

# **Loughview Medical Centre Complaints Procedure**

## **Practice complaints procedure**

If you have a complaint or are concerned about the Health Service treatment you have received from the Doctors or any of the Staff working in this practice, please let us know in writing. We operate a practice complaints procedure to deal with complaints that meets the criteria agreed for the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services. It does not cover services provided under a private arrangement between the practice and a patient.

## **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 this way and you wish to make a complaint, let us know in writing as soon as possible – ideally within a matter of days - this will help us to find out what happened more easily.

Although you should make your complaints as soon as possible after the event we can consider complaints made within six months of the date of discovering the problem, provided this is within twelve months of the incident. If it is clearly unreasonable in the circumstances to make a complaint earlier and where it is still possible to investigate the facts of the case we can consider extending this time limit.

Complaints should be addressed to the Practice Manager or any of the Doctors. Alternatively you may ask for an appointment with the Practice Manager in order to discuss your concerns. He or she will explain the complaints procedure to you and will ensure that your concerns are dealt with promptly. It will greatly assist us if you are as specific as possible about your complaint.

## **What we will do**

We shall acknowledge your complaint, normally within three working days, and aim to have looked into your complaint within 28 working days of the date when you raised it with us. We shall then be in a position to offer you an explanation or a meeting with those involved. In investigating your complaint we shall aim to

- Find out what happened and what went wrong
- Ensure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate; and
- Identify what we can do to ensure the problem does not 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 his or her permission to do so. A note signed by the person concerned and witnessed by the patient will be needed (except where the patient is a minor and the person concerned has parental responsibilities). If this is not possible the next of kin should bring the complaint.

### **Complaining to your Health and Social Care Board**

We hope that if you have a problem you will make use of our practice complaints procedure. We believe this will provide the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and an opportunity to improve our practice. But this does not affect your right to approach your Health and Social Care 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 complaints department

Health and Social care Board  
12-22 Linenhall Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8BS

Telephone 028 9032 1313

### **Complaints made by GPs**

GPs are also entitled to complain about a patient if they feel that the patient is being unreasonable or their conduct is causing particular difficulties within the practice. If you are the subject of a complaint we hope that talking with the GP or member of staff concerned can sort out any issue or misunderstanding.