

STONEHILL MEDICAL CENTRE & HIGHFIELD SURGERY

Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint or are concerned about the service or treatment you have received from a member of staff working at this practice, please let us know either in writing or verbally. We operate a Practice complaints procedure as part of an NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our complaints system meets national criteria. A copy of the complaints Procedure is available on our website www.stonehillmedicalcentre.nhs.uk.

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 in this way and you wish to make a formal complaint we would like you to let us know as soon as possible, ideally within a matter of days or, at the most, a few weeks. This will enable us to establish what happened more efficiently. If it is not possible to do this you will need to let us have details of your complaint:

- within 12 months of the date of treatment or incident that caused the problem

Address complaints to:

The Management Team
Stonehill Medical Centre
Piggott Street
Farnworth
Bolton
BL4 9QZ

Complaints are dealt with by Diane (Complaints Lead) and Lauren (Practice Manager). We will explain the complaints procedure to you and will ensure that your complaint is dealt with promptly.

Top Tips

- Make your complaint clear. What happened? When did it happen? How has it affected you?
- What would you like to achieve? How would you like things to be put right?
- Complain as soon as you can, while the events are still fresh in your mind.
- Keep a note of anyone involved in your complaint. Write down the names and positions of the people involved in.
- Keep copies of any communication you get; you may need to refer to them in the future.
- Ask for help if you need support on putting your complaint together.

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Getting help or advice

ICA (Independent Complaints Advocacy) provide advice and support to people who want to complain about the NHS:

Voiceability

Website: <https://www.voiceability.org/support-and-help/services-by-location/bolton>

Telephone: 0300 303 1660

Email: helpline@voiceability.org

Healthwatch Bolton will provide patients, carers, their families and members of the Bolton community with information about their rights and choices in health and social care.

Healthwatch Bolton, PO Box 822, Wigan, WN1 9XF

Tel: 01204 394603 Email: info@healthwatchbolton.co.uk www.healthwatchbolton.co.uk

The Department of Health for information on the NHS complaints procedure

Web: www.nhs.uk

The Practice Response

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days of receipt and aim to have looked into your complaint within ten working days. We will then be in a position to offer you a verbal or written explanation or a meeting with the people involved if considered more appropriate.

The outcome of your complaint will be confirmed in writing.

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 their permission to do so. Signed consent will be needed unless:

- the patient is a child under the age of 16; or
- the patient is incapable (because of illness) to provide this.

Complaining to The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

If you have received a final response to your complaint and don't feel like the matter has been resolved, you can contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. The Ombudsman makes final decisions on complaints that have not been resolved by the NHS, government departments and some other public organisations. To take a complaint to the Ombudsman go to www.ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint and visit the 'Making a complaint page' or call 0345 015 4033. It is important that you make the complaint as soon as you receive the final response as there are time limits for the Ombudsman to look into complaints.

Last reviewed: 2 November 2023

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Reviewed by: L Gilbert – Practice Manager