

**1800 696 784**

For information about contraception,  
pregnancy options and sexual health.

# Your healthcare rights: How to make a complaint

Everyone has the right to access safe, high quality health care.

As a patient in Victoria, you have the right to:

- Be treated with **respect, dignity and consideration**
- Be clearly and openly **informed** about services, treatment, options and costs
- Be **included in decisions** about your care
- **Privacy and confidentiality** of your personal information

You can find out more about your healthcare rights in the [Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights](#).

As a patient or a family member, you can complain if you think your rights have been violated. This could be because you are not happy with the quality of care you have received, or the way health workers have treated you.

For example, while some doctors may object to abortion, *they are required by law to refer you to a another doctor who can provide abortion information.*

**You may be entitled to make a complaint about your treatment if a health worker has:**

- Tried to **obstruct or delay** your ability to access an abortion (eg. refusing to refer you to a relevant health service)
- Provided **misinformation** (eg. misrepresenting the risks of abortion, stating abortion is illegal, or stating they require consent from your partner/parent)
- Provided an **inappropriate referral** (eg. to an anti-choice helpline, maternity service, tests you don't require, or to a service that does not provide abortion)
- **Shared your medical information** without your consent (eg. to a partner, parent, community member or another medical service)
- **Judged** your choice

The Better Health Channel has some more information about making a complaint about [a health service](#), [a GP \(doctor\)](#), [hospital](#) or [disability service](#).

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## Where to make a complaint

If you feel that your patient rights have been violated in any way, you can make a complaint through:

- **Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)**  
1300 419 495 (weekdays, 9am – 5pm)  
Contact AHPRA if you have safety concerns about an individual registered health practitioner. This may include doctors, nurses, radiologists, pharmacists, psychologists.
- **Health Complaints Commissioner (HCC)**  
1300 582 113 (weekdays, 9:30am – 3pm)  
The HCC resolves complaints about health services and the handling of health information in Victoria. This includes complaints around unsatisfactory treatment, negligent or unprofessional behaviour, admission or referral problems, lack of respect or privacy, and mishandled health information. You can make a complaint about practitioners such as GPs, specialists, nurses and social workers, as well as organisations such as hospitals.
- **The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission**  
1300 292 153 (weekdays, 10am - 2pm)  
The Commission provides a free, confidential and supportive complaints resolution process, if you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation, or racial or religious vilification.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (MHWC)**  
1800 246 054  
The MHWC deals with complaints about Victorian publicly funded mental health and wellbeing services. These include hospital-based, community, residential, specialist and forensic services. They are unable to deal with complaints about private mental health services or services funded by the Australian Government.
- **NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission**  
1800 035 544 (weekdays, 9am - 5pm)  
The Commission takes complaints about NDIS funded services, including services that are not provided in safe and respectful way, or delivered to an appropriate standard.
- **Victorian Disability Services Commission**  
1800 677 342  
Handles complaints about DFFH funded disability services, such as disability forensic service or TAC funded service.
- **National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline**  
1800 677 342  
An Australian-wide hotline for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disability.

Last updated 28/5/24