



Patient Complaints Procedure

Introduction

If you have a complaint or concern regarding the service you have received from the doctors or any member of staff working at Ledbury Health Partnership, we would like to know. As part of the NHS Directive, we operate a 'Patient Complaint Procedure' which meets national standards.

Lodging a Complaint

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the member of staff concerned. However, if your problem cannot be resolved on the spot and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know **as soon as possible**. If you inform us within a few days or weeks, we will be able to establish the details of the incident more easily.

If it is not possible to inform us within a few weeks, please let us have the details of your complaint:

- Within 6 months of the incident that caused the problem; or
- Within 12 months of discovering you have a problem (provided this is within 12 months of the incident)

Please address any complaints to the Practice Manager, or to any of the partners. You may wish to ask for an appointment with the Practice Manager to discuss your concerns. She will explain our procedure to you and ensure your concerns are dealt with promptly.

It will be a great help if you are as specific as possible about your complaint.

What we will do

- We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
- We will aim to look into your complaint within twenty working days.
- We shall then be in a position to offer you an explanation or arrange a meeting with the people involved if appropriate.

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 appropriate.
- Make sure you receive an apology, if appropriate.
- Identify what we can do to make sure the problem does not happen again.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we need to know that you have his or her permission. A note signed by them will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this. Details of deceased patients are also bound by confidentiality. Only the patient's legal representative can give consent for details to be disclosed.

Further advice can be accessed from the following organisations:

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers confidential advice, support and information on health-related matters. They provide a point of contact for patients, their families and their carers.

The nearest PALS office is based at
Hereford County Hospital
Stonebow Road
Hereford
Herefordshire HR1 2BN

Tel 01432 372986

How can PALS help?

PALS provides help in many ways. For example, it can:

- help you with health-related questions
- help resolve concerns or problems when you're using the NHS
- tell you how to get more involved in your own healthcare
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PALS can give you information about:

- the NHS
- the NHS complaints procedure, including how to get independent help if you want to make a complaint
- support groups outside the NHS

PALS also helps to improve the NHS by listening to your concerns and suggestions.

Onside - Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)

ICAS is free, independent and confidential and can:

- Generally support you with your NHS complaint
- Provide a self-help pack so you can deal with your own complaint
- Meet you in a place where you feel comfortable if you are not able to visit our office or speak on the phone

Onside Independent Advocacy

Williamson House

14 Charles Street

Worcester WR1 1LT

Helpline: 01905 27525 Fax: 01905 28554

Email: info@onside-advocacy.org.uk web: www.onside-advocacy.org.uk

Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

London SW1P 4QP

Enquiries: 0345 015 4033 phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk