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[About Us](#)

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For Service Providers

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# Protection of Vulnerable Adults

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## Introduction

Safeguarding adults in Wales is the responsibility of Local Authorities, Health Boards and Social Services.

This factsheet looks at the role of the independent investigating officer at Stage 2 of the statutory Social Services complaint procedure.

Complaints about the actions of Social Services in terms of safeguarding adults at risk. We can also look into complaints about the Health Service's actions in such cases. We cannot, however, look at any complaints about the Police. If you want to complain about the part played by the Police in these matters, you must complain to the relevant Police Commissioner.

## What we can do

We can:

- Look at a complaint that an adult at risk has suffered injustice as a result of failure in service or a failure in administration by a Local Authority in Wales;
- Look at a complaint about whether a Local Authority has followed the statutory adult safeguarding procedure and the statutory Social Services complaint procedure;
- Look at a complaint that a Local Authority has failed to act on the recommendations of the independent investigating officer at Stage 2 of the statutory Social Services complaint procedure.

## What we cannot do

We cannot:

- Directly investigate complaints about abuse. That is the responsibility of the organisations involved in safeguarding adults at risk;
- Look at any issues of suspension, discipline or any personnel issues about members of Social Services staff.

## Issues to bear in mind

We can look into complaints about the actions of Social Services in terms of safeguarding adults at risk. We can also look into complaints about the Health Service's actions in such cases. We cannot, however, look at any complaints about the Police. If you want to complain about the part played by the Police in these matters, you must complain to the relevant Police Commissioner.

Health Boards can also be responsible for carrying out an investigation in circumstances where alleged abuse has taken place within an NHS care setting or where an NHS employee is alleged to have abused an adult at risk.

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Social Services if there are good

We can also investigate complaints about a Health Board and its management of adult safeguarding concerns. The police conduct investigations into any alleged criminal offences.

We may need to share information with other bodies where we are of the view that there may be a threat to the health or safety of one or more persons and believe that the information should be disclosed in the public interest.

## Further Information

You may want to consider contacting the following organisations for advice:

**Age Cymru** provides information and advice to older people, their families, friends and carers in Wales. You can contact them on **08000 223 444** or via their website at <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/>

**Mind Cymru** provides assistance for people with mental health problems. You can contact them by phone on

**0300 123 3393** or via their website at <https://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/mind-cymru/>

**MENCAP Cymru** offers advice, information and support on any issue to do with learning disabilities. You can contact them by phone on **0808 8000 300** or via their website at <https://wales.mencap.org.uk/>

**Older People's Commissioner** is an independent voice and champion for older people across Wales.

You can contact them on 03442 640670 or online at [www.olderpeoplewales.com](http://www.olderpeoplewales.com)

## Contact us

If you are not sure who to contact, please contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Also available in Welsh

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### Get In Touch

0300 790 0203 Our phone line is open 10am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-4pm Monday – Friday

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales  
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed  
CF35 5LJ

You can contact us in Welsh and we will respond in Welsh.  
This will not lead to a delay in responding.  
All our documents are available in both Welsh and English.

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