

# Complaints & Concerns

Dr S Butler & Partners

GP F81013 – Western Road Surgery

<b>Policy:</b>	<b>Complaints &amp; Concerns</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> July 2020</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> July 22</b>
<b>Policy Responsibility:</b>	<b>The Practice Manager is responsible for ensuring that the policy is managed and adhered to by all relevant personnel</b>

## **Policy**

This policy sets out the Practice's approach to the handling of complaints and concerns and is intended as an internal guide. There is also a Complaint's, Compliments & Suggestions Leaflet for patients embedded herein



COMPLAINTS  
LEAFLET.doc

The master copy is held by the Practice Manager.

### **1. General provisions**

The Practice will take reasonable steps to ensure that patients are aware of:

- (a) the complaints procedure;
- (b) the role of the NHS England and other bodies in relation to complaints about services under the contract; and
- (c) A patient's right to assistance with any complaint from independent advocacy services

The Practice will take reasonable steps to ensure that the complaints procedure is accessible to all patients by having the Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions Leaflet available in the waiting area and having this information on the website.

### **2. Receiving of complaints**

The Practice may receive a complaint made by, or (with his/her consent) on behalf of a patient, or former patient, who is receiving or has received treatment at the Practice, or:

- (a) where the patient is a child:
  - (i) by either parent, or in the absence of both parents, the guardian or other adult who has care of the child,
  - (ii) 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

(iii) by a person duly authorised by a voluntary organisation by which the child is being accommodated

(b) where the patient is incapable of making a complaint, by a relative or other adult who has an interest in his/her welfare

### **3. Period within which complaints can be made**

The period for making a complaint is:

(a) 12 months from the date on which the event which is the subject of the complaint occurred.

### **4. Complaints handling**

(a) The Practice Manager will be responsible for the operation of the complaints procedure and the investigation of complaints. Dr Anil Patel is the named GP responsible for complaints; and

(b) The lead GP will be responsible for ensuring the Practice Manager efficiently co-ordinates the complaints procedure and will work with her to audit all complaints for review at an annual meeting in April each year (covering previous financial year).

### **5. Action upon receipt of a complaint**

Complaints may be received either verbally or in writing and must be forwarded to the Practice Manager or Practice Administrator in her absence. Complainants must always be offered the Complaints Leaflet and advised that they can also make their complaint to a third party i.e. Essex Health Watch, Ombudsman etc., (details in leaflet).

In all cases the Practice Manager (Practice Administrator in her absence) will

- acknowledge the complaint, in writing, within the period of three working days beginning with the day on which the complaint was received or, where that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable
- agree a time frame with the complainant for responding to the complaint (if there is no agreement the response will be made within 21 days unless circumstances dictate otherwise)
- ensure the complaint is properly investigated
- within the period of 21 working days beginning with the day on which the complaint was received at the Surgery and, where that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable, the complainant must be given a written statement of the investigation and its conclusions

### **6. Review of complaints**

Complaints received by the practice will be reviewed to ensure that learning points are shared where necessary:

- complaints will be reviewed at either Partners meetings or practice staff meetings whichever is deemed to be most appropriate to ensure any actions required are put into practice.

- A review of all complaints will be carried out annually, in January, to identify any trends or additional actions/learning points.

## **7. Confidentiality**

All complaints must be treated in the strictest confidence

Where the investigation of the complaint requires consideration of the patient's medical records, the Complaints Officer must inform the patient or person acting on his/her 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 must keep a record of all complaints and copies of all correspondence relating to complaints, but such records must be kept separate from patients' medical records.

## **8. Advocacy & Appeals**

Where a patient is dissatisfied with the response made by the Practice to a complaint or concern they will be offered an opportunity to express their dissatisfaction at a face to face meeting with the relevant personnel handling the complaint.

All complaint responses will contain information regarding agencies that the complainant can contact for advocacy.

All complaint responses will contain information regarding NHS England.

All complaint responses will advise the complaint that they can escalate their concerns to the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman.

The contact details for the above noted will be contained within the Practice Complaints leaflet and/or the written response made to the complainant by the Practice.