

Kington Medical Practice Practice Complaints and Feedback

Information for Patients

This procedure sets out the Practice's approach to the handling of comments, compliments, concerns and complaints

Policy Approval

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Practice Complaints and Feedback Procedure

Here at Kington Medical Practice we strive to provide all of our patients with the best services possible and are always keen to receive feedback, both positive and negative.

Any problems or concerns that arise can usually be sorted out quickly and easily, often at the time and with the person concerned. However, there may be times when you feel this has not happened. If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from the doctors or any of the staff working in this Practice, please let us know.

1. General provisions

We operate a practice Complaints and Feedback Policy as part of a NHS wide system for dealing with complaints, which meets the national criteria. We will take reasonable steps to ensure that the Complaints and Feedback Procedure is accessible to all patients and that patients are aware of:

- The complaints procedure;
- The role of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) NHS England and other bodies in relation to complaints about services under the contract; and
- The patient's right to assistance with any complaint from independent advocacy services.

2. Receiving complaints

The Practice may receive a complaint from:

- A patient or former patient, or third party acting on their behalf with the appropriate consent, who is receiving or has received treatment at the Practice
- Where the patient is a child a complaint may be made:
 - by either parent, or in the absence of both parents, the guardian or other adult who has care of the child
 - by a person duly authorised by a local authority to whose care the child has been committed under the provisions of the Children Act 1989; or
 - by a person duly authorised by a voluntary organisation by which the child is being accommodated

- Where the patient is incapable of making a complaint, by a relative or other adult who has delegated authority to act on a patient's behalf, for example a registered Power of Attorney which must include cover for health affairs
- The personal representative of a patient who has died
- An MP acting on behalf of a constituent.

3. Period within which complaints can be made

Complaints can be made 12 months from the date on which the matter that is the subject of the complaint came to the notice of the complainant. If there are good reasons for not having made the complaint within the above timeframe and, if it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly, we may decide to still consider the complaint, for example, longer periods of complaint timescales may apply to specific clinical areas.

- (a) 12 months from the date on which the event which is the subject of the complaint occurred;
or
- (b) 6 months from the date on which the event which is the subject of the complaint comes to the complainant's notice (provided that the complaint is made no later than 12 months after the date of the event).

GPs and/or Practice Managers have the discretion to extend the time limits if the complainant has suffered particular distress that prevented them from acting sooner. When considering an extension to the time limit the GP and/or Practice Manager will take into consideration that the passage of time may prevent an accurate recollection of events by the clinician concerned or by the person bringing the complaint. The collection of evidence, Clinical Guidelines or other resources relating to the time when the complaint event arose may also be difficult to establish or obtain. These factors may be considered as suitable reason for declining a time limit extension.

4. Complaints handling

The Practice Manager and Lead GP are responsible for the operation of the Complaints and Feedback procedure and for the investigation of complaints.

5. How to make a complaint

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. However, 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.

Verbal complaints

If patients do not wish to put their complaint in writing, they may make a verbal complaint in person or by telephone. The complaint shall be recorded by a member of the practice staff and a written record will be given to the complainant and to the Practice Manager (or their deputy if unavailable).

Written complaints

Complaints can be made in writing to the Practice Manager by letter or email (please see contact details at the end of this document).

Other bodies

If you do not wish to make a complaint directly to the practice, then you can raise your concerns with the local CCG or NHS England.

You may also ask an independent advocacy agency to contact the Practice on your behalf.

Contact details for all of these bodies can be found below.

6. Action taken upon receipt of a complaint

The Practice Manager (or deputy in their absence) will:

- Acknowledge the complaint in writing within 3 working days beginning with the day on which the complaint was received or, where that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

When acknowledging the complaint, we will offer to meet with you to discuss your concerns at a time to suit you. We will also advise of the expected timescale for the investigation and when you are likely to receive a written response

- Ensure the complaint is properly investigated
- Aim to provide a written response within 28 days. We will let you know if it is likely to be longer than this and keep you updated with the progress of your complaint.

The written response will include an explanation of how the complaint has been considered, conclusions reached and how they may affect you. It will confirm any actions that need to be taken as a consequence of the complaint. If resolution has not been reached, you have the right to take the complaint to the Health Service Ombudsman.

7. Reviewing complaints received

Complaints received by the Practice will be reviewed and learning points shared with the whole practice team. They may be discussed at Practice meetings to ensure any actions required are put in place.

A full review of all complaints will be carried out annually by the Practice Manager to identify any trends or additional actions/learning points. The details of this review will be shared at the Practice meeting.

8. Confidentiality

All complaints are treated in the strictest of confidence and will not affect your treatment within the Practice.

Where the investigation of the complaint requires consideration of a patient's medical records, the Practice Manager will inform the patient (or person acting on their behalf) if the investigation will involve disclosure of information contained in those records to a person other than the Practice or an employee of the Practice.

The Practice will keep a record of all complaints and copies of all correspondence relating to complaints, but such records will be kept separate from patients' medical records.

SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

The Practice Manager, Mr Tim Bellett, can be contacted on:

Telephone: 01544 230302

Email: Kington.correspondence@nhs.net

Address: Kington Medical Practice, Eardisley Road, Kington, Herefordshire, HR5 3EA

The area served by Kington Medical Practice is in the district covered by Herefordshire CCG. Herefordshire CCG is responsible for ensuring you get all primary care services in the area. The CCG also produces Your Guide to Local Health Services. Their contact details are as follows:-

Herefordshire CCG
St Owen's Chambers
22 St Owen's Street
Hereford
HR1 2PL

Tel: 01432 260618

W: www.herefordshireccg.nhs.uk/

The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service

The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service provides free help and support for people bringing formal complaints to the NHS. You can contact them at - Helpline: 0300 3305454 or email

nhscomplaints@voiceability.org .

Patient Advisory Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS provides a confidential service designed to help patients get the most from the NHS. PALS can tell you more about the NHS complaints procedure and may be able to help you resolve your complaint informally. You can contact them on telephone number 0800 030 4563 or email pals@staffordshireccs.nhs.uk.

The Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP. Tel: 0345 015 4033 or Minicom: 0300 061 4298 Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk.

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

If you have a genuine concern about a staff member or regulated activity carried on by this Practice then you can contact the CQC.

National Customer Service Centre: Telephone: 03000 616161, email enquiries@cqc.org.uk or via their website www.cqc.org.uk.