



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Help for patients,
relatives and carers



PALS is your first point of contact for any help you might need, as a patient, carer or visitor attending the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.

What is PALS?

PALS is a liaison service, speaking with wards and departments to provide an answer to your enquiry. This may involve asking a clinician or member of one of the clinical administrative teams (CATs), to contact you directly. We will discuss this with you.

There are many ways that PALS helps patients and their relatives.

Here are a few examples of how PALS can help you:

- If you have a query relating to an upcoming surgery or procedure;
- If you are unhappy with the treatment you or someone close to you is receiving;
- If an inpatient is due to leave the hospital and you are unsure what happens next;
- If you have questions relating to the care your recently deceased relative received.

PALS will aim to provide a reply to your enquiry within 5 working days. Sometimes, it may take longer than this, because we simply need more time to find the answer or because the enquiry is more complicated. When we first speak with you, we will usually be able to tell you if your query will take a little longer to answer. Either way, if we find it is taking longer than expected, we will be in contact with you to keep you informed. We want to do the best we can to help you.

How to contact PALS

Contact us by telephone, email, letter, or by visiting our office (no appointment needed). We are open Monday to Friday 8.30-4.30pm.



Call us on: **0118 322 8338**



Email us at: **PALS@royalberkshire.nhs.uk**



Write to us at: **PALS, Main Entrance, Level 2,
Royal Berkshire Hospital, Craven Road, Reading RG1 5AN**

If your concern is more complicated, we may ask you to put this in writing to us. We will be happy to discuss this with you in the first instance and can advise you if it needs to be put into writing, or if it is something we can help with over the telephone.

If you need additional support

The staff working in PALS are employed by the Royal Berkshire Hospital to provide a confidential service to all patients, their relatives and carers. We are here to listen and help; however, we are not an advocacy service. If you need advocacy support, please contact:

Healthwatch Reading 3 rd Floor Reading Central Library, Abbey Square Reading RG1 3BQ 0118 937 2295 <u>info@healthwatchreading.co.uk</u>	Healthwatch Wokingham Waterford House Erftstadt Court Wokingham RG40 2YF 0118 418 1418 <u>enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk</u>
Healthwatch West Berkshire Broadway House, 4-8 The Broadway, Northbrook Street Newbury RG14 1BA 01635 886 210 <u>contact@healthwatchwestberks.org.uk</u>	Healthwatch Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead Fernbank Road Ascot SL5 8JW 01753 851725 <u>info@healthwatchwam.co.uk</u>

If you are NOT a resident of these councils, please contact:

The Advocacy People, 0330 440 9000 info@theadvocypeople.org.uk

Making a formal complaint

You may decide that PALS is unable to help you on this occasion and that you would like to raise a formal complaint. Or we may suggest that your enquiry would be better addressed as a formal complaint. PALS is happy to discuss this and offer advice.

To raise a formal complaint, you will need to put the concerns in writing (if you haven't already done so via PALS). The details to do so are as follows:



Email us at: complaints@royalberkshire.nhs.uk



Write to us at: **Complaints, Main Entrance, Level 2, Royal Berkshire Hospital, Craven Road, Reading, RG1 5AN**



You can call the Complaints Team on **0118 322 8338**

We will be in contact with you directly to acknowledge your complaint and explain what happens next.

We aim to investigate formal complaints within 25 working days and you will receive a response, either by letter or in a meeting.

Messaging service

PALS also offer a messaging service to enable you to send a message to a loved one while they are in hospital. Your message will be presented using our colourful template, to make it more memorable for the recipient. To do this, please email the PALS team directly.

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

Find out more about PALS by visiting

www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/about-us/contact-us/patient-advice-and-liaison-service-pals/