

Witness Information Booklet

Easy read



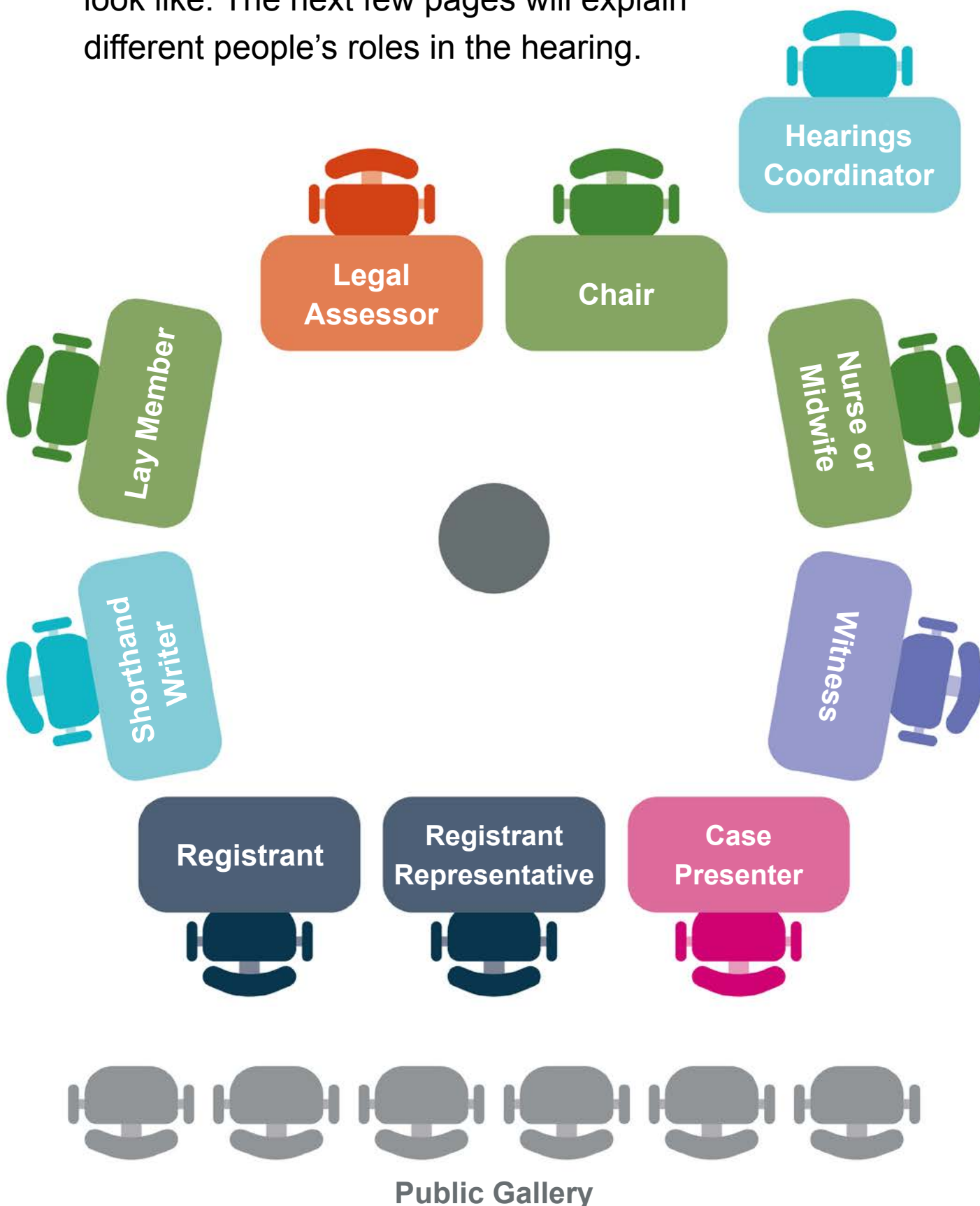
Who will be in the hearing?

Cross-examination

Other important information

Who will be in the hearing?

This is what the hearing room is likely to look like. The next few pages will explain different people's roles in the hearing.



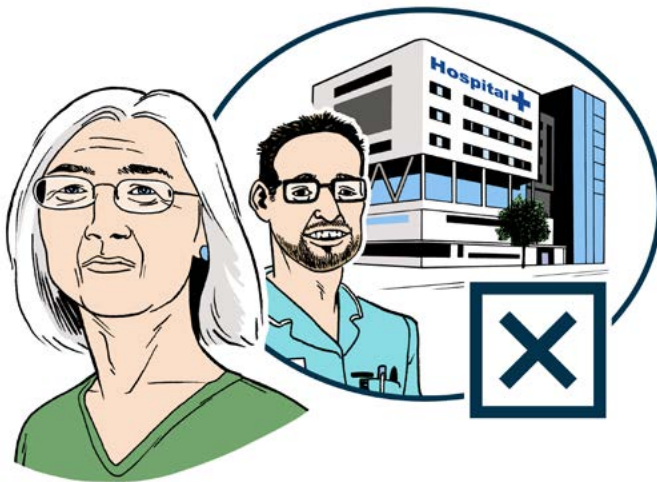


There are **3 Panel Members** who will make the decision.

The **Chair** is responsible for the overall hearing.



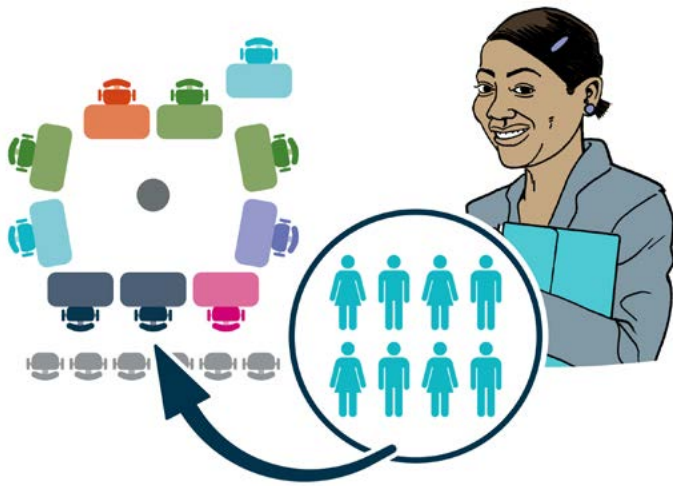
There will be a **Nurse or a Midwife** on the panel.



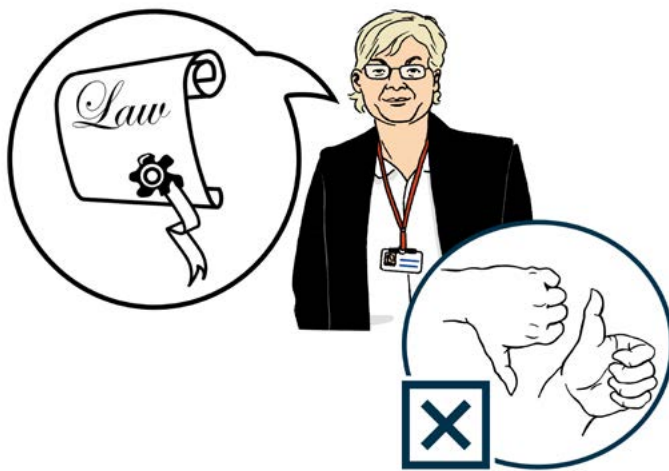
There will also be one **Lay Member**, which means they do not work in nursing or midwifery.



The **Hearings Coordinator** writes up the panel's decision, but is not involved in the decision making process.



The Hearings Coordinator is also responsible for making sure everyone who needs to be in the hearing is there.



The **Legal Assessor** is an independent lawyer that gives the panel advice on the law.

They are not involved in the making of the decision.

The panel can accept or reject the legal assessor's advice.



They need to have 10 years experience.



The **Case Presenter** is a lawyer and presents the case (complaint) to panel for the NMC.



The **Registrant** is the nurse, midwife or nursing associate being investigated.

They may be at the hearing and may have a representative to speak on their behalf.



They may also call **witnesses**.

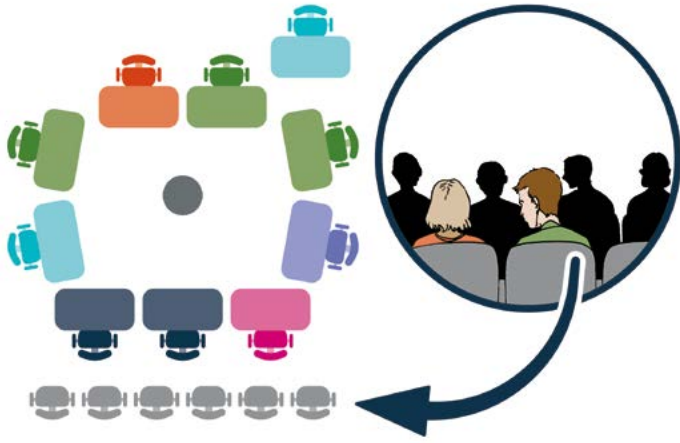


The NMC may decide to call witnesses in support of their case.

The nurse or midwife being investigated, or their representative, will also be able to ask the witness questions.



There may also be witnesses speaking on behalf of the nurse or midwife being investigated.



NMC hearings are public hearings so **members of the public** are allowed to be there.



Journalists and observers may attend the hearing, but not if the case is about someone's health.

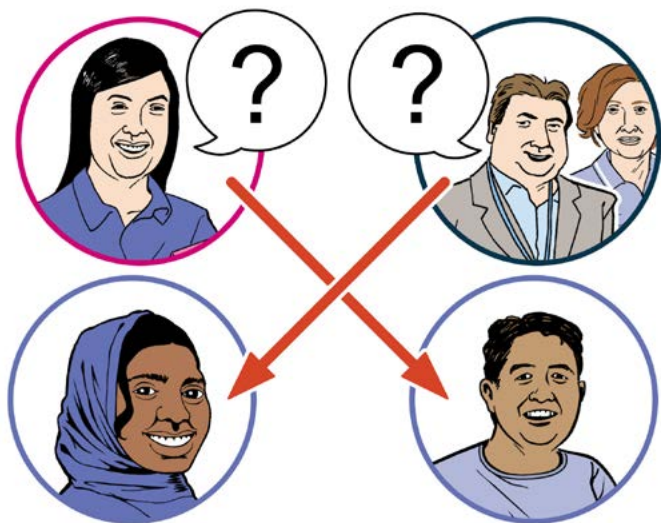


Student nurses and midwives also go to hearings as part of their training.



There may be other people in the public gallery, such as witness liaison officers, other NMC staff or staff who are on training.

Cross-examination



Cross-examination is when one side of a hearing asks questions to the other side's witnesses.

NMC Nursing & Midwifery Council



For example, a witness for the NMC might be asked questions by the nurse or midwife being investigated.



If you're a witness at the hearing and the nurse or midwife is there, you can expect to be cross-examined.

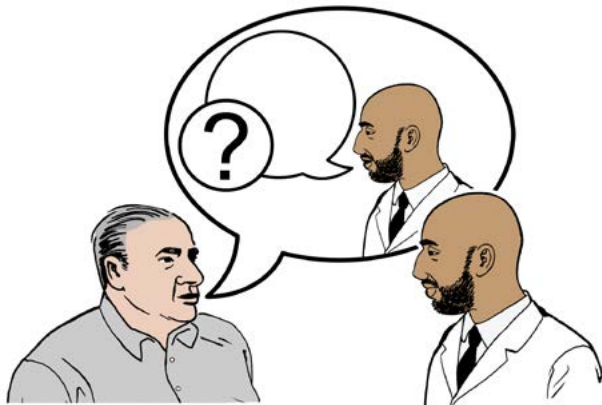
We know that giving evidence can be stressful. These are some of things that can help:



Read your witness statement before you give evidence to help you remember.



Listen carefully to the questions.



Questions may be difficult to understand.

If you don't understand a question you can ask for it to be repeated, or said in a simpler way.



You can take your time to answer questions.

You will have time to think of clear and careful answers.

Things that can help (continued):



Only answer the questions you have been asked.



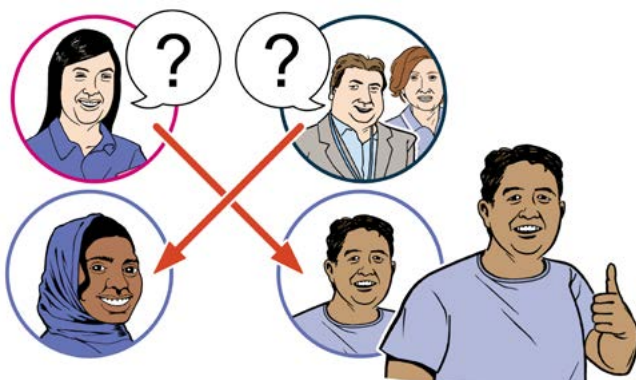
If you are asked about a certain document, you will be given time to look at it.



Someone may challenge your story or evidence.

It is their job to do so.

Don't worry if you feel like they don't believe you.



Keep calm and remember that cross-examination is an important part of a fair hearing.

Things that can help (continued):



If you do not know the answer or do not remember something, just say so.

Try not to guess.



There may be people watching in the room and they may leave or enter the room when you are giving evidence.

Try to ignore them.



If you are feeling stressed you can ask the chair for a short break.

Your evidence is important to the hearing. The panel are trying to get the clearest view of the events and will appreciate you coming to the hearing to give evidence.

Other important information

Witness evidence



Please don't talk about the case with other people as it can cause unfairness.



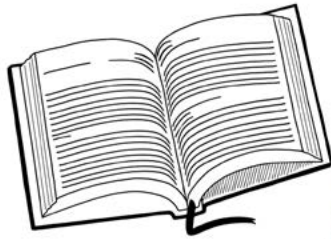
Please remember that witnesses from other hearings will be sharing the witness room so please don't talk about the case with them.

Please think about how other people might be affected.

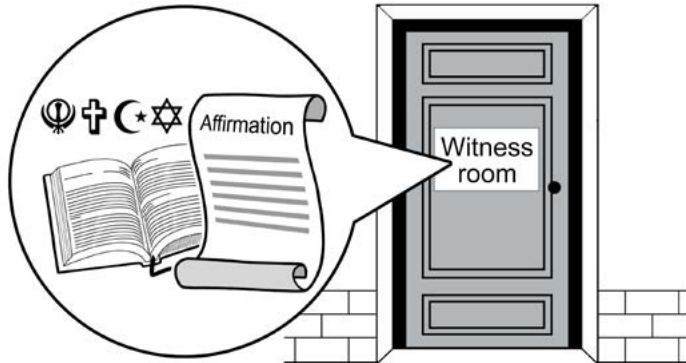
Swearing in of witnesses



Before you giving evidence, you will be asked to swear an oath to tell the truth.



This can either be a religious oath on a holy book or a non-religious affirmation. Either an oath or affirmation is ok.



Examples of these oaths can be found in the witness room.

Reasonable adjustments



Please let us know if we can make any reasonable adjustments to make it easier for you to give your evidence.



We have induction loops. Please let us know if it would be useful to use one in the hearing.

Meals & refreshments



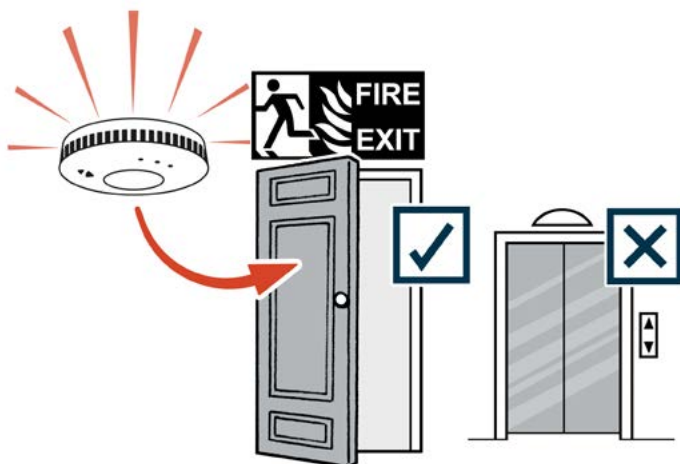
The lunch and refreshments provided are only for witnesses.

Fire alarm



There will be a fire alarm test every week at our hearings centres.

Witness Liaison staff will tell you if this will be happening when you are here.



If the alarm goes off and you are not expecting it, please leave the building using the emergency exits. (Please do not use the lifts).

Reflection & Prayer room



We have a reflection and prayer room.

Please let witness liaison or reception know if you would like to use this room for prayer or reflection and we will do our best to make this available.

Digital audio recording (DAR)



DAR is equipment we use to record what is said during the hearing.

However, some hearings still have shorthand writers.

www.nmc.org.uk

NMC Nursing &
Midwifery
Council



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