

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**SUBJECT:** HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS**POLICY NO.** 440

PURPOSE:: To use complaints in identifying and resolving problems thereby improving the delivery of service by the Department.**POLICY::** All complaints shall be resolved promptly. Complaints should be resolved at the level closest to the source. If the community or the consumer cannot obtain satisfaction at this level, an appeal may be made to the Deputy Director of the Region.

Each Department facility shall designate an officer as an ombudsman or consumer advocate who shall be directly responsible to the Deputy Director of the Region. Such advocates shall be responsible at all times to any consumer who wishes to air a complaint or grievance.

The officer or designee of the Deputy Director of the Region shall document all complaints and grievances to ensure effective follow-up and resolution of such complaints.

GUIDE:: The consumer complaint process should be simple. This requires the:

1. Clear posting of procedures to be followed, such as persons to be contacted.
2. Removal of language or ethnic barriers between the consumer and the responsible departmental agency.
3. Honoring of a patient's rights to appeal.

Each Deputy Director of the Region shall develop a process for appeal and a method by which documentation of similar complaints shall be transferred into affirmative action on the part of the Department to resolve existing problems for the consumer or the community.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Nov 24, 1975**SUPERCEDES:****APPROVED:** Signature on File