

# Littledown Surgery

## Practice Complaints Procedure

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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. We operate a practice complaints procedure as part of a NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our complaints system meets national criteria and Emma Prince (Practice Manager) is the complaints manager. She will explain the complaints procedure to you and will make sure that your concerns are dealt with promptly. It will be a great help if you are as specific as possible about your complaint.

### How to complain

Our aim at Littledown Surgery is to provide you with a high standard of medical treatment and care. We are keen to learn of any instances where you may feel we have fallen short of our aim. 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 12 months of an incident happening or of becoming aware of the matter complained about.**

The 12 month time limit does not apply if the practice is satisfied that there were good reasons for not making the complaint within that time limit or that despite the delay, it is still possible to investigate matters fairly and effectively.

Complaints made orally and resolved to the complainant's satisfaction not later than the next working day are not included in these complaints procedures. Written complaints should be addressed to Emma Prince, Practice Manager.

### 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, the written consent of the person concerned will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this.

### What we shall do

We shall acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days either orally or in writing, and offer to discuss the matter with you. If you do not wish to accept the offer of a discussion, we will decide how to handle the complaint, based on the available information. A letter will be sent to you setting out how the complaint will be investigated and the expected timescales. We will aim to have looked into your complaint within 14 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 the people involved. When we look into your complaint, we shall 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 this
- make sure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate
- identify what we can do to make sure the problem does not happen again
- advise you of your right to take your complaint to an alternative body (see below)

We will provide a written response as soon as reasonably practicable after completing the investigation.

We hope that, if you have a problem, you will use 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. If you remain dissatisfied with the response to the complaint you have the right to complain to an alternative body. (see below.)

If you wish, you can choose to complain to any of the following organisations rather than to the practice:

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**Dorset Advocacy - Help with NHS Complaints** is a free and independent service that listens, offers support and representation to people who are unhappy about their experience with the NHS. You may already have started a complaint, or you may just be wondering what to do next; we may be able to help you. **Call us on 0300 343 7000, email on [nhscomplaints@dorsetadvocacy.co.uk](mailto:nhscomplaints@dorsetadvocacy.co.uk) or use the contact form on our website [www.dorsetadvocacy.co.uk](http://www.dorsetadvocacy.co.uk)** to speak to one of our trained Independent Complaints Information Officers, who can tell you about the options for taking your complaint forward. If you decide that you want to make a formal complaint, they can help you to set it out clearly and effectively. **For more complex complaints** we provide Independent Complaints Advocates who offer face to face support. They may attend complaints hearings with you, helping you to prepare and put forward your case.

Dorset Advocacy also provides the Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA) service for Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth. By law people who are unable to make decisions about serious issues and have no one to speak up for them must be referred to the IMCA service. Enquiries can be made from staff, relatives or friends by calling the hotline 0845 3891762 – however a formal referral must be made by health or social care staff before work can begin.

**NHS England.** The NHS is made up of numerous different organisations. NHS England is the organisation responsible for commissioning or purchasing primary care services (such as GPs, dentists, opticians, pharmacies etc.) on behalf of the population. You can make your complaint directly to them if you prefer. Contact details:

Phone: 0300 311 2233 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm excluding English Bank Holidays). They will take a note of your complaint and arrange for it to be passed to the complaints manager.

Email: [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net) with “For the attention of the complaints manager” in the subject line.

Write to:

NHS England  
PO Box 16738  
Redditch, B97 9PT

Website: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/complaint/>

**Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman** – The Ombudsman will normally only take on a complaint after you have first tried to resolve the issue with the surgery and have received a response from them. The Ombudsman believes the surgery should be given a chance to respond to your complaint and, where appropriate, try to put things right before they get involved. Contact details:

Phone: 0345 015 4033 or textphone 0300 061 4298. Helpline is open 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday. To request a call back text “call back” with your name and mobile phone number to 07624 813005

Email: [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk)

Fax: 0300 061 4000

Write to:

The Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman  
Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London SW1P 4QP

Website: [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

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**The Care Quality Commission (CQC)** is the independent health and adult social care regulator. Their job is to make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate and high-quality care. They do that by monitoring, inspecting and regulating services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety and they publish what they find, including performance ratings to help people choose care. The CQC doesn't manage individual complaints about GPs and their services but you can still let them know your about your experiences should you wish to do so. Contact details:

Phone: 03000 616161

Email: [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

Online form at <http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/contact-us-using-our-online-form>

**Healthwatch Dorset** - Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public. The aim of Healthwatch is to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within their locality. Although they can't deal with individual complaints they can use your experience of the care you have received to help make services better in the future. Contact details:

Phone: 0300 111 0102 (calls cost the same as 01 or 02 numbers)

Email: [enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk)

Write:

FREEPOST RTJR-RHUI-XBLH

Healthwatch Dorset

896 Christchurch Road

Bournemouth BH7 6DL

Use our online "Speak Out" form at:

<http://www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk/content/your-story-can-change-local-health-and-care-services>

You can also find us at Citizens Advice Bureau offices across Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth