



ORCHARD SURGERY

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET Practice Complaints Procedure

This leaflet is available on paper in the practice and is reproduced on the Orchard Surgery website.

Practice Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from any of the staff working in this practice, please let us know. We operate a complaints procedure as part of a NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our complaints system meets national criteria.

How to complain

It is our aim that if patients wish to register a concern or make a complaint, they should find it easy to do so. We welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services.

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know as soon as possible – ideally, within a matter of days or at most a few weeks – because this will enable us to establish what happened more easily. If it is not possible to do that, please let us have details of your complaint:

- 1. Within 12 months of the incident that caused the problem.**
- 2. Within 12 months of discovering you have a problem.**
- 3. If longer than 12 months we will consider accepting this if there are good grounds for a delay and it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively.**

Complaints can be given to the practice verbally or in writing by email or letter delivered by hand or by post.

Mr Clive Farrington is the Complaints Manager for the practice.

Complaints should be addressed to:

**Mr Clive Farrington, Practice Manager
Orchard Surgery
Lower Tanbridge Way
Horsham
RH12 1PJ**

The email address is: sxicb-wsx.orchard-horsham@nhs.net

Alternatively, you may ask for an in person appointment or a telephone call with Mr Farrington to discuss your concerns. He will explain the complaints procedure to you and will make sure

that your concerns are dealt with promptly. It will be a great help if you are as specific as possible about your complaint.

In the event that the practice manager is absent, your complaint may be handled by another manager in the practice.

If your complaint is given to us verbally, you will be given a written copy of your complaint as recorded by the member of staff.

What we shall do

We shall acknowledge your complaint within **3 working days**.

We aim to have looked into your complaint thoroughly within 30-60 working days of the date when you raised your complaint with us. However, NHSE does not require us to adhere to a time limit. Generally we will agree an appropriate timescale with you during the acknowledgement process. This timescale might be dependent on annual leave, sickness, external organisation involvement or complexity of the complaint for example.

We will endeavour to keep you updated with the progress of the investigation as much as possible. It may be necessary to seek further information from you.

If there are unavoidable delays in the investigation we will discuss this with you and agree a revised timescale.

We shall then be in a position to offer you an explanation, or a meeting with the people involved.

When we look into complaint, we shall aim to:

- 1. Find out what happened and what went wrong.**
- 2. Make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if you would like this.**
- 3. Make sure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate.**
- 4. Identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't 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 have to know that you have his or her permission to do so. A handwritten or typed letter signed by the person concerned will be required unless the patient is incapable of providing this. Under these circumstances alternative ways forward will be discussed with you.

Additional help and advice

If you are not happy with the practice response, there are other organisations you can contact for guidance. Here are the details:

Healthwatch

West Sussex

The contact details for Healthwatch West Sussex Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service are:

Post: PO Box 1360, Crawley, RH10 0QS

Phone: 0300 012 0122

Email: helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

NHS Sussex

Anybody wishing to initiate a formal complaint can do so either verbally or in writing (including by telephone or email) to NHS Sussex. Any complaints received by the NHS Sussex ICB will be forwarded on to the ICB Patient Experience Team.

The ICB Patient Experience Team's email address is: sxicb.complaints@nhs.net

NHS England

Any concerns or complaints about a General Practitioner (GP), dentist, pharmacist, or optician that cannot be resolved locally with the practice manager must be referred to NHS England (NHSE).

Complaints about a GP that are of a clinical nature will be referred to NHSE as above, however, if the complaint is about a GP practice contractual issue, then the ICB will investigate.

England.contactus@nhs.net

Phone: 0300 311 2233

NHS England Customer Contact Centre PO Box 16738

Redditch

B97 9PT

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)

Further information on the role and work of the PHSO is available from:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

London

SW1P 4QP

Tel. Complaints Helpline 0345 015 4033

Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

The Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS)

The Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service is a free, independent, confidential advocacy service that can help individuals to make a complaint about any aspect of their NHS care or treatment. This includes treatment in a private hospital or care home that is funded by the NHS.

Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, in the event that a patient lacks capacity and does not have an appropriate nearest relative to act on their behalf, an IMHA (Independent Mental Health Advocate) can be allocated. Complainants may also receive support from specialist advocacy services or from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

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