

Gullane Medical Practice - Complaints

Complaints Procedure

We make every effort to give the best service possible to everyone who attends our Practice.

However, we are aware that things can go wrong, resulting in a patient feeling that they have a genuine cause for complaint. If this is so, we would like the matter to be settled as quickly, and as amicably, as possible.

Interpreting Service

We can arrange for a meeting with the Practice Manager and an Interpreter for any patient whose first language is not English and needs help with their complaint.

In General

If you have a complaint to make, please contact our Practice Manager.

- In writing, addressed to: Practice Manager, Gullane Medical Practice, Hamilton Road, Gullane, East Lothian, EH31 2HP
- Online using our complaints form

We will endeavour to:

1. Acknowledge any letter or complaints form within 3 working days of receiving it.
2. Deal with the matter as promptly as possible – usually within 20 working days – dependent on the nature of the complaint.

Who Can Complain?

- Complainants maybe current or former patients, or their nominated or elected representatives (who have been given consent to act on the patients behalf)
- Patients over the age of 16 whose mental capacity is unimpaired should normally complain themselves, or authorise someone to bring a complaint on their behalf.
- Children under the age of 16 may also make their own complaint, if they are able to do so.

If a patient lacks capacity to make decisions, their representative must be able to demonstrate sufficient interest in the patient's welfare and be an appropriate person to act on their behalf. This could be a partner, relative or someone appointed under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 with lasting power of attorney.

Appropriate Person

In certain circumstances, we need to check that a representative is the appropriate person to make the complaint.

- For example, if the complaint involves a child, we must satisfy ourselves that there are reasonable grounds for the representative to complain, rather than the child concerned.

- If the patient is a child or a patient who lacks capacity, we must also be satisfied that the representative is acting in the patients best interests.

If we are not satisfied that the representative is an appropriate person we will not consider the complaint, and will give the representative the reasons for our decision in writing.

Time Limits

A complaint must be made within 12 months, either from the date of the incident or from when the complainant first knew about it.

Regulations state that a responsible body should only consider a complaint after this time limit if:

- The complainant had good reason for doing so, and
- It is still possible to investigate the complaint fairly and effectively, despite the delay.

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.

- A letter of authority signed by the patient concerned will be required, unless they are incapable (due to illness or infirmity) of providing this.
- A third-party consent form, which can be requested from Reception.
- Verbal consent from the patient during a GP consultation or discussion with the Practice Manager

Once this has been completed and confirmed we can then proceed with the complaint.

Procedure

We have a two stage complaints procedure. We will always try and deal with your complaint quickly however if it is clear that the matter will need a detailed investigation, we will notify you and then keep you updated on our progress.

Stage One – Early, local resolution

We will try to resolve your complaint within five working days if possible. If you are dissatisfied with our response you can ask us to escalate your complaint to Stage Two.

Stage Two – Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage One. We also escalate some complaints straight to this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days, and we will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be within 20 working days unless there is clearly good reason for needing more time to respond.

Your Rights

If, after receiving our final decision, you remain dissatisfied you may contact the [Scottish Public Services Ombudsman \(SPSO\)](#) and ask them to consider your case.

We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.

Tel: 0800 377 7330

Tel: 0800 377 7331

Email: ask@spsso.org.uk

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

Address for appointments or visiting:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Bridgeside House

99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh

EH7 4NS

If posting, please write Freepost SPSO. This is all you need to write on the envelope, and you don't need to use a stamp.

However, before considering taking this step, we hope you would let us know what aspect of the complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily and provide an opportunity for us to consider whether there is anything further that could be done locally to resolve matters.

Making A Complaint About Your NHS Care or Treatment

Please follow the link below:

[Making a complaint about your NHS care or treatment | NHS inform](#)

NHS Patients' Rights

Please follow the link below to Citizens Advice Scotland. They provide patients with an array of information about your rights within the NHS.

[NHS patients' rights - Citizens Advice](#)

Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Where the investigation of the complaint requires consideration of the patient's medical records, we will inform the patient or person acting on his/her behalf if the investigation will involve disclosure of information contained in those records to a person other than the Practice of an employee of the Practice.

We will keep a record of all complaints and copies of all correspondence relating to complaints, but such records will be kept separate from patients' medical records.

Statistics and Reporting

The Practice must submit to the local primary care organisation periodically / at agreed intervals details of the number of complaints received and actioned.