

FOUR ACRE HEALTH CENTRE

Burnage avenue,
St Helens
WA9 4QB

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

PATIENT INFORMATION

Date of issue: February 2024

Date of review: February 2025

Reviewed by Dr T Tchikhiaeva, GP Partner

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from the Doctors or any of the staff working in the Practice, please let us know. We do our utmost to always provide a high level of service but accept that occasionally this might not happen. When this occurs, we will apologise and deal with your complaint as quickly as possible.

HOW TO COMPLAIN

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problems cannot be sorted out this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**- ideally, within a matter of days, or weeks, as this will enable us to establish what happened more easily. If it is not possible to do that, please let us have the details of your complaint:

- Within 12 months of the incident that caused the problem
- Within 12 months of discovering you have a problem (can be waived in certain circumstances)

Complaints can be placed verbally, in writing (please see attached form), via email or via our website. Formal complaints should be addressed to Dr Tatiana Tchikhiaeva, Lead GP or in her absence to the Practice Manager Miss Suzanne Ralphson. Alternatively, you can complain to the local ICB Complaints Team, Patient Advisory and Liaison Service (PALS) Complaints Department, or another provider such as ICAS (Independent Complaints Advisory Service). Once your complaint is received you will receive an acknowledgement of it within 5 working days.

For informal complaints you can request to speak to the Reception Supervisor Miss Rebecca Jones, or in their absence Miss Tara Parlane, Admin Supervisor who will get back to you within five working days and try and resolve the situation satisfactorily. They will explain the Complaints Procedure to you and will make sure your concerns are dealt with promptly. It will be a great help if you are as specific as possible about your complaint i.e., dates, times, what was said or done etc.

WHAT WE WILL DO

We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and aim to have investigated your complaint as quickly as possible, allowing time to investigate the concerns you raise. We shall then be able to offer you an explanation or a meeting with the people involved. When we investigate your complaint, we shall aim to:

- Find out what happened and what went wrong and get back to you within 28 days
- Make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if you would like this.
- Make sure you receive an apology.
- Identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.
- If you are dissatisfied with the practice's response, you can ask for further clarification or request a meeting between you and the practice and have a representative of your choice attend with you which could be a family member, friend, PALS officer (Patient Advisory and Liaison) or a member of ICAS. Complaints dealt in this way are considered to be a local resolution. Alternatively, you have the right to refer your complaint to the Healthcare Commissioner's Ombudsman.

Most complaints can be sorted out informally this will of course depend on the type of complaint and severity. Often it can be a breakdown in communication that is the cause of the problem in this case we can deal with this quickly. Alternatively, complaints that need to be more formal in nature can be made using the attached formal complaint statement form.

COMPLAINING ON BEHALF OF SOMEONE ELSE

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we must know that you have his or her permission to do so. A note showing their consent and signed by the person concerned will be required unless they are incapable (because of severe illness or mentally incapacitated) in which case the doctors will need to determine the release of medical information without the patient's consent and may seek legal advice before doing so. If this happens you will receive a letter keeping you up to date with events and will be given an estimate of when you should receive a response. Where the complaint involves a patient that is deceased, the consent from the patient's next of kin will be required before any confidential information can be disclosed. If a response is going to take longer than expected, we will write to you explaining the reasons for the delay and give you a revised date when you can expect to receive a response.

COMPLAINING TO ST HELENS ICB OR ICAS

We hope that if you have a problem, you will allow the practice the opportunity to investigate your complaint using our complaints procedure. We believe this will give us the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong, and a way of improving our services for patients. This does not affect your right to approach St. Helens ICB if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us, or you are dissatisfied with the result of our investigation, you should contact the Complaints Manager at the CCG's Patient Advisory and Liaison Service (PALS) or to the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) for further advice.

The first step should be local resolution with the Practice. If this fails patients can be directed to **Complaints - NHS Cheshire and Merseyside** for further information or contact the complaints team as below.

By Post: Patient Experience Team
NHS Cheshire and Merseyside
No 1 Lakeside
920 Centre Park Square
Warrington
WA1 1QY

By Email: enquiries@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk

By Telephone: 0800 132 996

Patient Advisory and Liaison Service (PALS)
NHS Merseyside
3rd Floor Merton House
Bootle
Liverpool L20 3DL 0800 218 2333

Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)
Millennium House,
Bickerstaffe Street,
St. Helens WA10 1DH

TAKING IT FURTHER.....

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint you may refer the matter to:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

Tel: 0345 0154033 or www.ombudsman.org.uk

Complaint Statement Form

Today's Date..... Name of Patient

Patient Address

Patient's DOB.....Patient's Contact Number.....

Full Name of Complainant (if not the patient)

Complainant's relationship to the Patient.....

If you are complaining on behalf of a patient, you will need their written consent before information can be shared with you. In the event that the patient is deceased we can only disclose information to the next of kin or to a named third party, with the next of kin's written consent.

Please provide details of your complaint below giving as much information as possible, so as to help our investigation.

Date of Incident Approximate Time of Incident.....

Details of Incident.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Name of Witness (if any).....

Complainant's Name.....

Complainants Signature.....

For Office Use Only

Checklist- Summary Of Complaints Procedure

Date of Initial Complaint:..... Practice Complaints Leaflet Given:

Complaint Made by Letter: Verbally

Member of staff dealing with initial complaint:

Complaint acknowledged YES/NO/n/a Date sent.....

Complaint discussed at GP meeting YES/NO N/A If yes, date

Meeting required separately with GP Responsible Doctor YES/NO If yes, date.....

Interview/s with: Date of Interview/s:

Response letter sent: Date Sent:.....

Meeting Date with Patient (if requested)