

VALLEY and CHILWELL MEADOWS SURGERY

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (part 1)

If you have a complaint or a concern about the service you have received from the doctor or any of the staff working in this practice then we would like to know about it. We operate a practice complaints procedure which follows the principles of the NHS Complaints procedure (last updated April 2009).

How to make a complaint

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise with the person concerned and this may be the approach you try first. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know **as soon as possible** after the event and ideally within a few days as this helps us to establish what happened more easily. In any event, this should be:

- Within 12 months of the incident that caused the problem; or
- Within 12 months of the becoming aware of the matter causing the complaint. These time limits may be waived if there are good reasons why you could not bring your concern (s) to our attention sooner.

Complaints should be addressed to Craig Dorrington, the practice manager, or to any of the doctors. It will be a great help if you are as specific as possible about your complaint. Complaints may be made verbally or in writing.

Patients, carers and relatives will not be treated adversely as a result of having complained.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we have to know that you have their permission to do so. A note signed by the person concerned will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this.

Complaints about attached Staff

If you have complaints about the community nurses, health visitors or any attached staff not employed by the practice you should make these directly to the PCT's complaints administrator.

Complaining to the Primary Health Care Trust

We hope that, if you have a problem you will use our practice complaints procedure. We believe that this will give us the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and an opportunity for us to improve our practice. This does not affect your right to approach the local Primary Health Care Trust, if you feel you cannot raise the complaint with us or are dissatisfied with the results of our investigation. Their contact details are:

PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service)

Complaints Team

Freepost RRZL-GBTT-RJUJ

Patient Advice & Liaison Service

NHS Nottinghamshire County

NG21 0HJ

or

Complaints Team, NHS Nottinghamshire County

Birch House, Ransom Wood Business Park

Southwell Road West

Rainworth

Mansfield

Nottinghamshire

NG21 0JH Telephone 0800 028 3693 (please ask for PALS advisors)

Other help available.

You may wish to contact the East Midlands Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS). They are independent of the NHS and confidential. They can help you in your complaint resolution.

ICAS may be contacted on 0845 650 0088

You also have the right to ask the Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) to review your complaint if you remain unhappy once local resolution is completed. The address is:

The Parliamentary & Health Services Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

LONDON SW1P 4QP Tel 0345 015 4033

email is: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

VALLEY and MEADOWS SURGERY

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (Part 2)

This leaflet provides more information about what will happen once a complaint has been made.

Within three working days:

We shall acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days, either verbally or in writing and discuss the way forward. We will develop a plan of action for how the complaint will be handled and reasonable timescales for investigating and concluding the complaint.

We will then investigate your complaint, within the timescale agreed in the plan, with the aim of

- finding out what happened and what went wrong.
- making it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if you would like this...
- Identifying what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.

We shall contact you again when we have looked into your complaint. This will either be in the form of a written response or with the suggestion of a meeting with the complaints manager or the team member involved if you would prefer.

The written response:

This will normally include

- a summary of the complaint
- an explanation of the practice's view of the events
- an apology where appropriate
- the outcome of any meetings held
- details of what has been done to prevent a recurrence of the incident where appropriate
- suggestions as to what might happen next eg a further meeting or discussion
- Information of the PCT's complaint's procedure.

Arranging a meeting

Sometimes it is more appropriate and helpful to discuss issues with members from the practice. It is a good idea and we would welcome it for you to bring along a relative or friend although we will do all we can to make you feel at ease. You may choose to have any doctor or staff member you wish present and normally we would expect the complaints manager to be there.

The meeting will be arranged for as soon as we can practically arrange for the people you have specified to get together. Afterwards details of the meeting and decisions made will be sent to you.

Confidentiality

Even within the practice information relating to the complaint will be strictly kept on a need to know basis. All correspondence relating to the complaint will be held in a confidential file in the practice and not attached to the medical notes. They will be handled in a non-discriminatory manner.

Monitoring of complaints

All complaints are reviewed annually by the practice in an anonymous way. This is important so we can identify any recurrent themes or patterns of complaints. An annual complaints report is provided to the PCT.

Part 1 of the practice complaints procedure has contact details of the how to complaint to the PCT or Parliamentary & Health Services Ombudsman if you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint within the practice.

This complaint procedure will be reviewed every two years to ensure it is kept up to date with National and local guidelines.