

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET**

#### **Introduction**

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. Our practice complaints procedure follows guidelines set out by the Department of Health in the Health and Social Care Complaints Procedure

#### **How to complain**

We hope that most problems can be resolved quickly and easily, 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 formal complaint, we would like you to let us know as soon as 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. 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.

Please give as much information as possible about the incident and send your complaint to the Surgery for the attention of the Practice Manager.

Banbridge Group Surgery  
1 Old Hospital Road  
Banbridge  
BT32 3GN

Telephone: 028 4062 3303  
Email: Reception.z00471@gp.hscni.net

#### **What we will do**

Our complaints procedure is designed to make sure that we settle any complaints as quickly as possible.

#### **Stage 1 – Quick Resolution**

- We aim to respond within 5 working days
- If necessary, this timeframe may be extended by up to 5 additional working days.
- Complaints at this stage may be resolved through an apology, explanation, immediate action or training.
- If the service user is dissatisfied with the response, they can request a Stage 2 investigation

## **Stage 2 - Investigation**

- Complaints are acknowledged within 3 working days
- A full investigation will be carried out
- You will receive a written response within 20 working days
- We will keep you informed if more time is needed.

When we look into your complaint we aim to:

- Find out what happened and what went wrong
- Make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if appropriate.
- 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 adhere strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else we will require signed consent from the patient concerned, unless they are incapable (e.g. because of illness) of providing this. A consent form is provided for this purpose.

## **Confidentiality**

All complaints received by the Practice will be treated in the strictest confidence. Please note however, that anonymised copies of all complaints received by the Practice and the responses issued must be forwarded to the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) of the Department of Health for monitoring purposes.

## **Support for Complainants**

The Patient and Client Council offer support for complaints if required:

Freephone: 0800 917 0222

Email: [info@pcc-ni.net](mailto:info@pcc-ni.net)

## **If You are Still Unhappy**

You can contact:

## **SPPG Complaints Team**

SPPG Complaints Team  
12-22 Linenhall Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8BS



**If you are dissatisfied with the outcome**

In the event of you remaining dissatisfied with the outcome of the Practice/SPPG complaints procedure, you may approach:

The NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)  
Freepost  
Belfast  
BT4 3BJ

Freephone: 0800 34 34 24

Email: [nipso@nipso.org.uk](mailto:nipso@nipso.org.uk)

Complaints to NIPSO should be made within 6 months of our final response letter.