

HILLHEAD FAMILY PRACTICE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Dr G Bonnar / Dr A Thompson / Dr E Fitzsimons

The practice is open to comments and suggestions and recognises that speed, sympathy and a willingness to listen may be all that is necessary to resolve a complaint.

We always try to offer you the best services possible, but there may be times when you feel that this has not happened. If something has gone wrong or fallen below standard, we welcome the opportunity to improve and avoid a recurrence.

The purpose of this leaflet is to explain what to do if you have a complaint.

If you are unhappy with something, you can speak to anyone who is dealing with your treatment or care and they will try to resolve the problem straight away.

We would hope to resolve any problems you may have as early as possible by offering you an appropriate explanation and apology. The Practice Manager is the practice designated complaints manager.

HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Complaints may be made either verbally or in writing to any member of staff or doctor. This can be done by:

- Speaking in person
- Telephoning the surgery on 028 9028 6800
- Writing, giving full details of the complaint to David Fowler (Practice Manager).

If you do wish to make a complaint we would ask you to let us know as soon as possible after the event, normally within six months. Please include contact details, who or what is being complained about, where and when the events of the complaint happened and where possible what you would like us to do – offer an apology, or an explanation or make changes to services.

We have a duty of confidentiality to patients. Complaints from a third party must, where possible, have the written consent of the individual concerned.

If you do not feel able to approach someone in the practice, you may contact the Health and Social Care Board.

HOW IS MY COMPLAINT DEALT WITH?

We think it is important to deal quickly, thoroughly, openly, honestly and objectively with any complaints received. The practice will aim to address your concerns fully, provide you with an explanation and discuss any action that may be needed.

This is the procedure that we follow:

1. All written complaints will be acknowledged within two working days of being received by the Practice.
2. A full investigation of the complaint will be undertaken and you will normally be offered an appointment within 7 working days. You are welcome to bring a friend or relative with you to the meeting to discuss the outcome of your complaint.
3. A full written response to the outcome of the complaints investigation will also be forwarded to you within 10 working days.

4. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome following investigation you may refer the complaint to the NIPSO (Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman); contact details below.
5. You will be kept informed of any reason why there may be a delay in dealing with your complaint, for example, if enquiries are taking longer than expected.
6. The practice is required to provide the Health and Social Care Board with anonymised copies of all written complaints within 3 working days of completion of the process.

We hope that you will feel satisfied that we have dealt with the matter thoroughly.

We cannot deal with questions of legal liability or compensation but we hope we can look into and, put right any problem.

The Patient and Client Council

The council works on behalf of patients in all areas of health and social care.

They will:

- Work with health and social care organisations to improve the services as a result of concerns raised
- Give you information on how to complain and who to complain to
- Help you to write letters of complaint
- Make telephone calls for you about concerns
- Go with you to meetings about a complaint and help with the process

If you use the Practice's complaints procedure it will not affect your right to refer your complaint to the Ombudsman if you wish.

Please note; complaints should normally be forwarded to the Ombudsman within 6 months of the completion of our internal complaints process.

WHO ELSE CAN I CONTACT?

Health and Social Care Board

Complaints Office

12–22 Linenhall Street

Belfast

BT2 8BS

Tel.:028 90321313

<http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/>

Patient Client Council

1st Floor

Lesley House

25-27 Wellington Place

Belfast

BT1 6GQ

Freephone 0800 917 0222

<http://www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net/>

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman

Progressive House

33 Wellington Place

Belfast

BT1 6HN

Freephone 0800 34 34 24

<http://www.nipso.org.uk>