

DR. D. MCAULEY

SPERRIN FAMILY PRACTICE



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

**PATIENT INFORMATION
LEAFLET**

It is the Policy of the Practice to provide the best possible service to our patients. We are however always pleased to receive suggestions for improving our services.

As a patient, you have a right to complain about any aspect of the service with which you are less than satisfied.

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and can be sorted out locally with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you have a concern or wish to make a complaint about the service that you have received from the doctors or staff working within the practice, please let us know. We operate a practice complaints procedure to assist you and is aimed at quick resolution of problems. This procedure adheres to the Department of Health 'Guidance in relation to the Health and Social Care Complaints Procedure (April 2023) [HSC Complaints Procedure].

Under the HSC Complaints Procedure, a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction that requires a response.

We would ask that you let us know as soon as possible if there is a problem – ideally within a matter of days or at most a few weeks as this will enable us to establish what happened more easily.

****Please note**** Under the HSC Complaints Procedure, complaints should normally be made within 6 months of you becoming aware of the cause for complaint, or within 12 months of the date of the event, whichever is the earlier**.

Local Resolution

- Your complaint can be accepted either in writing, via email, verbally by telephone or in person and should preferably be addressed in either case to the Practice Manager (**Heather Orr at Sperrin Family Practice, Plumbridge or Tel: 02881648292**).
- *If you feel the doctor is the most appropriate person to approach, you are free to do so or speak to any member of the Practice Team.*
- The Practice Manager will ensure that your complaint will be investigated thoroughly and as promptly as possible.

The Practice will then be in a position to offer you an explanation or a meeting with the people involved if appropriate.

- Your complaint will be received and acknowledged in writing within 3 working days.
- You will receive a response within 10 working days (unless otherwise stated)
- Any complaint you make will be taken seriously and investigated. 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 to do this;

Make sure you get an apology where it is appropriate;

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

- All complaints are logged (ANONYMOUSLY) discussed and audited to help us improve our services
- The Department of Health requires all GPs to forward anonymised copies of written complaints received and their respective responses to the Complaints Team at the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG), 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS for monitoring purposes.

Patients should be aware that should you make a complaint, the practice may need to provide information about you, and treatment you have received to insurers or legal advisers.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

The practice must ensure strict adherence to the strict rule of confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we may have to know that you have permission to do so. Written consent from the patient concerned will be needed and recorded, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this. This form will be given to you on request.

Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG)

*It is sincerely hoped that if you have a problem, you will use our complaints procedure and any complaint you have about the Practice can be dealt with by those responsible for ensuring patient care and delivery of services within the Practice. This allows the best chance of putting right whatever has went wrong and an opportunity to improve our service. **However there may be times when you feel this is inappropriate, or you may not be happy with the outcome.***

If you do not want to approach the practice directly you can contact or forward your complaint to the SPPG Complaints Team, 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS, contact 02895363893 or complaints.sppg@hscni.net. The SPPG Complaints Team will if both parties agree act as “an honest broker” or intermediary between yourself and the practice to resolve the complaint at Practice level.

Patient and Client Council

Throughout the complaints investigation you also have the right to seek the help of the Patient and Client Council for support and advice. The Council is an independent body set up to represent your interest in health and social care. It is willing to assist you at any stage of your complaint by providing advice and support.

The Patient and Client Council have local offices in Ballymena, Craigavon, Omagh, with its HQ at 1st Floor Ormeau Baths, Ormeau Avenue, Belfast BT2 8HS – e-mail info.pcc@pcc-ni.net or Freephone 0800 917 0222

NI Public Services Ombudsman

Under the HSC Complaints procedure, if you are not happy with the practice’s attempts to resolve your complaint or outcome of our investigation, you can progress this to the NI Public Services Ombudsman, who can undertake an independent investigation of your complaint. The Ombudsman will normally only investigate a complaint after all attempts to resolve this at practice level have been exhausted. If a complainant wishes to approach the NIPSO, they must do so within 6 months of receiving the Practice Final Response. The Ombudsman can be contacted at:-

NI Public Services Ombudsman

Progressive House

33 Wellington Place

BELFAST,

BT1 6HN

OR

Freepost: Freepost NIPSO

Tel: Freephone: 0800343424

Tel: 02890233821

Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk