

Complaints Procedure

If you have any complaint or concern about the service that you have received from the Doctors or Staff working for this Practice you are entitled to ask for an explanation. We operate an informal, in-house complaints procedure to deal with your complaint. This procedure does not deal with matters of legal liability or compensation. In some cases the in-house procedure is not an appropriate form of investigation, in which case you will be referred to the appropriate authority.

This procedure does not affect your right to ask for an independent review, as a second stage procedure, as set out in the final paragraph. Nor does it affect your right to seek compensation in law.

The practice has a Duty of Candour Policy and is committed to being open and honest about anything that affects patient care. We investigate all complaints thoroughly in order to learn about the cause behind any failings or poor performance so that we can continue to improve our standard of care to our patients.

Preferably, your complaint should be in writing and addressed to the Practice Manager who will ensure that it is investigated thoroughly and as speedily as possible. However, we deal with all complaints exactly the same whether received in writing or verbally. If your complaint cannot be quickly put right we will carry out an investigation. We will acknowledge the complaint within two weeks and attempt to contact you immediately to discuss the matter and explain how we will proceed. We aim to report back to you within a reasonable timescale and this might be as little as two weeks although, in some cases, a full investigation may require more time especially if the person concerned is away. If this is the case we will inform you of this and keep you updated.

Please note that the Practice must ensure strict adherence to the rule of medical confidentiality. We cannot provide confidential information without appropriate authority if you are not the patient in question.

We can help you write down your complaint if you feel you need help to do so. Please do not hesitate to contact the Practice Manager, who will be pleased to assist you.

Please send your complaint to the Surgery as soon as possible.

Your complaint will then be investigated by someone within the Practice. It is likely that, as a first step, the investigator will contact you directly to ensure that he or she fully understands your complaint. It may be suggested that this is done by a short face-to-face meeting which, it has been found, often clarifies the picture for both sides of the complaint. The investigator will then interview appropriate members of the Practice Staff and may inspect relevant documents. At the conclusion of the investigation, your complaint will be discussed with you in detail or, if felt more appropriate, in writing to you.

People using the complaints procedure can obtain support and advice from ICAS – the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service. This is a free service and it can be accessed by free-phone number 0845 1203782. Patients might also like to seek advice from NHS Bath & North East Somerset's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who can be contacted at -

Patient Advice and Liaison Service
Bath and North East Somerset CCG
Trust Headquarters
St. Martin's Hospital
Clara Cross Lane
Bath
BA2 5RP
Tel: 01225 831717

In the event of a complaint not being resolved at this stage, it may be referred to the second stage procedure (independent review) which would be handled by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman whose contact details are -

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP
Tel: 0345 015 4033
E-mail: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk
Fax: 0300 061 4000

At completion of the Practice investigation, claimants have 60 days in which to ask the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman for an independent review.