

The Bellingham Practice

Practice Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from the doctors or any of the staff working in this practice, please let us know. We operate a practice based complaints procedure as part of a NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our complaints system meets national criteria. We take comments, complaints and concerns very seriously and will endeavour to deal with any issues efficiently and effectively.

How to complain

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 possible - ideally, within a matter of days or at the most a few weeks - because this will enable us to establish what happened more easily.

There are time limits on making a complaint. Normally a complaint should be made:

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

Please ask to see Jayne Reed , who is the practice Complaints Manager. She will explain the complaints procedure to you and will make sure your concerns are dealt with confidentially, promptly and thoroughly. Alternatively you can write to Jayne with the details of your complaint.

In the event of anyone not wishing to complain direct to the practice you can make a complaint to the local Integrated Care Board :

By telephone: 0191 512 8277

By email: necsu.complaints@nhs.net

By post: Primary Care Complaints, c/o North of England Commissioning Support Unit, John Snow House, University Science Park, Durham, DH1 3YG

What we will do

We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and aim to have looked at your complaint within 20 working days of the date when you raised it with us. We will then be in a position to offer you an explanation, or a meeting with the people involved. When we look at your complaint, we will 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 to do this;
- make sure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate;
- identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.

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 their permission to do so. We will supply a consent form which must be signed by the person concerned, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this.

If you need help to make your complaint

Should you require any direct help or advice making your complaint you can contact the Independent Complaints Advocacy Northumberland (ICAN) service. ICAN is a service offered by Adapt North East and can help residents of the county complain or raise a concern about NHS care and treatment. They are able to give advice, information and support to complainants throughout the NHS complaints process.

Independent Complaints Advocacy Northumberland
c/o Adapt North East
Burn Lane
Hexham
NE46 3HN

Tel. 01434 600699
Email. generaloffice@adapt-tyndale.org.uk

If you remain dissatisfied at the end of local resolution you can put your complaint to the Health Services Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can carry out independent investigations into complaints about poor treatment or service provided through the NHS in England, The Ombudsman's services are free.

If you have any questions about whether the Ombudsman may be able to help you or about how to make a complaint please contact their helpline on 0845 015 4033, email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk or fax 0300 061 4000. Or you can write to them at:

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

Further information about the Ombudsman can be found on www.ombudsman.org.uk

Updated:	March 2006 October 2006, October 2007, October 2012 October 2013, January 2014, January 2020,
Reviewed:	October 2022, April 2023 no change required July 2023 (ICB details added), May 2025
Review date	May 2027 JR

S: Complaints\Current Complaints Procedure\Complaints Procedure Leaflet for patients