

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE****Patient Information Leaflet – Newton Drive Health Centre**

*Our aim is always to deliver high quality patient care, but we appreciate there are times when our service is less than efficient, or a patient is not happy with the service they have received. In order to maintain high standards of care, we need feedback about such incidents so that we can avoid any recurrence in the future. We would rather you tell us if you are not happy with the service, rather than telling other people. That way we can apologise if we have done something wrong, identify why things happened the way they did and perhaps make changes as a result.*

If you have any complaints or concerns about the service that you have received from the Doctors or staff working for this practice please let us know.

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. If it is not possible to do that, please let us have details of your complaint:

- Within 12 months of the incident that caused your problem, or
- Within 12 months of discovering that you have a problem

Mr Chris Casey (Practice Manager) will be pleased to deal with any complaint. He will explain the procedure to you and make sure your concerns are dealt with. You can make your complaint:

**By telephone** – ask to speak to a member of the management team, they can take your complaint and attempt to resolve it for you. If not it will be escalated to the Practice Manager. If, due to the nature of your complaint the practice needs you to put it in writing you will be advised accordingly.

**In writing** – some complaints may be easier to explain in writing – please give as much information as you can, then send your complaint to the practice for the attention of the Practice Manager as soon as possible. You can email FAO the Practice Manager to [blackpool.ndhcadmin@nhs.net](mailto:blackpool.ndhcadmin@nhs.net)

The practice is only able to investigate and answer complaints which relate directly to the practice and its employed staff. If your complaint relates to an external third party, where possible you will be advised of the appropriate person to contact.

**What we shall do**

Our complaints procedure is designed to make sure we deal with any complaints as quickly as possible. We shall normally acknowledge your complaint within 2 working days of receipt, and although there are no NHS timescales when considering a complaint, simply that it must be investigated thoroughly, at Newton Drive Health Centre we aim to have looked into your complaint within 20 working days of receipt. We shall then be in a position to offer you a response to the issues you have raised and, where appropriate, a meeting with the people involved. [If for any reason the complaint takes longer to respond to we will keep in contact with you to notify you of any expected delay.]

If the complaint is a general one about the service, it will be investigated by the Practice Manager. If it involves any clinical issues it will be passed to one of the Doctors to investigate and they will subsequently respond.

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

- Find out what happened and what went wrong.
- Make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if you wish to do so
- Make sure you receive an apology, where appropriate
- Identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.

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## Consent from a third party to lodge a complaint on their behalf

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

We shall be unable to respond to you unless you have provided us with the informed consent of the patient, to disclose confidential information relating to the complaint.

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## What you can do next

As of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 you can complaint either to the practice directly or to the Integrated Care Board (ICB). Although a practice first approach is preferred, you may wish to contact the ICB directly as they are the commissioning authority responsible for the practice. You can email the ICB at [lscicb.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:lscicb.patientexperience@nhs.net).

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS operates from Blackpool Victoria Hospital. They can provide confidential, on-the-spot advice and support, helping people to sort out any concerns they have about the care they (or people in their care) are being provided with. PALS will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries, and help sort out problems quickly on your behalf. They will guide people through the different services available from the NHS. They act independently and will liaise with relevant organisations and can be contacted on Blackpool Tel (01253) 955588 or [bfwh.patientrelations@nhs.net](mailto:bfwh.patientrelations@nhs.net)

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If you remain dissatisfied with the responses to your complaint, you have the right to take your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is independent of the Government and NHS, and the service is confidential and free.

If you have any questions about whether the Ombudsman will be able to help you, or about how to make a complaint, you can contact the telephone helpline on 0345 015 4033, online at [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

**Help us get it right.**