

VICTORIA ROAD SURGERY

Patient Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint or concern about the service that you have received from the doctors or any of the staff working in the Practice, please let us know. We operate a Practice Complaints Procedure as part of the NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our system meets national criteria.

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 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 - ideally, within a matter of days or at most a few weeks - because this will enable us to establish what happened more easily.

You should normally make a complaint within twelve months of the event, or within twelve months of becoming aware that you have something to complain about. However, these time limits may be waived if there are good reasons why you could not complain earlier and if we are still able to investigate the complaint fairly and effectively in spite of the delay.

Complaints can be made either orally or in writing to the Practice Manager & Complaints Lead, Mrs Julie Wallis, who will try to resolve the issue and offer you further advice on the complaints procedure. If your problem cannot be resolved at this stage and you wish to make a formal complaint please let us know as soon as possible, preferably in writing. This will enable us to get a clear picture of the circumstances surrounding the complaint.

Please note Victoria Road Surgery keeps strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, the practice needs to know that you have their permission to do so. We will need the written consent of the patient concerned, to confirm they are happy for their stated representative to deal with the complaint on their behalf. Please ask at reception for a Third Party Consent Complaint Form. Where the patient is incapable of providing consent due to illness or disability it may still be possible for a representative of the patient to deal with the complaint. Please provide the precise details of the circumstances which prevent the patient giving written consent in your covering letter. Please note we are unable to discuss any issue relating to someone else without their express permission, which must be in writing, unless the circumstances above apply.

If you make a complaint it is practice policy to ensure you are not discriminated against, or subjected to any negative effect on your care, treatment or support.

What We Will Do

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days either orally or in writing and will offer to discuss the matter with you.

We will offer you a meeting with the Complaints Lead to agree a timeframe for resolution and to reach an agreement with you on how you wish the complaint to be handled and the likely period for completion of the investigation and response to you. If you would prefer not to accept the offer of a discussion we will determine a specified response period and notify you in writing of that period.

All oral complaints will be recorded in writing by the Practice and you will be provided with a copy of the written record.

When we look into your complaint, we will aim to:

- find out what happened and what went wrong
- advise you what we will do to put the matter right
- make sure you receive an apology where this is appropriate.
- identify what we can do to make sure the problem does not happen again.

We will aim to investigate and deal with all complaints efficiently and speedily. We will aim to will send you a written response with a report on the investigation within 10 working days, or as soon as reasonably practicable. If we are not able to meet the response deadline we have agreed with you, we will contact you to advise why and negotiate another timescale.

Where the complaint involves more than one organisation, e.g. Out of Hours service, Social Services, we will liaise with that organisation so that you receive coordinated replies. However, we may need your consent to do this.

We hope that if you have a problem, you will use our Practice Complaints Procedure. We believe this will give us the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and an opportunity to improve the services provided by our Practice.

If you remain dissatisfied and feel that your complaint needs further investigation you can contact the NHS England Customer Call Centre where calls will be triaged and followed up by a case manager. The centre is open between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. Contact details are below:

NHS England
PO Box 16738
Redditch
Worcester
B98 9BT

Telephone: 0300 311 22 33
Email: england.contactus@nhs.net

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint at local level you should contact the Health Service Ombudsman by:

- visiting www.ombudsman.org.uk
- calling the complaints helpline 0345 015 4033 (Mon-Fri 8:30am – 5:30pm)
- or write to: The Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP

If you need assistance in making a complaint you can contact the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service at:

NHS Complaints Advocacy Birmingham
VoiceAbility
3rd Floor
Cobalt Square
83 Hagley Road
Birmingham
B16 8QG

Helpline: 0300 330 5454
Textphone: 0786 002 2939
Fax: 0330 088 3762
Email: nhscomplaints@voiceability.org