these services, the appropriate Clinical Manager and Associate Medical Director will discuss the request with you to see if a solution can be found.

### **What do I do if I'm not happy with the outcome of the process?**

- If having gone through this process you are not satisfied with the outcome you should say so and a discussion will take place with the appropriate Associate Director and Associate Medical Director.

## Flowchart – How to request a change of consultant



## How to seek a second opinion

The information below describes how, and in what circumstances, you or someone else may seek a second opinion on your behalf.

- A consultant treating you may think a second opinion would be helpful and may suggest this to you. It is up to you whether you see another consultant.
- If you would like a second opinion you can request this from your consultant, who may think this is appropriate and help you find a second opinion.
- Your GP (General Practitioner) is also able to ask for a second opinion without you discussing this with your consultant.
- If it is difficult for you to request a second opinion from the consultant that you are seeing then you can ask another professional member of the team or ask a service user organisation to help you in this request.
- In a situation where your consultant does not feel a second opinion would be helpful or appropriate, the consultant will ask the opinion of other people involved in your care such as other mental health professionals, your general practitioner, your carers and your relatives. If the consultant does not think you should have a second opinion they should explain this to you and record this in your patient record.

If the consultant does not think you should have a second opinion and after discussion with you, you still want a second opinion the consultant will involve the appropriate Assistant Medical Director, who will make a decision as to whether a second opinion should be sought.

- If you are between 16-18 years of age we will have to seek your consent if the request is made by your parents for a second opinion.

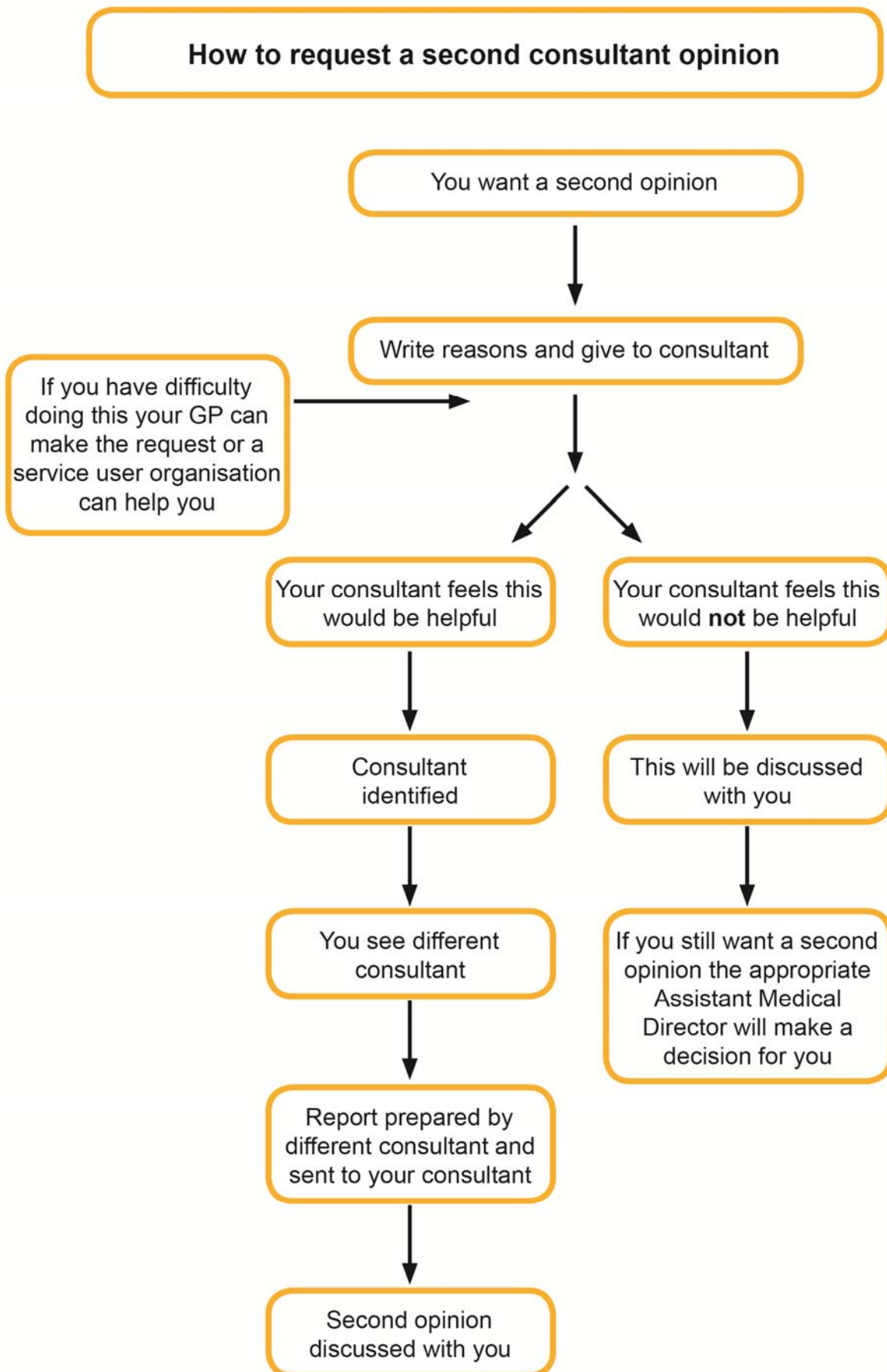
## How will the second opinion be given?

- After you have seen another consultant for a second opinion this will be provided in a written report, which will be available to you should you want to see it.

## Who will give the second opinion?

- When requesting a second opinion it is assumed that you will accept whoever is suggested to you. In practice this is likely to be your consultant's cross-cover partner or another consultant whose areas of interest or expertise are appropriate to your clinical situation. If any difficulties arise identifying a second opinion a discussion will be had with the appropriate Associate Director and Associate Medical Director, who will find a suitable consultant for you.

## Flowchart – How to request a second opinion



## Associate Director contact details: Northumberland and North Tyneside

<b>Access North Clinical Business Unit</b>	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis and Home Treatment</li> <li>• Recovery Partnership</li> <li>• Liaison</li> </ul>	Associate Directors St George's Park Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2NU
<b>Community North Clinical Business Unit</b>	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Mental Health Services</li> </ul>	Associate Directors St George's Park Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2NU
<b>Inpatient North Clinical Business Unit</b>	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Mental Health</li> <li>• Older Peoples' Service</li> <li>• Learning Disabilities and Autism</li> </ul>	Associate Directors St George's Park Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2NU
<b>Specialist Children and Young Peoples Services Clinical Business Unit</b>	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child and Adolescent Wards</li> <li>• Children and Young Peoples Eating Disorders Community Treatment Service</li> </ul>	Associate Directors Ferndene Prudhoe Northumberland NE42 5PB

## Associate Director contact details: Newcastle and Gateshead

<b>Access Central Clinical Business Unit</b>	
<p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis and Home Treatment</li> <li>• Drug and Alcohol Service</li> <li>• Liaison</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Directors                      Hartside Offices                      St Nicholas Hospital                      Jubilee Road                      Gosforth                      Newcastle upon Tyne                      NE3 3XT</p>
<b>Community Central Clinical Business Unit</b>	
<p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Mental Health Services</li> <li>• Day Hospital</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Directors                      Hartside Offices                      St Nicholas Hospital                      Jubilee Road                      Gosforth                      Newcastle upon Tyne                      NE3 3XT</p>
<b>Inpatient Central Clinical Business Unit</b>	
<p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Mental Health</li> <li>• Older Peoples' Service</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Directors                      Hartside Offices                      St Nicholas Hospital                      Jubilee Road                      Gosforth                      Newcastle upon Tyne                      NE3 3XT</p>
<b>Secure Care Services Clinical Business Unit</b>	
<p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure Services</li> <li>• Secure Outreach Treatment</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Directors                      Northgate Hospital                      Morpeth                      Northumberland                      NE61 3BP</p>



## Associate Director contact details: Sunderland and South Tyneside

<b>Access South Clinical Business Unit</b>	
<p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis and Home Treatment</li> <li>• Addiction Service</li> <li>• Liaison</li> <li>• Veterans Service</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Directors Hopewood Park Waterworks Road, Ryhope Sunderland SR2 0NB</p>
<b>Community South Clinical Business Unit</b>	
<p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Mental Health Services</li> <li>• Older Adults Day Service</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Directors Monkwearmouth Hospital Newcastle Road Sunderland SR5 1NB</p>
<b>Inpatient South Clinical Business Unit</b>	
<p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Mental Health</li> <li>• Older Peoples' Service</li> <li>• Learning Disabilities and Autism</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Directors Hopewood Park Waterworks Road, Ryhope Sunderland SR2 0NB</p>
<b>Neurological Services and Specialist Mental Health Services Clinical Business Unit</b>	
<p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neurological Services</li> <li>• Specialist Mental Health Services</li> <li>• Specialist Psychological Therapies</li> <li>• Perinatal Community</li> </ul>	<p>Associate Directors Walkergate Park Centre for Neurorehabilitation and Neuropsychiatry Benfield Road Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 4QD</p>

## What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website [www.ntw.nhs.uk](http://www.ntw.nhs.uk) (click on the 'Contact Us' tab)
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- email [complaints@ntw.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints@ntw.nhs.uk) Please note that information sent to the Trust via email is sent at your own risk
- We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention. You can provide feedback in the following ways:
  - the quickest way for you to do this is to complete our short online survey at [www.ntw.nhs.uk/poy](http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/poy)
  - complete a Points of You survey, available on wards, reception areas or from staff.
  - some areas of the Trust have electronic feedback touch screens, staff can help you to use these.

## Useful contacts

- **Pathways Advocacy**  
Mental Health Matters  
Room 206, Aidan House, Sunderland Road, Gateshead, NE8 3HU  
T: 0191 477 7380  
[www.mentalhealthmatters.com](http://www.mentalhealthmatters.com)
- **Independent Advocacy North Tyneside**  
62 Howard Street, North Shields, NE30 1AF  
T: 0191 259 6662  
F: 0191 296 3767  
E: [info@iane.org.uk](mailto:info@iane.org.uk)  
[www.iane.org.uk](http://www.iane.org.uk)
- **Advocacy Centre North**  
Higham House, Higham Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8AF  
T: 0191 235 7013  
F: 0191 230 5640  
E: [advocacy@cvsnewcastle.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@cvsnewcastle.org.uk)  
[www.advocacycentrenorth.org.uk](http://www.advocacycentrenorth.org.uk)
- **Total Voice Sunderland Advocacy Service**  
Room 1 Qd, North Sands Business Centre, Liberty Way, Sunderland, SR6 0QA  
T: 0191 543 7890  
F: 0191 510 5099  
E: [referrals.sunderland@voiceability.org](mailto:referrals.sunderland@voiceability.org)  
[www.totalvoicesunderland.org](http://www.totalvoicesunderland.org)
- **Adapt (North East)**  
Burn Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3HN  
T: 01434 600 599  
F: 01434 605 251  
E: [generaloffice@adapt-tynedale.org.uk](mailto:generaloffice@adapt-tynedale.org.uk)  
<http://adapt-ne.org.uk>
- **Patient Advice and Liaison Service**  
North of Tyne - Tel: 0800 032 0202  
South of Tyne - Tel: 0800 328 4397



Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre Tel: 0191 246 7288

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