

Stratton Medical Centre

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT – THE NHS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This leaflet tells you how to make a complaint about your local NHS services.

If you are dissatisfied with our service and wish to complain, we will endeavour to give you a quick but thorough response that fully answers your concerns. Your comments help us to understand when and why problems and mistakes arise and how we can try to prevent them from happening again. We also welcome your views about things that have gone well, as this is another way in which you can help us to improve our services.

Who can complain?

Anyone who is or has received NHS treatment or services and is dissatisfied

If you cannot make a complaint yourself, then a friend or relative can, with your consent, complain on your behalf. However, the NHS complaints procedure cannot address complaints about non-NHS treatment, social services or matters that are the subject of legal action.

Whom do I complain to in the practice?

The quickest and simplest way is usually to first speak to someone close to the cause of your complaint – this step is known as **local resolution**. If you have a complaint about our service, you can either ask to see the Practice Manager Kathryn Pengelly or Dr Moss – staff at the practice will be able to give you further details. Alternatively you can telephone or write to the practice describing your concerns.

What do I do if I have a complaint about another NHS service?

If you have a complaint about other family services e.g. dental, pharmacy, optician, hospital and community health services in the North & East Cornwall area, please telephone or write to the Trust Complaints Manager (details over) for further information.

If you wish to complain about your local Primary Care Trust or are uncertain how to begin the complaints procedure, please contact the Trust Complaints Manager or write to the Chief Executive at the Trust (address overleaf).

Can anyone help me?

Yes, you can receive independent help and advice on the complaints procedure from your local **Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)** – the ICAS are confidential and a free service to support you in making your complaint. *contact details overleaf*

You can also contact the Trust **PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service)** *contact details are given overleaf*

When should I complain?

As soon as possible after the event as there are time limits.

The time limit is normally 12 months but there are exceptions. If you are in any doubt, please contact the Practice Manager.

What will happen when I complain?

The person you talk/write to will try to find out what happened and take any action that is necessary. He/she may need to talk to other staff but they will be careful to ensure that any information about you is kept confidential. Your complaint will not be recorded on your clinical notes unless you ask for such a record to be made. If you complain in writing, your letter will be acknowledged within 3 working days. Please put your telephone number on the letter if you are happy for us to ring you – this may help us to reply more quickly. If you make a complaint about our services, we will aim to respond with a full explanation. (There are time limits for hospitals and Trusts). If resolution exceeds 6 months, you will be informed of the reason in writing.

What if I remain unhappy?

Please tell us – those investigating may be able to do more to help.

If you remain unhappy when local resolution is complete, you will be advised by the practice manager of the details of the next stage of the complaints procedure – **independent review**. An independent review is undertaken by:

The Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP Tel. 0345 0154033

You should decide to seek an independent review within 60 days of the conclusion of local resolution. The trust Complaints Manager can give you more information about the independent review process or you can contact the Ombudsman direct.

Some useful contact details:

- **For PALS, Trust Complaints Manager and Trust Chief Executive:
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly PCT, Sedgemoor Centre, Priory Road, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 5AS
Tel: 0845 1708000**
- **Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust, Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro TR1 3LJ Tel: 01872 250000**
- **Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust, Derriford Hospital, Derriford Road, Plymouth, PL6 8DH Tel: 01752 777111**
- **Westcountry Ambulance Service NHS Trust, Abbey Court, Eagle Way, Exeter, EX2 7HY Tel: 01392 261500**
- **The Ombudsman (Health Service Commissioner), Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP
Tel: 0345 0154033**
- **ICAS, Citizen Advice, 1st Floor, 17 Dean Street, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 4AB, Tel: 01579 345193**
- **Kernow Urgent Care Service (Out of Hours), Complaints, Cudmore House, Oak Lane, Truro, Treliske Industrial Estate, TR1 3LP Tel: 01872 226754**