

## GOSSOMS END SURGERY

### Complaints Leaflet

#### Making a Complaint

Most problems can be sorted out quickly and easily with the person concerned, often at the time they arise, and this may be the approach you try first.

Where you are not able to resolve your complaint in this way and wish to make a formal complaint you should do so, preferably **in writing** as soon as possible after the event and ideally within a few days, giving as much detail as you can, as this helps us to establish what happened more easily. In any event, this should be:

- Within 6 months of the incident,
- or Within 6 months of discovering that you have a problem, provided that is within 12 months of the incident.

If you are a registered patient, you can complain about your own care. You are unable to complain about someone else's treatment without their written authority. See the separate section in this leaflet.

We can provide you with a separate complaints form to register your complaint, and this includes a third-party authority form to enable a complaint to be made by someone else. Please ask at reception for this. You can provide this in

your own format providing these covers all the necessary aspects.

#### Send your written complaint to:

The Practice Manager

Gossoms End Surgery

Victory Road, Berkhamsted, HP4 1DL

#### What we do next

We look to settle complaints as soon as possible.

We will acknowledge receipt within three working days and aim to have investigated the matter within 10 working days. You may then receive a formal reply in writing, or you may be invited to meet with the person(s) concerned to attempt to resolve the issue. If the matter is likely to take longer than this, we will let you know, and keep you informed as the investigation progresses.

When looking into a complaint we attempt to see what happened and why, to see if there is something we can learn from this and make it possible for you to discuss the issue with those involved if you wish to do so.

When the investigations are complete, a final response will be sent to you.

Where your complaint involves more than one organisation (e.g., social services) we will liaise with that organisation so that you receive one coordinated reply. We may need your consent to do this. Where your complaint has been sent initially to an incorrect organisation, we may seek your consent to forward this to the correct person to deal with.

The final response letter will include details of the result of

your complaint and your right to escalate the matter further if you remain dissatisfied with the response.

#### Complaining on Behalf of Someone Else

We keep to the strict rules of medical and personal confidentiality. If you wish to make a complaint and are not the patient involved, we will require the written consent of the patient to confirm that they are unhappy with their treatment and that we can deal with someone else about it.

Please ask at reception for the Complaints Form, which contains a suitable authority for the patient to sign to enable the complaint to proceed.

Where the patient is incapable of providing consent due to illness or accident it may still be possible to deal with the complaint. Please provide the precise details of the circumstances that prevent this in your covering letter.

Please note that we are unable to discuss any issue relating to someone else without their express permission, which must be in writing, unless the circumstances above apply.

We may still need to correspond directly with the patient or may be able to deal directly with the third party. This depends on the wording of the authority provided.

### **If you are dissatisfied with the outcome**

You have the right to approach the Health Service Ombudsman.

The contact details are:

**The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman**

**Millbank Tower**

**30 Millbank**

**London**

**SW1P 4QP**

**Tel: 0345 0154033**

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

**You may also approach PALS for help or advice;**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is based at Watford Hospital, who provide confidential advice and support, helping you to sort out any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available from the NHS

01923 217198

The Practice Manager is:

Vanessa Cox

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