

NHS Continuing Healthcare

*Introduction of Timescales for Reviews of NHS
CHC Eligibility Decisions from 1st April 2012*

Frequently Asked Questions

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the timescales which will apply to the review process for NHS Continuing Healthcare (NHS CHC)

For current cases from 1st April 2012, the following time limits will be introduced:

- for an individual or their representative to seek review of a decision with regard to eligibility for NHS CHC funding by the local PCT or responsible NHS body at a local level; this time limit should be no later than **6 months** from the date that the notification of the eligibility decision is given to the individual;
- a time frame for the responsible NHS body to deal with a request for a local review. This should be within **3 months** of receipt of the request;
- a time limit for requesting an Independent Review through the SHA or responsible NHS body, after a local review of the decision has taken place and been notified. This time limit should be no later than **6 months** following notification of the responsible body's decision; and
- a time frame for the Independent Review to be conducted, which should be within **3 months** of the request.

2. Why is the Department of Health introducing this?

The introduction of these timescales will bring greater clarity for both individuals and organisations, of the review procedures in place for NHS CHC eligibility decisions.

The introduction of the timescales is also in line with the NHS Complaints process and also the process for bringing complaints to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

3. Isn't this unfair to individuals? This may be a difficult time for the individual concerned and their family.

The introduction of timescales for the review process where individuals are unhappy with the NHS CHC eligibility decision, will provide individuals and their families with greater clarity about what to expect and when, as they go through the process. The PCT will inform the individual or their representative of the process and timescales which apply when the assessment process commences.

In the absence of exceptional circumstances, late applications for a review of an eligibility decision will not be considered if the deadline has passed.

4. My episode of care commenced on 2nd March 2012, do these timescales apply?

The timescales apply to any cases where the notification of the eligibility decision, or request for a review of a decision, is made on or after 1st April 2012. It is the date of notification of decision (rather than the date when care commenced) which is relevant in triggering the timescales for seeking and completing reviews (whether at local review stage or Independent Review stage). However, many PCTs already try to work as closely as possible to these good practice guidelines.

5. How will I know what the timescales are?

The PCT responsible for assessing you for NHS CHC has a responsibility to inform you at the time of notification of the eligibility decision of the timescales and the process that will apply should you wish to request a review of the eligibility decision.