

Quarterly Bulletin

**October
2018**

My third Bulletin contains news of a significant international conference being held in Belfast later this month. The subject of the conference is how Ombudsmen organisations use their powers to investigate on their 'Own Initiative'. My Office will be using the conference to explore best practice in this area and to set out the local context. Find out more by following the link below.

The Bulletin also highlights a selection of our investigation reports published during the last quarter. The reports examine complaints brought by members of the public in the areas of central government, health and planning.

Marie Anderson, Ombudsman

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[Ombudsman to host international conference on Own Initiative investigation powers](#)

Preparations are under way for a major international conference being held in Belfast next week. Delegates are meeting to exchange ideas and explore best practice on the issue of 'own initiative' investigations, which allow Ombudsmen to investigate without having received a complaint.



[Ombudsman asks Department to refund complainant after finding it unfairly recovered payment of farming subsidy](#)

The Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs has been asked to refund money it recovered from an applicant of the Single Farm Payments scheme (SFP) after an investigation found that unclear Departmental guidance caused confusion among claimants.



[Investigation finds that patient was given adequate information about her medical condition on discharge from hospital](#)

The Ombudsman has found that staff from the Ulster Hospital followed full and appropriate procedures when they discharged a patient who had been in their High Dependency Unit while undergoing treatment for a serious illness.



[NIPSO - A short video guide](#)

We have produced a short animated video for members of the public. It explains in simple terms when they can complain about a public service and how the Ombudsman may be able to help. Click on the link above to view the video on our new YouTube page.



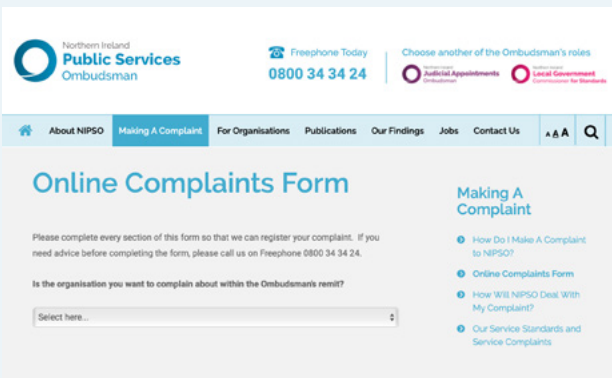
[Trust failed to provide adequate care and treatment to patient during last weeks of her life](#)

An investigation has found that appropriate and timely intervention may have alleviated a patient's discomfort and distress in the last weeks of her life. The Ombudsman found a number of failures by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust in relation to the patient's nutritional care and treatment, and failings with regard to some aspects of her nursing care and treatment.



[Ombudsman critical of Transport NI's failure to provide and record reasons why four planning applications were considered acceptable](#)

An investigation into the way Transport NI (now DfI Roads) dealt with consultation responses to a planning application has led to the Ombudsman making a number of recommendations.



[How to make a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman](#)

The quickest way for your complaint to be registered with us is by completing our online complaints form. The form takes you through a series of questions about your complaint.



[Investigation into a complaint that slow response by hospital staff contributed to patient's loss of sight](#)

Ombudsman finds that man's 'red-eye' should have been monitored more closely, and that an earlier diagnosis would have improved the chances of his vision being retained.

[The care and treatment of a patient at the Royal Victoria Hospital](#)

An Ombudsman investigation has found that a hospital patient should have been given higher levels of fluid in the days before he died, but that while this may have prolonged his life for a time his death could not have been avoided.