

The Doctors and Staff at Phoenix Medical Centre welcome any concerns, compliments and complaints that patients or anyone who uses the services at the Practice may have. The Practice treat these as valuable feedback that can help to learn from experiences and make improvements to services.

The Practice Complaints Policy is based on the NHS Complaints procedure.

The complaints procedure

The Complaints Procedure is designed to be as patient focused as possible and investigate complaints effectively and efficiently. It is a two stage process; the first is called Local Resolution.

Local resolution

Who should the patient complain to?

The NHS is made up from numerous different organisations, e.g., GP Practice (Primary Care), hospital (Secondary Care), Out of Hours service, Community Services (e.g., Midwives, Health Visitors, Podiatry, etc). It is important to try to ensure that you direct your complaint to the correct organisation so that your concerns can be investigated properly.

A patient can complain to either the Provider or the Commissioner of the Health Service they are unhappy about.

The provider is the organisation that provides the service to you, in our case it is the Practice. You should direct your complaint to the Practice Manager.

NHS England is the commissioner or purchaser of Primary Care (i.e., GPs, dentists, opticians, pharmacy, and some specialised services.)

Who can complain?

Anyone can complain, including young people, a family member, carer, friend or your local MP can complain on your behalf with your permission.'

A complaint can be made in writing, by email or by speaking to someone in the organisation. You should make your complaint within 12 months of the incident or within 12 months of the matter coming to your attention. This time limit can sometimes be extended as long as it is still possible to investigate your complaint.

When should a patient complain?

A patient should make a complaint as soon as possible after an event. The NHS complaint procedure states that a complaint should be made within 12 months of either the event which is being complained about or as soon as the matter came to the patients attention. This time limit can be extended as long as the complaint can still be satisfactorily investigated.

If a complaint is made verbally, a record of the complaint will be made and the patient be provided with a written copy.

Is help available to make a complaint?

If a patient would like support in making a complaint, the Practice Manager can assist in composing a written statement. Alternatively, NHS Advocacy is a free, confidential service which is totally independent of the NHS. The service is provided by the local authority.

How long will it take?

This will depend on what the complaint is about and how complex it is. The NHS complaints regulations do not require complaints to be investigated within a set timescale. Each complaint will have an agreed timescale depending upon the complexities of the complaint and investigation necessary.

What the patient will need to provide.

Providing as much information as possible to allow a full investigation will help with the process of handling the complaint.

The following should be included:

- patient name and a valid email or home address for reply;
- a clear description of the complaint;
- any relevant correspondence

What the Practice will do next?

The complaint will be acknowledged no later than the third working day after the day the complaint is received. This will be via a letter or email to the patient making the complaint.

Investigating the complaint.

The complaint will be fully investigated. The patient will receive a formal response including a full and honest explanation of our consideration of the complaint, conclusions that have been reached in respect of the complaint, an appropriate apology, any corrective action that is considered to be appropriate and confirmation that the action has been taken or will be taken.

Audit of Complaints

An internal review of all complaints will be held by the Practice on a regular basis.

Second stage of the complaints process

If the patient is not satisfied with the formal response, the next step is to ask the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) to review your complaint and how it has been handled. Their details are given below:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

Telephone: 0345 015 4033

Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

As from 1st July 2023 - members of the public wishing to make a complaint to the commissioner of a primary care service can contact NHS Cheshire and Merseyside by:

Tele: 0800 132 996

E-mail: enquiries@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk

In Writing to : Patient Experience Team, No 1 Lakeside, 920 Centre Park Square,
Warrington, WA11QY