

# Portesham Surgery

## Complaints Procedure

If you have any complaint or concern about the service you have received from the doctors or staff working for this surgery you are entitled to ask for an explanation. Speak to any member of staff with your concerns, or fill in a complaints form at the front desk, or write to us (addressed to the Practice Manager). We actively welcome **all** feedback from our patients, whether positive or negative, and treat any complaint as an opportunity to improve our service in the future.

We aim to resolve any problems immediately (within 24 hours) and if you are then satisfied, we will not take any further action.

If we are unable to immediately resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, we will arrange a **meeting with the Practice Manager**, Alison Dunbar at a mutually convenient time, and we will write to confirm this within three working days.

Whether your complaint is resolved immediately or not, the member of staff to whom you first speak will make a note of the details on our **complaints form**, with your assistance. Even if you decide not to take matters any further, we will use these details internally to review our procedures and improve our service.

This procedure does not affect your right to make a formal complaint to the NHS Dorset if you so wish. Nor does it affect your right to seek compensation in law.

### When to complain

Generally speaking you should make your complaint within 12 months of an incident happening.

### What we will do

When we look into your complaint we aim to:

- Agree a timescale for our investigation and response, and keep you informed of any delays and the reason.
- Interview everyone involved to establish the facts of what happened and what went wrong.
- Write to you with a full report of our investigation and conclusions, including any steps taken to ensure the problem does not happen again.
- 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

### Complaining on behalf of someone else

Please note that the practice must ensure strict adherence to the rule of medical confidentiality. We cannot provide confidential information without appropriate authority, if you are not the patient in question.

### Getting further help with your complaint

We hope that, if you have a problem, you will use our practice complaints procedure. A new NHS and social care complaints procedure was introduced in April 2009 and we are required to offer “local resolution”. Apart from the regulations however, we strongly believe that by working directly with you we have the best chance of putting right anything that has gone wrong and an opportunity to improve our practice.

If however you do need help and advice from outside the Surgery, here are the details you will need:

### NHS Dorset

If you are dealing directly with us but want advice or assistance, or you would prefer not to complain directly to us, NHS Dorset (who commission us to provide the local GP service) is the best place to start. Telephone the Customer Care Team on **0300 311 2233**.

### Healthwatch

You can contact Healthwatch, for independent advice on GPs, including to make a comment: **0300 111 0102**.

**Dorset Advocacy** is an independent service who can help you with any complaint about an NHS service (eg GP, hospital, Opticians and Dentists). Contact them on: **0300 343 7000**.

And if your complaint is with someone other than our GP Surgery – for example, a hospital, check that service’s website for details of the PALs (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) team. For Dorset County Hospital the PALs number is **0800 783 8058**.

### Ombudsman

If you make your complaint directly to us, and are not satisfied by our response, you then have the right to refer your complaint to the Health Service Ombudsman, by doing one of the following:

- Telephone the complaints helpline on **0345 0154033** (Mon – Fri 8.30 – 5.30pm)
- Visit the website: [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)
- Email [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk)
- Write to:  
The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman  
Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London SW1P 4QP

### Further Information:

You may also find it helpful to refer to the advice on the following websites:

[www.pals.nhs.uk](http://www.pals.nhs.uk)

[www.nhschoices.nhs.uk](http://www.nhschoices.nhs.uk)