

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Objectives:**

To ensure that if a patient (or persons acting on their behalf) is not satisfied with any service provided by the Practice, whether this be medical or administrative:

1. That the complainant is dealt with in an effective and timely manner.
2. The complainant is given an adequate opportunity to discuss their grievance.
3. Where possible the complainant should be given an apology, and/or a reason/explanation as to why the grievance occurred
4. The complainant should feel that they have had an adequate opportunity to state their case fully and that they have been fairly treated, whether the problem has been resolved or not.

### **Responsibilities:**

Any of the complaints procedure should also be applied to any person acting on behalf of the patient.

1. All staff will be provided with adequate training to enable them to implement the Practice procedures. This will involve them having:
  - a. A full understanding of the patients rights
  - b. The patients' rights and the Practice protocol.
  - c. Those who have direct patient contact, will be given specific training on how to manage difficult situations i.e. dealing with anxious or aggressive patients.
2. When any member of the team is made aware of a patient's dissatisfaction, they should make every effort either to resolve the grievance immediately, or to refer the matter to the appropriate member of the Practice team to follow up.
3. When a written complaint is received or if a patient wishes to make a verbal complaint, the matter should be referred to the Practice Manager. Wherever possible this referral should be immediate. However, if this is not possible then:
  - a. The situation should be carefully and fully explained to the patient. An appointment should be offered to them.
  - b. If this is not convenient, then the patient should be advised to notify the Practice Manager of their grievance in writing, or alternatively the Practice Manager would contact them back by telephone. This response should be within 2 working days.
  - c. Where this is not possible the complaint should be referred to a senior member of the team or an appropriate Partner who will then respond within the statutory guidelines i.e. 2 working days. The complainant will be asked to complete a Practice complaints form, which will record the details of the complaint.
4. If required, all complaints should be resolved within 2 weeks. An extension of 1 month is allowed when certain cases prove particularly difficult to resolve.
5. At all times impartiality will be observed. Records of all complaints will be kept, but will be filed separately from patient's medical records.

It would be preferred that all complaints relating to any individual person employed by, or a service provided by the Practice, be discussed with the Practice Manager or Senior Partner.

However, it is acknowledged that for whatever reason, this may not be the preferred option of the complainant. Therefore in those circumstances the complainant will be directed to either the PCT or the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service. A response will be provided within 25 working days, with the provision for a complainant to agree a longer period if necessary.

If you still feel that your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you have the right to request the Health Service Ombudsman to review your case. This should be done within two months of completing the Local Resolution stage. The Health Service Ombudsman is completely independent of the NHS or the Government.

Can be contacted at:  
Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4QP

Tel : 0345 015 4033

[www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk) or email [Phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:Phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk)