

## Customer service areas

**This guide explains how to file complaints about health care quality and safety concerns. The chart on page 2 has contact information for each complaint type.**

- [Beneficiary and Family Centered Care - Quality Improvement Organizations \(BFCC-QIOs\)](#) help people with Medicare with their concerns about the quality of care they get from a Medicare provider.
  - A QIO is a group of health quality experts, providers, and consumers organized to improve the quality of care delivered to people with Medicare. The BFCC-QIOs review complaints and quality of care. They also help improve the effectiveness, efficiency, economy, and quality of services. BFCC-QIOs provide services to help with complaints and quality of care reviews.
  - The BFCC-QIO will decide if your concerns will be handled through Immediate Advocacy or a formal review process. Immediate Advocacy is an informal process used to quickly resolve a verbal complaint. If you and your QIO representative agree to use Immediate Advocacy, the BFCC-QIO contacts your doctor or other health care provider at once on your behalf. Formal and informal reviews aren't meant to punish health care providers. They help improve the effectiveness and quality of services offered to people with Medicare.
  - You have the right to a [fast appeal](#) if you think your Medicare-covered services are ending too soon (like if your hospital says that you must be discharged and you disagree). Ask your BFCC-QIO to help [file an appeal](#).
- [State Survey Agencies](#) oversee health care facilities taking part in Medicare or Medicaid and are also part of state health departments. They certify that the care and services given to residents and patients meet federal and state regulations. If not, the facility may be subject to enforcement actions (like fines) when not in compliance and there are immediate risks to resident safety or harm has occurred. You can contact your State Survey Agency if you:
  - Have a complaint about improper care or unsafe conditions in health care settings like a hospital, home health agency, hospice, rehabilitation facility, nursing home, dialysis or transplant center, or clinical laboratory; or
  - Are worried about the health care, treatment, or services that you or someone else did or didn't get.
- [End-Stage Renal Disease \(ESRD\) Networks](#) check and improve the quality of care given to people with ESRD and can help you with concerns about your dialysis or transplant center. If you're worried about your care, you can file your concern directly with your facility or with your ESRD Network. Contact your ESRD Network for complaints like:
  - The facility staff doesn't treat you with respect;
  - The staff doesn't allow you to eat during dialysis when you're hungry and have specific nutritional needs;
  - Your dialysis shifts conflict with your work hours, and the facility won't let you change your shift; or
  - You have made complaints to your facility, and they weren't resolved.
- [Long Term Care \(LTC\) Ombudsman Programs](#) are in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam under the authorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA). These LTC Ombudsman Programs work with residents to resolve concerns related to the health, safety, welfare, and rights of individuals who live in LTC facilities, like nursing homes and other residential care communities. These programs promote policies that support and improve LTC services at the facility, local, state, and national levels.
- [State Medical Boards](#) can often help with and act on concerns you have with your doctor or other health care provider, like unprofessional conduct, incompetent practice, or licensing questions or concerns.

Potential concerns	Who to contact
--------------------	----------------

All of the organizations listed below can be found on the **Medicare Contacts page** (<https://www.medicare.gov/contacts/>)

BFCC-QIOs	
-----------	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drug errors (like being given the wrong drug or being given drugs that interact in a negative way)</li> <li>Getting unnecessary or inappropriate treatment (like being given the wrong treatment or treatment you didn't need)</li> <li>Getting unnecessary or inappropriate surgery (like being operated on for a condition that could've been effectively treated with drugs or physical therapy)</li> <li>Not getting treatment after your condition changed (like not getting treatment after abnormal test results or when you've had a complication)</li> <li>Getting discharged from the hospital too soon</li> <li>Getting incomplete discharge instructions and/or arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://qioprogram.org/file-complaint">Qioprogram.org/file-complaint</a></li> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://www.medicare.gov/claims-appeals/how-do-i-file-an-appeal">Medicare.gov/claims-appeals/how-do-i-file-an-appeal</a> for information about filing an appeal</li> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://www.medicare.gov/claims-appeals/your-right-to-a-fast-appeal">Medicare.gov/claims-appeals/your-right-to-a-fast-appeal</a> for information about fast appeals</li> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://www.medicare.gov/Contacts/">Medicare.gov/Contacts/</a></li> <li>❖ Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to get the phone number of your BFCC-QIO. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.</li> </ul>
--	---

State Survey Agencies	
-----------------------	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unsafe or unsanitary conditions in health care facilities or with home health agencies</li> <li>Staffing concerns or problems with improper care (like mistakes in giving out or prescribing prescription drugs)</li> <li>Patient or resident abuse or neglect</li> <li>Concerns about resident rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://www.medicare.gov/Contacts/">Medicare.gov/Contacts/</a></li> <li>❖ Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to get the phone number of your State Survey Agency. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.</li> </ul>
--	---

ESRD Networks	
---------------	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns about your dialysis or transplant center</li> <li>Not being treated with respect</li> <li>Complaints go unresolved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://www.medicare.gov/Contacts/">Medicare.gov/Contacts/</a></li> <li>❖ Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to get the phone number of your ESRD Network. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.</li> </ul>
---	--

LTC Ombudsman Programs	
------------------------	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns about the quality of life and care within nursing homes and other residential care communities</li> <li>Violation of residents' rights or dignity</li> <li>Improper discharge of patient</li> <li>Slow response to requests for assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://acl.gov/programs/Protecting-Rights-and-Preventing-Abuse/Long-term-Care-Ombudsman-Program">acl.gov/programs/Protecting-Rights-and-Preventing-Abuse/Long-term-Care-Ombudsman-Program</a></li> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://www.medicare.gov/Contacts/">Medicare.gov/Contacts/</a></li> <li>❖ Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to get the phone number of the LTC Ombudsman for your area. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.</li> </ul>
---	---

State Medical Boards	
----------------------	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unprofessional behavior by your health care provider</li> <li>Incompetent practice by your doctor or other licensed health care provider</li> <li>Licensing questions or concerns about your doctors and other health care providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://fsmb.org/contact-a-state-medical-board/">fsmb.org/contact-a-state-medical-board/</a></li> <li>❖ Visit <a href="https://www.medicare.gov/Contacts/">Medicare.gov/Contacts/</a></li> <li>❖ Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to get the phone number of your State Medical Board. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.</li> </ul>
--	--