

Making a complaint as a patient

If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from the Referral Management Service (RMS) or any of our personnel, please let us know.

We have a Complaints Policy and associated procedures not only because they form part of the NHS complaints system and therefore enable us to meet national criteria, but also because we believe your feedback is essential to enable us to continually improve our services and tailor them to your needs as a patient.

Please note that feedback, both positive and negative, from organisations or individuals other than patients are handled under our Significant Incident policy. A copy of our **Providing Feedback** document is available on our website www.snhcic.org.uk, by phoning 01603 964520 or emailing andrew.cummings@nhs.net

When to complain

We hope that we can sort out most problems to the satisfaction of the patient concerned at the time they arise. However sometimes this will not be possible. If you wish to make a formal complaint as a patient, please do so as soon as possible following the incident of concern. This will help us to establish what happened more easily. If this is not possible, your complaint should be submitted within 2 months of the incident of concern, or within 2 months of you becoming aware of the incident of concern.

We will aim to provide you with a satisfactory response to your complaint within 10 working days, but some more complicated incidents may take longer. It is the responsibility of the complaints manager to ensure you are kept informed of the progress of your complaint and to communicate the outcome of the investigation. In the absence of the complaints manager, a more senior officer or Director will be appointed to oversee your complaint.

How to complain

Please submit your complaint in writing to Andrew Cummings, Operations Manager, Innovation Centre, Norwich Research Park, Norwich, NR4 7GJ or via email to andrew.cummings@nhs.net giving a detailed explanation of your complaint or concerns, the issues or problems this raised and confirming your name, contact details, NHS number and GP surgery.

If submitting a written complaint is difficult for you, you may phone us on 01603 964520 and make your complaint verbally. Please be prepared to provide, your name, contact details, NHS number and GP surgery, your preferred method of communication, and a concise explanation of your complaint or concerns and the issues or problems this raised. Please be patient as the person answering the call will need to write all this information onto a Complaint Form to be forwarded to the complaints manager.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

If you are not the patient, or when the patient is a child, are the parent or carer of the patient, involved in the incident, and are complaining on their behalf, you must make this clear to us. To make a formal complaint on behalf of someone else, you must have their permission to do so. For reasons of patient confidentiality you must submit an authority signed by the person concerned. If they are unable to do this for reasons of illness or infirmity please let us know. A **Patient Third Party Consent Form** is available on the website www.snhcic.org.uk or by phoning 01603 964520.

What we will do

We will acknowledge receipt of your written complaint within three working days, advising timescales and next steps. If your complaint was made verbally we will send you a copy of the completed Complaint Form should you ask to receive a copy.

Your complaint will be fully investigated in an open and timely manner and, if we cannot provide a response within ten working days, the complaints manager will contact you to explain the reason for the delay and to give you a revised timescale for response.

We will provide you with an explanation of our findings and outcomes and make sure you receive an apology if this is appropriate. We will also explain what we have done, or will do, to make sure any problem does not arise again.

Taking it further

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of our investigations, you may refer the matter to the NHS NEL Commissioning Support Unit, by phoning 01603 595857 or emailing NELCSU.AngliaComplaints@nhs.net. If you remain dissatisfied with the response from NHS Anglia Commissioning Support Unit, you may refer the matter in writing to The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP.