

## Making a formal complaint:

Most problems can be sorted out quickly and easily at the time they arise with the person concerned directly. This is the approach many patients prefer to try first.

Where a patient has a concern that they are not able to resolve in this way and wish to make a formal complaint they should do so **in writing** as soon as possible after the event.

A complaint needs to ideally include details of:

- What happened?
- When?
- Who was involved?
- The reason that the patient feels that there was a problem or that something should have been handled differently.
- What the patient would like to happen next?

*Send your signed, written complaint in writing to:*

*Mrs Victoria Johnson – Practice Manager*

*Aire Valley Surgery, 11 New Road Side, Rawdon, LS16 6DD*

- **Email complaints.**

Complaints need to be sent in in writing through the post or via the Reception desk because we need a patient signature due to confidentiality and consent.

We therefore do not accept emailed complaints due to data protection risks.

If you have a disability which prevent you from being able to send a letter in, please contact the Advocacy People - their numbers are on the back of this leaflet for support in alternative ways of sending in your complaint.

## Timescales:

Ideally, all complaints should be sent in to the practice within a few days of the event as this helps us to establish what happened more easily. In any event, this should be:

- Within 12 months of the incident
- or
- Within 12 months of the patient discovering that they have grounds for a complaint.

## What happens next?

The Management Team at Aire Valley Surgery looks to investigate complaints as soon as possible. The response is always usually in writing however, and patients should NOT expect a call back in the meantime.

If you do therefore require medical attention, you should book a GP appointment in the usual way and not wait for the formal complaints response.

A number of sources of information are available including telephone call recordings and audits of computerised medical records as well as statements from staff involved.

- All complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days by either the Practice Manager or by other members of the Management Team in her absence.
- The practice aims to have looked into the matter thoroughly and drafted a response, but in line with the NHS complaints procedure, there is no timescale and the length of time in investigating and responding may be influenced by many factors.

The patient may be invited to meet with the person(s) concerned to attempt to resolve the issue. If the matter is likely to take longer than 30 days to investigate, we will let the patient know as soon as we are able to, and keep them informed as the investigation progresses.

When looking into a complaint the practice will attempt to see what happened and why, to understand if there is something that can be learnt.

When the investigations are complete the complaint will be determined and a final response sent to the patient. Where a complaint involves more than one organisation (e.g. social services/ Pharmacy, etc) we will liaise with that organisation so that the patient will receive one coordinated reply. We may need the patient consent to do this. Where a complaint has been sent initially to an incorrect organisation, we may seek consent to forward this to the correct person to deal with.

## Complaining on behalf of someone else:

You can only complaint on behalf of a patient if they agree.

To confirm this, we will require the written consent of the patient to confirm that they wish to make a formal complaint or for any emails to come from their email address. We also need their consent to speak to and/or correspond with someone else about this matter and potentially disclose medical information. Where the patient is incapable of providing consent, it may still be possible to deal with the complaint.

## What if I'm still not happy?

We will make every effort to try and resolve your complaint or concern. If you are not happy with the response you receive, please let us know as soon as possible. We can meet you to discuss the matter further or carry out more investigation.

If we can not reach a resolution with you directly after going through the formal complaints process, you may wish to explore this further with the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman or NHS England for help.

Before you contact The Ombudsman and/or NHS England, please note that they would usually expect that the patient has complained directly to the practice first.

The Ombudsman can review the way your complaint has been Handled, within 12 months of the final outcome.

### Ombudsman:

Website: <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint>  
Telephone: 0345 015 4033

### Leeds Integrated Care Board:

Telephone: 0113 221 7777  
E-mail: [leeds.complaints@nhs.net](mailto:leeds.complaints@nhs.net)

Address: Patient Experience, Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group, Suites 2-4 WIRA House, West Park Ring Road, Leeds, LS16 6EB

### Advocacy (and help to write your complaint):

- **The Advocacy People:** 0330 440 9000 or email: [info@theadvocypeople.org.uk](mailto:info@theadvocypeople.org.uk) You can also text them on 80800 start your message with the word PEOPLE
- **Healthwatch** 0113 8980 035 [info@healthwatchleeds.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchleeds.co.uk) can help you find independent NHS complaints advocacy services in your local area.

Aire Valley Surgery's Complaints Manager is:  
**Mrs Victoria Johnson - Practice Manager**

Send all written complaints to:  
Mrs Victoria Johnson - Practice Manager  
Aire Valley Surgery, 11 New Road Side  
Rawdon  
LS19 6DD



## How a patient can make a complaint at Aire Valley Surgery.

