



Practice complaints procedure

We aim to provide high quality, efficient healthcare services. Unfortunately from time to time problems do occur. Our intention is to resolve problems at the earliest opportunity and to learn from our mistakes.

If you have a complaint, dissatisfaction or concern about the service you have received from the doctors or any of the staff working in this practice, please let us know.

We operate a practice complaints procedure as part of a NHS system for dealing with complaints. The first stage of the NHS complaints procedure is 'Local Resolution'. Your complaint should be made in the first instance to the practice.

How to complain

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise 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 because this will enable us to establish what happened more easily. If it is not possible to do that, please let us have details of your complaint within 12 months of the incident that caused the problem.

Complaints should be addressed to the Practice Manager or any of the doctors. Alternatively, you may ask for an appointment with the Practice Manager to discuss your concerns. To help us understand what we can do to support a resolution it will be a great help if you can provide us with a clear and specific issue.

How we aim to respond

Acknowledgement of written complaints within 2 working days

Investigation within 10 working days which will

- find out what happened and what went wrong
- make it possible for you to discuss the problem those concerned (if you would like this)
- make sure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate
- identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again

Complaining on behalf of someone else

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are complaining of behalf of someone else, we have to know that you have their permission to do so. A note signed by the person concerned will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this.

Independent Assistance

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 our practice.

However, if you would like assistance in making your complaint you can contact The Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (I.C.A.S.). This is an advocacy service which assists patients with formal complaints regarding NHS care or treatment. ICAS is an impartial client led service in which the advocate represents the complainant's wishes and feelings without giving advice or bias. ICAS can offer you independent and confidential support throughout the NHS Complaints Procedure and can assist you in drafting letters and attending meetings.

In West Sussex the service is provided by Central and South CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau) and the telephone number is 0844 477 1171



Healthwatch

Healthwatch is the name of the newly formed consumer champion for health and social care. At a local level, Healthwatch works to help people get the best out of their health and social care services, providing them with advice and information on local services.

You can contact Healthwatch in person at any of the following Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) advice centres:

Lancing
Shoreham-by-Sea
Worthing

Or by phoning 0300 012 0122

There is an online enquiry form via their website <http://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk/>

If you are not satisfied with our response

NHS England

If, after contacting us, there is an issue that we are unable to resolve any complaints, issues and enquiries can be directed to NHS England.

Tel: 0300 311 2233

Email: england.contactus@nhs.net

The Health Service Ombudsman

If you remain unhappy after local resolution, then you can complain to the Health Service Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is completely independent of the NHS and Government. You can contact the Ombudsman at:

Millbank Tower
Millbank
LONDON
SW1P 4QP

Telephone 0845 015 4033

E-mail OHSC.Enquiries@ombudsman.gsi.gov.uk

Website www.ombudsman.org.uk

Where can I get further advice and help?

NHS 111

Call NHS 111 or your local Citizens Advice Bureau

The Department of Health's website also has information on the NHS complaints procedure – www.dh.gov.uk