



Complaints Procedure – Patient Leaflet

Document history

Last reviewed 24.03.22, July 2025	Next review – July 2028
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Overview of the Complaints Process

1. Please see if you can resolve your issue with the Practice verbally.
2. If you are unable to obtain satisfaction under 1 above or if you prefer not to discuss the issue with us, proceed to making a formal complaint. You can do this verbally, in writing or by email.
3. You can complain to the Practice or alternatively to Somerset Integrated Care Board
4. There are some exclusions and time limits.
5. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days.
6. We will investigate your complaint as quickly as possible and give you the outcome in writing.
7. If you are unhappy with the outcome, you can refer your complaint to a higher authority.

1. Introduction

If you have a complaint or concern about the service, you have received from the doctors or staff working at St James Medical Centre or Orchard Medical Centre you are entitled to ask for an explanation. We operate a practice complaints procedure as part of the NHS system for dealing with complaints.

Our complaints system meets national criteria (Local Resolution under NHS and Social Care Complaints Procedure governed by The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.)

Our Patient Services Assistants and secretarial staff can normally deal with grumbles and other minor matters quickly and efficiently, often at the time they arise. Our Practice Manager or Assistant Manager (Operations) can also assist you in trying to resolve any problems on an informal basis.

2. Local Resolution

If you have a complaint about our services, we will try to resolve this with you in the practice. Dr Martin, Senior Partner is the practice nominated 'Responsible Person' to oversee complaints. Complaints will be investigated by Tracey Pike, Practice Manager or Janice Weetch, Assistant Manager

(Operations). Another partner will be appointed to investigate any complaint which involves Dr Martin or Mrs Pike.

In the first place, the practice would welcome the opportunity to try and resolve your complaint. Under local resolution you are able to complain to the organisation responsible for commissioning the services provided by the practice. This is Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group

If you complain about the practice to Somerset Integrated Care Board there are two alternative options

- Option A Somerset ICB decides that it can handle the complaint. Somerset ICB must seek your consent to send the details of your complaint to the Practice. This is to enable them to obtain any relevant information from the practice.
- Option B Somerset ICB may consider that it is more appropriate for the practice to answer the complaint, in which case it must seek your consent to ask the practice to investigate and respond.
- Important You must choose at the outset whether to make your complaint to the practice or to Somerset ICB. If you make your initial complaint to the practice and do not agree with our response you cannot then seek a review from Somerset ICB. You do have the right to refer your complaint to the Ombudsman.

3. How to complain

You can complain in 3 ways:

- Verbally – face to face or by telephone
- In writing to
 - Dr J Martin, Senior Partner, St James Medical Centre, Coal Orchard, Taunton TA1 1JP or
 - Complaints Manager, Somerset ICB, Wynford House. Lufton Way, Lufton, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 8HR
- Electronically by email to somicb.contact.stjames@nhs.net

A complaint form is included at the end of this information. If you are complaining in writing, please feel free to use the form. Alternatively, a letter is equally fine.

Verbal complaints resolved within 24 hours.

It may be possible to resolve simple verbal complaint and wherever possible the practice will seek to do this for you. Complaints dealt with in this way fall outside of the regulations.

All other complaints

All other complaints are governed by the regulations and will result in a formal written response being made to you.

If you require any help to make your complaint, the practice can assist you with this. For further information about this contact Tracey Pike, Practice Manager.

4. Complaining on behalf of somebody else

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we must know that you have his or her permission to do so. A signed note by the person concerned will be needed.

In certain circumstances, the regulations impose a duty upon the practice to satisfy us that the representative is an appropriate person to make a complaint.

5. Exclusions

The Complaints Procedure excludes:

- Complaints that were first made verbally and which were resolved to the complainant's satisfaction within one working day.
- Complaints about the same subject matter as a complaint that has previously been made and resolved.
- Complaints alleging failure by the practice to comply with a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

6. Time Limits

A complaint should be made within 12 months from the date on which the matter occurred or from when the matter came to the attention of the complainant.

A complaint may be considered outside of the time limit if the complainant has good reason for not making the complaint within the limit. The practice will also consider whether it is still possible to investigate the complaint fairly and effectively.

7. How will we handle your complaint?

- We will record the date we received your complaint and acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days.
- We will agree a complaints plan with you including timescales for investigation.
- We will offer you the opportunity to discuss your complaint.

- Your complaint will be promptly investigated.
- We will advise you of the outcome of the investigation in writing.
- We will take any necessary action in light of the outcome of the complaint.

During the complaints process you will be treated with respect and courtesy and if required we will help you as far as is reasonably practical to understand our procedures and advise on where you may be able to obtain assistance.

8. Ombudsman

If you are not satisfied with our response, you can refer your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (must be within 12 months of the completion of the local resolution). The Ombudsman can also consider complaints about the administration of the complaint's procedure itself.

9. Useful contacts and websites

The Practice

Dr J Martin

Senior Partner (Responsible Person for Complaints)

St James Medical Centre

Coal Orchard

Taunton TA1 1JP

Tel 01823 285400, email somicb.contact.stjames@nhs.net

Somerset ICB

Wynford House

Lufton Way

Lufton

Yeovil BA22 8 HR

Telephone: 0300 311 22 33 Email – England.contactus@nhs.net

Ombudsman

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

London SW1P 4QP

Tel - Complaints Helpline 0345 015 4033 (8.30 am to 5.30pm Mon to Fri)

Email - phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

Websites

<https://www.nhs.uk>

<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/contact-us/patient-advice-and-liaison-service-pals/>

St James Medical Centre and Orchard Medical Centre

Complaint Form

1. Complainant's details

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Contact telephone number	
Signed	
Date	

2. Patient's details (where different from above)

Name	
Date of birth	
Address	
Postcode	
Contact telephone number	
Signed	
Date	

(We will need the signed written authority of the patient for you to act on their behalf)

3. Details of complaint (including date(s) of events and persons involved
please continue overleaf if necessary)

(Continue on next page if needed)

Continued (if needed)