

Feedback, Concerns, Comments and Complaints Procedure Information for Patients

At Cramond Medical Practice our aim is to give the best possible care and treatment to our patients. We welcome feedback and comments about our services and aim to deal with any concerns or complaints promptly, courteously and efficiently. We consider all feedback, comments, concerns and complaints as a positive way of looking at what we do and making changes to improve our service to patients. All views will be taken seriously and our procedures are in line with NHS Complaints Procedure.

Responsibilities

The practice Feedback and Complaints Officer is Ms Emma Smith, Practice Manager, who can be contacted at Cramond Medical Practice, 2 Cramond Glebe Road, Edinburgh, EH4 6NS or (telephone) 0131 336 5432.

Feedback, Comments and Concerns

We want you to let us know if something is important to you, such as:

- what you think about the care and treatment you have received;
- what we have done well;
- whether you have any concerns, e.g. about your appointment times or the facilities at the practice;
- if you have any suggestions to help us improve things;
- you don't understand something and need more information about our services.

You can tell us by:

- talking to any member of staff;
- writing to the Practice Manager;
- telling the Patient Advice and Support Service (see under Contacts);

We will use the information you give us to improve the services we provide.

Complaints about NHS treatment

You can make a complaint about

- NHS care or treatment you have had or are having at the practice;
- Our services or facilities;
- A member of staff;
- How services in the local area are organised, if this has affected your care or treatment.

You cannot use this complaints procedure

- If you are taking legal action about the issue you would want to complain about.

Time limits

Normally, you must make your complaint:

- within 6 months of the event you want to complain about; but no longer than 12 months after the event or
- within 6 months of finding out that you have a reason to complain

How to make a complaint:

- You can complain in person, by phone, or in writing. Please note that if you fax or email other people may be able to see your personal information.
- If you can, first talk to a member of staff involved with your care. We will try to sort out the complaint on the spot.
- If you are unable to talk to the member of staff involved with your care, ask to speak to the practice manager or one of the GP Partners.
- If you don't want to complain to anyone in the practice, you can contact the SPSO or the Patient Advice and Support Service (see under Contacts) for advice.
- When making your complaint, please give:
 - your full name and address (and the patient's name if you are acting on behalf of someone else);
 - as much helpful information as possible about what happened, where it happened and when, and what you would like to have done about it;
 - your preferred method of communication; and
 - consent from the patient, if you are making the complaint on behalf of the patient.

What we will do:

- *Stage 1 - Early Resolution* - We will always try to resolve complaints on the spot.
- *Stage 2 - Investigation* - If we cannot resolve your complaint on the spot, we will acknowledge your complaint in writing within 3 working days. In the letter we will:
 - include contact details for the complaints officer
 - tell you what action we will take to look into your complaint;
 - offer you the chance to talk to a member of staff;
 - let you know when we will respond (within 20 working days);
 - give you information about advice and support available to help you with your complaint, e.g. the Patient Advice and Support Service.
- We will keep information about your complaint confidential. We may have to talk to other NHS staff or show them your medical record. If you do not want us to share information from your medical record, please tell us when you make your complaint, but bear in mind this may make it more difficult to look into your complaint.
- We will keep a record of your details and the complaint and use it to help improve our services, and for statistical purposes.

Stage 1 – Early Resolution

- We aim to resolve complaints quickly. Where appropriate, this could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.
- Sometimes we will have to make some enquiries before we can respond to your complaint. We will give you our decision at Stage 1 within five working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

- If we cannot resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We might suggest that you take your complaint to Stage 2. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial decision.

Stage 2 – Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using Stage 2 we will:

- Acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days.
- Where appropriate, discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- Give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within twenty working days.
- If our investigation will take longer than twenty working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised timelines and keep you updated on progress.

Complaining on someone's behalf

You can complain for someone else if you:

- have their consent to complain - we may require this in writing;
- are a parent, guardian or main carer of a child and your child is not mature enough to understand how to complain;
- have a welfare power of attorney or a welfare guardianship order for someone who cannot make decisions for themselves, and the order specifies that you have the power to make a complaint about healthcare;
- are a relative of, or had a relationship with, a patient who has died and you are concerned about how they were treated before they died; or
- are acting as an advocate for the patient.

If you change your mind after making a complaint

You can change your mind about making a complaint at any time. Please let us know as soon as possible. It would be helpful if you could write or e-mail and tell us, but otherwise a phone call will do.

Help with your complaint

Patient Advice and Support Service

If you would like to speak to someone for independent advice about your rights and responsibilities when using NHS services, including help to make a complaint, please contact your local Patient Advice and Support Service which is available through your local Citizens Advice Scotland bureau (CAS). To find your local CAS office go to www.cas.org.uk/bureaux and enter your postcode or telephone 03454 04 05 06.

Advocacy

If you want someone to help you express your views, you can ask for an advocate. An advocate is independent of the NHS and can help make sure your views are heard and get access to the information you need to make your own decisions. The Feedback and

Complaints Officer at the practice or NHS Lothian can tell you more about advocacy services available.

Mediation (also known as Alternative Dispute Resolution)

- Mediation means bringing people together to resolve a complaint.
- An independent mediator will try to help you and us to agree what should happen if we cannot settle the complaint ourselves.
- Mediation can only be used if we both agree to it.

Information about mediation

- The Feedback and Complaints Officer at the practice or at NHS Lothian can tell you more about mediation services.

If you are not happy with our response to your complaint

If you are still not happy with our response, or if you are not happy with the way we are dealing with your complaint, e.g. if you think we are taking too long, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to consider your complaint further.

- The SPSO cannot normally look at complaints more than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about. Sometimes this time limit will not apply. Contact the SPSO for more information.
- The SPSO cannot look at matters that have been or are being considered in court.
- The SPSO does not take up all cases and will decide whether or not to investigate your complaint further.

Contacts

Patient Advice and Support Service

This service is available through your local Citizens Advice Scotland Bureau www.cas.org.uk/patientadvice. To find your local CAS office go to www.cas.org.uk/bureaux and enter your postcode or telephone 03454 04 05 06.

NHS Inform

Helpline 0800 22 44 88 (textphone 18001 0800 22 44 88); www.nhsinform.co.uk; the Looking Local iPhone app; NHSScotland's Digital TV Service (Sky and Virgin Media).

Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

Tel.: 0800 377 7330

www.spsos.org.uk

Post: Freepost SPSO

Open from 9.00am – 5.00pm (Mon – Fri), from 10.00am – 5.00pm (Tues)