

Ledbury Health Partnership

COMPLAINTS LEAFLET

A Brief Guide on How to Voice Your Concerns

Listening, Responding and Improving at Ledbury Health Partnership

In order to provide our patients with the best possible care, we would like to hear from you if you think we could do something differently. Furthermore, we understand that there may be times you are unhappy with the service received at the Practice and we would like to hear about this too.

Giving Us Your Feedback

If you have any comments or suggestions, please speak initially to the receptionist on duty who will be able to advise you.

If We Fail to Meet Your Expectations

If you have a complaint please do not be afraid to say how you feel. We welcome feedback to improve our standards and you will not be treated any differently if you have complained.

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, you should do so in writing as soon as possible after the event and ideally within a few days, as this helps us to establish what happened more easily. Usually the NHS Complaints Procedures only deal with complaints made within 12 months of the event or on discovering something to complain about. This time limit may be waived if there are good reasons why you could not let us know earlier.

Should a complaint be received about a member of another organisation's staff, then this is to be brought to the attention of the Practice Manager at the earliest opportunity. The Practice Manager will then liaise with the other organisation's manager.

Ledbury Health Partnership will ensure that all locum staff, be it GPs, nurses or administrative staff, are aware of both the complaints process and that they will be expected to partake in any subsequent investigation, even if they have left the Practice (keeping in mind the 12 months' timeframe to complain).

If you are a registered patient you can complain about your own care. You are unable to complain about someone else's treatment without their written authority (see the section below).

We are able to provide you with a separate complaint form to register your complaint and this includes a third-party authority form to enable a complaint to be made by someone else. Please ask at reception for this or download a copy from our website.

You can provide this in your own format providing this covers all the necessary aspects.

Formal complaints should be submitted to:

The Practice Manager
Ledbury Health Partnership
Market Street
Ledbury
Herefordshire HR8 2AQ

What We Do Next

We look to settle complaints as soon as possible. Where possible, we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days and aim to have looked into the matter within an agreed timescale when you raised it with us. Confidentiality will be respected at all times and a patient's consent will be sought where complaints are made by anybody other than the patient themselves.

The Practice Manager will undertake a thorough investigation of events and seek to address all aspects of the patient's complaint; taking advice and where beneficial, arrange a meeting with the complainant. There is no end date by which the complainant must receive their response however every effort will be made to keep the complainant informed of progress and for a final response to be sent to the complainant within the agreed timescales.

The Practice Manager will keep a record of all complaints received and this information will help contribute to the identification of staff training needs and service improvements as well as forming part of the Practice's Annual Report on complaints.

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. Please ask at Reception for the Complaints form, or download this from our website, which contains a suitable authority for the patient to sign to enable the complaint to proceed.

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 circumstance 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.

Final Response

The Practice Manager will issue a final formal response to all complainants which will provide full details and the outcome of the complaint. Further information is detailed in our Practice Complaints Procedures.

What Other Options Do I Have?

Complaints can be directed to NHS England rather than the Practice and they may undertake the complaint handling. In some cases, with your consent, they will refer the complaint back to the Practice. Where a complaint is solely about a third party, we may seek your agreement to pass the complaint to them.

Who Can Help with Your Complaint?

The following contacts can help you further with any questions you may still have about the complaint's procedure within the NHS:

The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service is available to support you and represent your views when making a complaint. They can accompany you to meetings to discuss your complaint and provide support or an interpreter.

NHS England

Tel: 0300 311 2233

Email: England.contactus@nhs.net

By Post: NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch. B97 9PT

Independent advocacy services include:

- POhWER – a charity that helps people to be involved in decisions being made about their care. POhWER's support centre can be contacted via 0300 456 2370. Email: pohwer@pohwer.net or via their website www.pohwer.net
- SeAp Advocacy – gives advocacy support. Call 0330 440 9000 for advice or text SEAP to 80800
- Age UK – may have advocates in the area. Visit their website or call 0800 055 6112.
- Local councils can offer support in helping the complainant to find an advocacy service. Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council>

If you are Dissatisfied with the Outcome

You have the right to refer your complaint to the Ombudsman. The contact details are:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

London

SW1P 4QP

Tel: 0345 015 4033

Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk

Ledbury Health Partnership recognise that patients who complain about care and treatment received have every right to expect a prompt, open, constructive and honest response including an explanation and, if appropriate, an apology.

We understand the importance of listening to patients and making changes when things have not gone as they (or we) wish.