

Complaints or suggestions

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. Concerns are often best dealt with when they arise, so we would encourage you first to explain your problem or suggestion to a member of staff who knows you and your situation (such as a doctor). In many cases it should be possible to sort out the problem straight away by talking to the person you have already been dealing with or, perhaps, the practice manager. Most complaints are straightforward, and can be quickly rectified or an explanation can be given.

Our practice complaints procedure is compliant with the NHS complaints procedure and has been designed to be fair, flexible and conciliatory so that difficulties can be settled as quickly as possible.

How to complain

Complaints should be made as soon as possible after the event. They are treated in confidence, will not be filed on your medical records and will not affect your treatment in any way. If someone else (eg a relative or friend) complains on your behalf, we will need your written consent for that person to act for you. You may complain verbally, in writing or electronically.

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please do so as soon as possible - ideally within a matter of a few days as this will enable us to establish what happened more easily. If that's not possible your complaint should be submitted within 12 months of the incident that caused the problem or within 12 months of discovering that you have a problem. You should address your complaint to the practice manager, Mrs Julie Walsh. The practice manager will make sure that we deal with your concerns promptly and in the correct way.

What we will do

We aim to acknowledge all formal complaints within three working days and a full investigation will take place. The practice manager will provide you with a full response, which should usually be within ten working days. If it's not possible to respond within this timescale, you will be contacted and told regularly what is happening. A full response should include:

- An apology, if appropriate
- A detailed answer to each part of your complaint
- An offer of a meeting with you, if appropriate
- Details of any action that has been taken to prevent the problem happening again

Complaining on behalf of someone else

We keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality, If you are not the patient, but are complaining on their behalf, you must have their permission to do so. An authority signed by the patient concerned will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness or infirmity) of providing this.

Other routes

Whilst we hope that you will address your complaint to the practice directly, you may, if you prefer, address your complaint to NHS Lincolnshire instead. NHS Lincolnshire will forward the complaint to us at the practice for us to investigate in the normal way:

NHS Lincolnshire, Cross O'Cliff, Bracebridge Heath, Lincoln, LN4 2HN

Telephone: 01522 515370 or 01522 515319

Fax: 01522 515382

Email: complaints@lpct.nhs.uk

www.lpct.nhs.uk/Get-Involved/Complaints

The Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) can help if you want to make a complaint about NHS services:

ICAS (East Midlands), Unit 14, Evans Business Centre, Gateway Park, Roman Way, Lincoln, LN6 9UH

Telephone: 0300 456 8347

Fax: 01522 705131

Email: lincolnicas@carersfederation.co.uk

<http://www.carersfederation.co.uk/>

Taking it further

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint you may refer the matter to:

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

Telephone: 0345 0154033

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