

## Belford Medical Practice Complaints or Comments

**Our aim is to provide the highest level of care for all our patients. We will always be willing to hear if there is any way that you think that we can improve the service we provide.**

### **Making a complaint**

If you have any complaints or concerns about the service that you have received from the doctors or staff working for this practice, please let us know.

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:

- Within 6 months of the incident that caused the problem; or
- Within 6 months of discovering that you have a problem, provided that is within 12 months of the incident.

The Practice Manager will be pleased to deal with any complaint. They will explain the procedure to you and make sure that your concerns are dealt with promptly. You can make your complaint:

***In person*** – ask to speak to the Practice Manager

***In writing*** – some complaints may be easier to explain in writing - please give as much information as can, then send your complaint to the practice for the attention of the Practice Manager as soon as possible

### **What we shall do**

Our complaints procedure is designed to make sure that we settle any complaints as quickly as possible. Complaints

We shall acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days (this includes the date the complaint was received) and aim to have provided a response to your complaint within 10 working days of the date when you raised it with us, if we are not able to resolve your complaint within this time scale we will let you know why and advise you when you may expect a response. We shall then be in a position to offer you an explanation, or a meeting with the people involved.

When we look into your complaint, we shall aim to:

- find out what happened and what went wrong
- make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if you would like this
- make sure you receive an apology, where appropriate
- identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.

At the end of the investigation which is carried out by the Practice Manager and a G.P. or other health care professional, your complaint will be discussed with you in detail, either in person or in writing.

### **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 note signed by the person concerned will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this.

## What you can do next

We hope that, if you have a problem, you will use our practice complaints procedure. We believe that this will give us the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and the opportunity to improve our practice.

However this does not affect your right to approach the local Primary Care Trust if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us **or** you are dissatisfied with the way we are dealing with your complaint. The Complaints Manager is based at NHS North of Tyne, and provide confidential advice and support, helping you to sort out any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available from the NHS

Write to NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch, B97 9PT  
Telephone 03003112233 email [England.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:England.contactus@nhs.net)

If you remain dissatisfied at the end of this local resolution process you can put your complaint to the Health Services Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can carry out independent investigations into complaints provided through the NHS in England.

If you have any questions about whether the Ombudsman may be able to help you contact their helpline on 0345 015 4033, email: [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk) or fax 020 7217 400. Or you can write to them at:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman  
Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4QP

**This policy meets with NHS Criteria**

Further information about the Ombudsman can be found on [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

Should you require any direct help or advice making your complaint you can contact your local Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS):

ICAS  
Churchill House  
12 Mosley Street  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 1DE  
Tel: 0845 120 3732

ICAS provides independent advocacy to people making complaint under the NHS complaints procedure.

## Help us get it right

We constantly try to improve the service we offer.

Please let us know if you have any suggestions as to how we can do something better.

## Belford Medical Practice

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NE70 7ER

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