

**ST ALBANS MEDICAL CENTRE**

**212 Richmond Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT2 5HF**

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

**How to make a complaint**

We welcome your comments and suggestions at all times. If you have reason to be dissatisfied with any aspect of our service we are eager to look into and, if necessary, correct any problems that may have arisen or misunderstandings that may have occurred. We work very hard to get things right but, as with any busy service, mistakes can happen. When a mistake has happened we aim to acknowledge it, put things right quickly and learn from the experience.

If you wish to make a complaint, please contact our Practice Manager in person, by telephone or by letter. She will take full details of your complaint in order to establish the facts and decide how best to undertake the investigation. If the Practice Manager is not available on the day you can speak to her Assistant.

**Under the regulations a complaint must be made within 12 months of the matter at issue, unless you could not reasonably be expected to know about the incident or had appropriate reasons for not complaining within the time limit. However we would like you to let us know about any complaint 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.**

Complaints which are made orally and resolved to your satisfaction by the next working day after the day on which the complaint was made do not need to be taken further under the Regulations.

**We would advise you to complain to us directly but you have got the right to pass your complaint to NHS England instead of the practice. They may either investigate the complaint itself or, with your consent, pas the complaint to the practice to manage.**

**NHS England P O Box 16738 Redditch, B97 9PT 0300 311 2233 England.contactus@nhs.net**

**Who may make a complaint?**

* A person who receives or had received services from us or a person who is affected, or likely to be affected by the action, omission or decision of the practice which is the subject of the complaint.
* A representative acting on behalf of a person mentioned in the above paragraph who
  + 1. Has died
    2. Is a child
    3. Is unable to make the complaint themselves because of physical incapacity or lack of mental capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005
    4. Has requested the representative to be on their behalf

Please note that we have a duty of confidentiality to our patients and written patient consent is necessary if a complaint is made on behalf of a patient.

**How we will handle your complaint before investigation**

* The complaint may be made orally or in writing to the Practice Manager but if orally, she will make a written record.
* The Practice Manager will acknowledge the complaint orally or in writing within three working days of receipt.
* If the Practice Manager is absent at the time of your complaint, The Practice Manager’s Assistant as the responsible person, will let you know orally or in writing when you may expect a response.
* The acknowledgement will include an offer to discuss with you at a time to be agreed with you the management of the complaint and when any investigation and response are likely to occur. In doing so we aim to agree a clear plan and a realistic outcome with you from the start.

**When making a complaint it may be helpful if you give consideration to what you would like to happen as a result of the complaint.**

How will we investigate your complaint and respond to it

* We will keep you informed of the progress of any investigation and any reasons for delay.
* If appropriate, we will arrange a meeting with our and the relevant parties. We would be happy for you to bring a friend or relative to the meeting.
* A response, ideally signed by the Practice Manager or GP partner, will be sent as soon as reasonably possible after the completion of the investigation.
* The response will note:
* How the complaint has been considered
* The conclusions reached
* Any actions taken or proposed as a response to the complaint
* Details of your right to take your complaint to the Health Service Ombudsman

**What to do if you are unhappy with our response**

We will aim to address your concerns fully, provide you with an explanation and discuss any actions that may be proposed. We trust that at the end of the investigation you will be satisfied that the matter is resolved.

If at the end of their investigation you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you may ask the Health Service Ombudsman to review the matter (the contact details be enclosed in the written response from the Practice).