

STEWARTON MEDICAL 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 the Practice, please let us know. We operate a Practice Complaints Procedure as part of an 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 6 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.

Complaints should be addressed to the designated Complaints Officer who is Dr Colin Hunter or to any of the doctors. Alternatively, you may ask for an appointment with the complaints officer in order to discuss your concerns. He will explain the complaints procedure to you and will make sure that your concerns are dealt with promptly. If this is not possible we will write to you and give you an explanation and will aim to do this within 10 days. It will be of great help if you are as specific as possible about your complaint.

WHAT SHALL WE DO

We shall acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days and aim to have looked into your complaint within 10 working days of the date you raised it with us. We shall then be in a position to give an explanation, or offer a meeting with those involved. In investigating your complaint we shall aim to:

Find out what happened and what went wrong.

Enable you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if you would like this.

Ensure you receive an apology, if this is appropriate.

Identify what we can do to make sure the problem does not happen again.

COMPLAINING ON BEHALF OF SOMEONE ELSE

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.

REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS

Complaints received by the practice will be reviewed to ensure that learning points are shared with the whole practice team. Complaints received during the month will be reviewed at monthly practice meetings to ensure any actions required are put into practice.

The practice must keep a record of all complaints and copies of all correspondence relating to complaints, but such records must be kept separate from patient's medical records.

CONCILIATION

We hope that if you have a problem, you will make use of 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. However, this does not affect your right to approach the Health Board, if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us or you are dissatisfied with the result of our investigation. You should contact the Patient Relations and Complaints Team, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, PO Box 13, Eglinton House, Ailsa Hospital, Dalmellington Road, AYR KA6 6AB or telephone 01292 513620 for further advice.

OMBUDSMAN

The ombudsman will normally only consider complaints which have been passed through the local resolution stage. Complaints more than 12 months old will not normally be considered unless there are special circumstances.