



WONFORD GREEN SURGERY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The success of the Wonford Green complaints procedure relies, as ever, on the General Practitioners and staff who work here.

Here are some notes of guidance, designed to help everyone who works here.

Compliments, comments, suggestions and complaints are a useful indication of the service we provide. The purpose of the procedure is to ensure that:

- We have a way of identifying any problems with the service provision to our patients
- We are prompted to review the service and make changes where necessary
- Patients need to know that we are interested in their views. They should feel free to comment or complain in the knowledge that what is said will be treated confidentially and seriously - even if we do not agree with everything they say
- All members of staff will be able to deal sympathetically with patients who make a complaint.
- All members of staff - clinical and non-clinical will be supported

POSITIVE THINKING

Patients may find it difficult to complain - even though we may feel that they don't! GPs and staff may find it hard not to take the complaint personally and respond positively if there is a breakdown in patient/surgery relationship. We may feel frustrated that the patient appears to lack the understanding of our systems and the care they receive.

Sometimes, patients have good ideas about the Practice and how we can improve the service. By listening to them and acknowledging their ideas is sometimes all it takes.

COMPLAINTS MANAGER

The Practice Manager is the person designated to receive any complaints

COMPLAINTS PARTNER

Dr Hoban is the nominated Complaints Partner. She will investigate complaints and provide peer support, should the complaint be clinical. Dr Hoban, as Clinical Governance Lead is the second nominated peer support.



PROCEDURE

1. Complaint received and logged
2. Check consent if complaint is not made by patient themselves
3. Give Patient Leaflet to the patients, which describe the procedure.
4. Practice Manager Julia Knott, assesses the complaint and makes contact immediately to acknowledge the problem. If patient makes a verbal complaint and the Practice Manager is unavailable, it will be immediately assessed by Donna Alderman, the Office Manager. If the Practice Manager or Office manager is not available, the patient will be asked to put the complaint in writing.
5. If the complaint is clinical, Dr Hoban will manage it.
6. If the complaint is administrative/organisational, it will be dealt with by the Practice Manager.
7. All complaints will be managed 'in house' in the first instance
8. Acknowledge within 48 hours
9. Inform the complainant of the right to complain to the NEW Devon ICB if the 'in house' system doesn't resolve the problem
10. If complaint is clinical, access peer support and medical defence union for advice.
11. Offer an interview with the complainant
12. Within 10 working days, investigate and explain to the patient a summary of the findings, the explanation of the practice's view, what was agreed and details of what has been done to prevent recurrence and any further action as appropriate. Keep a written record
13. Complaints will be audited annually and brought to significant event meetings for learning and discussion if appropriate.



PRACTICE STAFF WRITTEN GUIDANCE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

If anyone receives a complaint, please refer them to the Practice Manager. If the Manager is unavailable, ask the patient to put their complaint in writing.

If the patient wishes to discuss issues right away it is important to:-

Make the person feel relaxed, offer to speak to them privately if possible

Remain calm

If appropriate, deal with the problem immediately. Remember that an apology is often sufficient but not necessarily an admission of responsibility.

Re-assure the person to confidentiality

Remember that we are unable to discuss anything with anyone other than the patient about patient's medical conditions unless written permission is received from the patient.

Ensure an accurate written record is kept

Bring the matter to the Practice Manager's attention

Give the patient a copy of the patient information leaflet and a PALS leaflet- These are kept in reception top copies folder or the PALS file in the practice managers filing cabinet (top drawer)



WONFORD GREEN SURGERY

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

PATIENT LEAFLET

The General Practitioners and the staff at Wonford Green Surgery always try to give the best service possible to our patients, but there may be times when you feel that this has not happened.

This leaflet is designed to help you if you feel that you have a complaint about the service we offer.

The General Practitioners and staff are all aware of the Complaint's Procedure. We hope that you will allow us to put right any problems you have identified or mistakes that may have been made.

If you use our procedure it does not affect your right to complain to NEW Devon CCG or the health ombudsman.

Please note that we are strictly bound to patient confidentiality. Patient details will not be discussed under any circumstances to anyone other than the patient, unless full written consent from the patient has been obtained or the next of kin.

If the Practice Manager Mrs Julia Knott, is unavailable she will be happy to contact you back at as soon as she is next in the practice. Should you wish to speak to someone personally Donna Alderman, the office manager, or any member of staff will be able to help you and your complaint will be passed to the Manager.

We feel it is important to deal with matters swiftly so you will normally be contacted by the Practice Manager within a week to discuss the issue. Occasionally if we have to make a lot of enquiries this may take a little longer but you will be kept informed of the progress we are making.



Where your complaint involves more than one organisation (e.g. social services) we will liaise with that organisation so that you receive one coordinated reply. We may need your consent to do this. Where your complaint has been sent initially to an incorrect organisation, we may seek your consent to forward this to the correct person to deal with.

When looking into a complaint we attempt to see what happened and why, to see if there is something we can learn from this.

We will try to address your concerns fully and provide you with an explanation and discuss any actions that may be required. We hope that following this you will feel satisfied that we have dealt with the problem thoroughly.

However, if this is not the case and you are dissatisfied with the outcome you may wish to take the complaint further.

Where can I get more help and information ?

- NHS England

We recommend that you first raise any complaint directly with the Practice. However we understand that you may not wish to do this. From April 2013, the complaints service for primary care will be managed on a national basis by NHS England, telephone **0300 123 1672**. Calls will be triaged and where possible these will be resolved with the complainant without further escalation. Where complaints cannot be resolved by the central team, they will be passed to a local area representative. The service from NHS England replaces the PALS system, that operated up to end-March 2013.

You may also contact NHS England by email on:

d-icb.patientexperience@nhs.net

By Post : **Patient Advice and Complaints team, Pomona House,
Edginswell Business Park, Oak View Close Torquay TQ2 7FF**

- The Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCA)

Is a free confidential advocacy service that advises and supports people complaining about the NHS. In Devon, this is SEAP.



◆ 0300 343 5707 ◆ devon@seap.org.uk ◆ www.seap.org.uk

- Independent and Charitable bodies

Organisations such as Citizens Advice, Age UK, etc., can also offer advice and support.

or you have the right to approach the Ombudsman.

The contact details are:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

London

SW1P 4QP

Tel: 0345 0154033

Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk