

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

The aim of the practice is to provide a good service for our patients and we should therefore value their comments, suggestions and complaints.

Comments

Patients can make their comments in person, by telephone or by letter. The complaint will need to be written down, even if done by a member of the team on behalf, and in the presence of, the patient. This is to ensure all facts are recorded correctly.

Procedure

Compliments and suggestions

Compliments should be passed on to the doctors and staff concerned. Suggestions will be considered and, where appropriate, be discussed at a practice meeting and action taken if necessary.

Complaints

The practice may receive complaints made by, or on behalf of a patient or former patient, who is receiving, or has received treatment at the practice. A relative or friend may also make a complaint on behalf of the patient. However, if the response is to include personal information, express consent must be obtained. If the patient is a child, only a parent or other person with legal responsibility for the child, may make a complaint on the patient's behalf.

Period within which complaints can be made

The period for making a complaint is:-

- Six months from the date on which the event which is the subject of the complaint occurred; or
- Six months from the date on which the event which the subject of the complaint comes to the complainant's notice, (provided that the complaint is made no later than 12 months after the date of the event).

Complaints handling

The Practice Manager is responsible for the operation of the complaints procedure and the investigation of complaints. The Senior Partner is responsible for the effective management of the complaints procedure and for ensuring action is taken in the light of the outcome of any investigation

Action upon receipt of a complaint

The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within two working days.

The complaint will be properly investigated.

A full response to the complaint will be provided to the patient within 28 working days. If the investigation is prolonged, the complainant will be kept informed and given an indication of when a response will be available.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Where the investigation of the complaint requires consideration of the patient's medical records, the patient must be informed if the investigation involves disclosure of information contained in those records, to a person other than the doctors or employees of the practice.

Llais (formally the Community Health Council)

Llais exists to represent and protect public interests in health and social care by monitoring the quality of care, seeking redress where appropriate and acting as a source of information for local people.

The Chief Officer is available to advise and provide assistance to anyone with a suggestion or complaint about the health service.

The local Llais office can be contacted at:

Ladywell House
Newtown
Powys SY16 1JQ
Tel: 01686 627632

Resolution

The practice strives to resolve complaints locally. Where the patient remains unhappy with the complaints outcome, they may request a review by the Independent Review Secretariat within 28 days of the notification of the outcome. Following independent review, there is a further option of referring the patient's concerns to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The contact details are as follows:

Independent Complaints Secretariat
Mid & west Wales
PO Box 2
Brecon
Powys LD3 0XR

Tel: 01874 712748

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen
Pencoed
Cardiff CF35 5LJ
Tel: 01656 641150