

# SANDWICH MEDICAL 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 complaints procedure as part of the NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our complaints system meets national criteria.

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

Complaints should be addressed to the Practice Manager or any of the doctors. Alternatively, you may ask for an appointment with the Practice Manager or any of the doctors in order to discuss your concerns. He/she will explain the complaints procedure to you and will make sure that your concerns are dealt with promptly. It will be a great help if you are as specific as possible about your complaint.

### **What we will do**

We will acknowledge all written complaints within three working days and aim to have looked into your complaint as soon as possible after you have raised it with us. 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 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 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. A note signed by the person concerned will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this.

## **Complaining to the Clinical Commissioning Group**

We hope that, if you have a problem, you will use our practice complaints procedure. We believe this will give us the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and an opportunity to improve our practice. This does not affect your right to approach the local Clinical Commissioning Group, if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us **or** you are dissatisfied with the result of our investigation. You should contact Pam Mills, Corporate Governance Support Officer for Canterbury & Coastal and Ashford CCGs, Ground Floor, Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury CT1 1YW. Telephone 01227 795045 or email [pam.mills@nhs.net](mailto:pam.mills@nhs.net) Or you may contact NHS England at PO Box 16738, Redditch, BP7 9PT. Telephone 0300 311 2233 or email [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net)

You may also be able to seek advice from the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service on 0300 330 5454 or via their website at [www.nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org](http://www.nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org) or you can contact the Citizens Advice Bureau on 08444 111 444 – [www.citizensadvice.org](http://www.citizensadvice.org)

If you are not satisfied with the local or regional attempts to deal with your complaint you should contact the Parliamentary and Health Ombudsman at Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP. Telephone 0300 061 4298 or email [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk) – website [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)