

**Consultation on the draft Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill
WIHA's response to the Finance Committee's call for evidence
Introduction**

Introduction

1. The Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Finance Committee's Call for Evidence on this draft Bill. As per the Committee's directive, ISCAS has focused its response on those consultation questions of direct relevance to its membership.
2. ISCAS has operated the Complaints Code of Practice across the UK Independent healthcare sector for fifteen years.

Consultation Questions

Question 14 - Do you have any comments on the new provision enabling the Ombudsman to investigate the whole complaint when a combination of treatment has been received by public and private health services providers (see sections 10(1)(d) and 10(2))

ISCAS welcomes this provision and believes it would be beneficial for patients in these circumstances.

Question 15 - Does section 10(2) adequately cover anyone who has received a combination of public and private treatment?

All ISCAS members would be covered by the definition in section 10(2) and therefore all patients who have received treatment in Welsh Independent Hospitals would be covered.

Question 18 – Should the Ombudsman have powers to recover costs incurred in investigating private health services?

ISCAS members already pay an annual subscription to cover the management resource of ISCAS.

Question 21 Should the Ombudsman's power in relation to obtaining information, documents, evidence and facilities also apply to own initiative investigations and investigations into private health services (see section 17)?

ISCAS does not support this proposal on the basis that a mechanism for independent review of complaints already exists at no cost to the taxpayer. Furthermore, ISCAS would welcome the opportunity to enter into an information sharing agreement with the PSO for complaints that cross between the NHS and the independent sector.

Conclusion

ISCAS submitted evidence to the National Assembly for Wales Finance Committee on the Consideration of Powers Public Services Ombudsman (PSO) for Wales – January 2015. The content of this evidence remains current. ISCAS does not support the Ombudsman's proposal to extend his jurisdiction to include private healthcare services in Wales.

18 January 2016