

- ◆ **Complaining on behalf of someone else**

We adhere strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. So we need the written permission of the patient him or herself before disclosing medical details to any other persons. If there are problems or uncertainties, the Co-ordinator will be pleased to help by explaining the procedures we must adhere to.



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A step by step guide

**For
PATIENTS**

PRACTICE COMPLAINTS

PROCEDURE

This practice operates a complaints procedure, as part of the NHS system for dealing with complaints and it meets the national criteria.

If you have a complaint or concern about any service you have received, from a doctor or other member of staff, please let us know as soon as possible.

◆ **What the patient needs to do**

Many problems can be sorted out quickly at the time with the person concerned. However, if this is not the case and you wish to make a complaint, we have clear procedures to help resolve the problem.

Please play your part by informing us as soon as possible – within days, or at most weeks, of the event.

A detailed complaint must be made within six months of the incident that caused the problem, or within 6 months of discovering a problem, provided that it is within twelve months of the incident.

Ask to speak to our complaints co-ordinator (Jane Kimber—Business Manager). She will explain the procedure and you may wish to write in with your complaint or see the Co-ordinator.

It is helpful if you can give as many details as possible.

What the Co-ordinator will do

- ◆ She will make a full and accurate record of your complaint. She will acknowledge that the complaint has been received (within 2 working days if at all possible).
- ◆ The Co-ordinator will then initiate an investigation. This means finding out what happened and what was thought to have gone wrong. It may seem necessary to disclose certain medical records to a trusted outsider. If this is so, this will be explained and your permission sought. A reply will be forthcoming within 10 days of acknowledgement.
- ◆ She will provide you with an explanation and a conclusion, and be sure that you will receive an apology if this is called for. We try to resolve all issues locally and to the satisfaction of all concerned. In the NHS, this process is known as Local Resolution.



If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of this process, you are entitled to go to the second stage of the complaints procedure and ask for your complaint to be considered by the

Healthcare Commission. They can be

contacted on 020 7448 9200,

or write to them at:

**The Healthcare Commission
Complaints Team
Peter House
Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 5AN**

Or visit them at :

www.healthcarecommission.com

Should you wish to ask for the assistance of ICAS (Independent Complaints Advocacy Service) they can be contacted on 01892 540490 or write to them at

**ICAS, Ground floor,
7 Vale Avenue,
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent. TN1 1DJ**