

Complaints Procedure

We always try to provide the best service possible but there may be times when you feel that this has not happened.

The following information explains our complaints procedure. We will use it to look into and if necessary, correct any problems that you may have identified or mistakes that may have been made.

If you use this procedure, it will not affect your right to complain to NHS England, should you wish to do so. Please note that we must respect our duty of confidentiality to patients and therefore patients' consent will be necessary if the patient themselves do not make a complaint.

How to complain

Most problems can be sorted out quickly and easily, often at the time they arise with the person concerned and this may be the approach you try first. Where you are not able to resolve your complaint in this way and wish to make a formal complaint, please contact our **Practice Manager, Mrs Melanie Lyman**. Full details will be taken and a decision made on how best to undertake the investigation.

We believe it is important to deal with complaints swiftly so you will usually be offered an initial response within 3 working days to acknowledge your complaint and a full explanation of reasons why and how the complaint may have come about within the following 28 days.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

We keep to the strict rules of medical and personal confidentiality. If you wish to make a complaint and are not the patient involved, we will require the written consent of the patient to confirm that they are unhappy with their treatment and that we can deal with someone else about it.

Where the patient is incapable of providing consent due to illness or accident it may still be possible to deal with the complaint.

Please provide the precise details of the circumstances which prevent this in your covering letter.

Please note that we are unable to discuss any issue relating to someone else without their express permission, which must be in writing, unless the circumstances above apply.

We may still need to correspond directly with the patient, or may be able to deal directly with the third party, and this depends on the wording of the authority provided

Patient Services

As a patient, relative, carer or any other member of the public, you may have questions about the services we provide and may need someone to turn to for on-the-spot help and advice. This is where Patient Services can help. Contact details:

Patient Advice and Liaison (PALs):

Mail to: enquiries@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk

Tel: 0800 132 996

For all *patient complaints* and enquiries about any other local health service. (This includes GPs, Dentists, Pharmacist and Opticians).

Under the NHS Complaints Procedure, you can choose to complain to either the local health service directly or to the commissioner of that service, which for most local services will be NHS Cheshire and Merseyside.

If you choose to complain to the commissioner, the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Team can be contacted on the following details:

Complaints: enquiries@cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk

Tel: 0800 132 996

Or via the following postal address:

Complaints, Concerns and Compliments
Patient Experience Team
NHS Cheshire and Merseyside
No 1 Lakeside
920 Centre Park Square
Warrington WA1 1QY

Health Service Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied you can refer your complaint to the Health Service Ombudsman. This is an independent body set up to promote improvements in healthcare. If you wish to refer your complaint to the Health Service Ombudsman you must do so within 12 months of the event. You can do this in the following way:

Write to:

The Health Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

London

SW1P 4QP

Telephone: 0345 0154033

Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk