



# Blossomgate Medical Centre Complaints Policy

## **Introduction**

We know that we can make mistakes or fail to meet expectations. Patients/families and carers will sometimes express dissatisfaction with the service/care provided at our practice. It is our practice policy to do our best to resolve complaints as quickly as possible. Each member of staff has a duty to listen to our patients' concerns. Learning from comments, suggestions and complaints helps us to improve our service.

We want to continuously improve the quality of our patients' experience of their care and treatment and will implement changes in response to shortcomings where at all possible and in a timely manner.

## **Open Disclosure**

It is the policy of this Practice to disclose to patients all available information relating to patient safety incidents, as defined by legislation. We will communicate with our patients and their families in an open, honest and transparent manner if things go wrong. We believe it is the correct and ethical response to an adverse event and we believe it allows patients and their families to make informed decisions regarding their subsequent treatment and care.

## **Apology**

It is the policy of this practice to offer an apology when we have failed to meet our commitments to patients.

## **Managing complaints**

Our practice team will take all complaints seriously and will handle them appropriately, sensitively and in confidence. We believe in resolving complaints at the earliest possible opportunity. Our practice team will treat feedback, both positive and negative, with courtesy respect and efficiency. We expect patients to show courtesy to our staff when making a complaint.

The Practice has appointed a person responsible for handling complaints appropriately, known as the "Complaints Lead". Sarah Fitzgerald, practice manager is our Complaints Lead.

## **Anonymous Complaints**

In the interest of fairness, we cannot investigate anonymous complaints.

## **Vexatious Complaints**

If, following investigation, a complaint is found to be frivolous or vexatious, we will not pursue the complaint any further. Before the complaint is considered vexatious the member of staff who receives it must bring it to the attention of the Complaints Lead. A frivolous, vexatious or malicious complaint will not be recorded in the file of the staff member about whom it was made.



## **Principles**

The principles underpinning our policy are-

### **Fairness and Equity**

The investigation of complaints will be fair and transparent and patients should not fear recrimination for raising an issue of concern to them. A consistent and standardised approach will be adopted for the management of all complaints.

### **Respect**

We will treat patients and families with respect and dignity as we also expect to be treated by patients and their families

### **Accessibility**

We will publicise our policy and make it accessible to patients and their families. We will pay special attention to the needs of people with special requirements e.g. older people, children, people with physical and sensory disability, literacy issues and disadvantaged groups.

### **Effectiveness and Efficiency**

We will try to resolve all complaints effectively and within clearly stated timeframes without compromising other principles.

### **Impartiality**

We will deal with all complaints in an impartial manner. Complainants will have the opportunity to be heard and complaints will be investigated without prejudice to either the complainant, the doctor or member of staff.

### **Confidentiality**

We will treat all information obtained through the course of complaint management in a confidential manner and meet the requirements of Data Protection legislation.

### **Consent**

We will ensure that consent to access patient-confidential information is obtained from the complainant and/or the person on whose behalf the complaint is made.

### **Accountability**

Procedures will be transparent to the complainant during the process of all complaint investigation. Recommendations arising from any investigation will be implemented where resources allow. Recommendations relating to Patient Safety will be given priority and an appropriate action plan will be implemented in a timely manner. Complaints will be recorded and action plans will be monitored ensuring learning from complaints.

### **Right of Appeal**

Patients will be informed of the available appeals processes and other avenues to pursue their complaint if they are dissatisfied with the local investigation.