

HARBOURSIDE FAMILY PRACTICE

Guide for Patients: Complaints Procedure

If you need this information in larger print or in another language please let us know.

INTRODUCTION

Every NHS facility has a complaints procedure. This permits a patient (or their nominated representative) to submit a complaint either to the NHS organisation or the organisation that has been commissioned by the NHS to provide a service.

This organisation adopts a patient-focused approach to complaint handling in accordance with the [National Health Service England Complaints Policy \(2021\)](#) whilst also conforming to guidance detailed in:

- [Good Practice Standards for NHS Complaints Handling 2013](#)
- [Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's Principles of Good Complaints Handling 2009](#)
- [My Expectations 2014](#)
- [The NHS Constitution](#)
- [Health and Social Care Act 2008 \(Regulated Activities\) Regulations 2014: Regulation 16](#)
- [The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Services Complaints \(England\) Regulations 2009](#)

All healthcare providers within the NHS have legal, contractual and professional obligations to provide an accessible and suitably responsive complaints procedure for service users.

Harbourside Family Practice views complaints positively and is committed to an effective procedure for handling complaints which is outcome driven. Our aim is to provide an accessible, flexible and responsive patient-centred complaints handling procedure, integrally linked to continuous service improvements and patient safety.

Complaints may be any indication of dissatisfaction about a decision made in regard to service or care, a failure to reach a decision, the nature or quality of a service, or a failure to provide a service. Complaints can be used as a means of getting feedback on performance and monitoring the quality of services.

Patients, relatives or representatives can make complaints but if the complainant is not the patient, written consent must be obtained from the patient to enable that person to act on behalf of the patient. Every complaint is unique and individual care and attention will be given to each complainant. We will treat your complaint in confidence.

What to Do When Something is Wrong

Our aim is for procedures to be simple, widely publicised and easily understood.

If you need to complain please tell us – what happened, when, where, who was involved, what was the outcome, what you would like us to do to matters right. If for any reason you experience difficulties in putting your complaint in writing, Fran Upshon, the Practice Manager will be happy to arrange a meeting with you.

Key Things You Should Know

The practice has arrangements in place to handle complaints efficiently, investigating them properly and delivering a timely and appropriate response. We make information about these arrangements available to the public.

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 – 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
- If you don't discover the problem immediately, within 6 months of discovering that you have a problem, provided that the time is reasonable

The practice will give complainants the support that they need to follow the complaints procedure or to inform them of advice available (such as Patient Advisory and Liaison Services - PALS or ICAS Independent Complaints Advocacy Services).

Complainants will be treated with respect and courtesy and will be told the outcome of the investigation.

The complaints-handling arrangements include procedures for ensuring that necessary actions are taken in light of the outcome of a complaint.

Dr Tina Chan, GP Partner, is designated the "Responsible Person" who ensures that complaints are handled in compliance with the Regulations and that lessons learned from complaints are implemented

Ms Fran Upshon, Practice Manager, is the designated complaints manager and responsible for the progress of complaints in the practice.

Complaints can be made by patients or anyone affected by the actions, omissions or decisions of the practice, either on their own behalf or by a representative. In the case of a representative, the practice must be satisfied that he/she is acting in the best interests of the person on whose behalf he/she is complaining. If we decide that this is not the case, we will notify the complainant in writing, giving reasons for its decision.

Complainants can direct their complaints to **NHS North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group - NSCCG** rather than the practice and the **NS CCG** may undertake the complaint handling itself or, if it deems it appropriate and has the complainant's consent, refer the complaint to the practice concerned. **NS CCG** will notify the practice of the details of a complaint, provided it has the complainant's consent to do so.

All complaints should be made in writing and will be acknowledged, in writing, **within five working days of receipt**.

The acknowledgement letter will include the offer of a discussion (which might be by telephone or a meeting) to agree a plan of how the complaint will be handled and agree reasonable timescales for investigating and concluding the complaint.

If the complainant declines the offer to discuss the issue, the practice will decide how the complaint will be handled, based on the available information. A letter will be sent to the complainant setting out how the complaint will be investigated and the expected timescales.

The complaint will be investigated appropriately and speedily and the complainant will be kept informed of progress.

Where a complaint involves one or more agencies the complainant will be given a co-ordinated response and the practice will co-operate with others to make this possible.

Once the investigation has been concluded, a letter will be sent to the complainant, setting out how the complaint has been investigated, the evidence considered and the conclusion reached. This letter will also include details of actions the practice has and will be taking as a result of its findings. Explanations of clinical matters will be written in accessible language.

The letter will be signed by Dr Chan or Ms Upshon or someone delegated by the practice to carry out this function on his/her behalf. It will confirm that the practice is satisfied with the way it has dealt with the complaint, making it clear that nothing more can be done at local level and that the complainant can take the complaint to the Ombudsman if he/she wishes.

The practice's complaints handling arrangements will be monitored to ensure that they are working effectively and that no discrimination against complainants has ensued.

A record will be kept of each complaint received, detailing the subject and outcome of the complaint and whether it was resolved within the agreed timescale.

The practice will supply the **NHS North Somerset CCG** with an annual report containing the following information:

1. The number of complaints received
2. The number of complaints that were upheld
3. The number of complaints that are known to have been referred to the Health Service Ombudsman
4. A summary of the reasons for the complaints
5. A narrative about significant issues relating to the practice's experience of complaints during the year, including lessons learned and actions taken.

Legal obligations

The NHS Constitution sets out the following rights for patients:

- You have the right to have any complaint you make about NHS services dealt with efficiently and to have it properly investigated.
- You have the right to know the outcome of any investigation into your complaint.
- You have the right to take your complaint to the independent Health Service Ombudsman, if you are not satisfied with the way your complaint has been dealt with by the NHS.

The Health Act 2009 places a duty on NHS organisations (including contractors) to "have regard to the NHS Constitution".

Ombudsman

In England, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman is now responsible for investigating second-stage complaints.

Contact Details

Practice:

Harbourside Family Practice
Marina Healthcare Centre
2 Haven View
Portishead
BS20 7QA

NHS England

Email: england.contactus@nhs.net

Telephone: 0300 311 22 33

Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS) North Somerset

Castlewood, PO Box 237, Tickenham Road
Clevedon, North Somerset, BS21 9AX
Telephone : 0800 923 2222
Email: pals@bristol.nhs.uk

Healthwatch North Somerset

Telephone: 01275 244238 (9am - 5pm. If we cannot answer your call or you call us outside these hours, please leave a message with your contact details and we will get back to you within 5 working days.)

Email: contact@healthwatchnorthsomerset.co.uk

Health Service Ombudsman

Complaints Helpline 0345 015 4033

Email phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

The Helpline is open 8:30am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday.

Or write to:

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

Complaint Form (Please send report marked PERSONAL IN CONFIDENCE)

To: Ms Fran Upshon, Practice Manager,
Harbourside Family Practice, 2 Haven View, Portishead, BS20 7QA

Complainant's details

Name: _____

Address : _____

Patient's details (where different from above)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Usual Practitioner: _____

Details of Complaint (including date(s) of events and persons involved)

Complainant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Where the complainant is not the patient:

I, _____ authorise this complaint to be made on my behalf by
_____ and I agree that the Practice may disclose to
_____ (only in so far as is necessary to answer the complaint)
confidential information about me which I provided to them.

Patient's signature: _____ Date: _____

Name and address: _____

Monitoring data about complainant

Ethnicity:					
White – Other White		British		Irish	
Mixed - White & Asian		White & Black Caribbean Other Mixed		White & Black African	
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi		Indian Other Asian		Pakistani	
Black/Black British - Other Black		Black Caribbean		Black African	
Chinese					
Other ethnic category					
Not stated					
Age group:					
under18 stated	19 - 30	31 – 50	51 – 65	65 and over	Not stated
Do you consider yourself to be disabled?					
Yes	No	Not stated			