

THE ELMS MEDICAL PRACTICE

Complaints Policy/Procedure

The Elms Medical Practice is always looking for ways to improve the services provided for our patients. Our aim is to ensure the highest level of care and service to all our patients at all times. We know that we do not always achieve this.

If you have a complaint or concern about any aspect of the service you have received from the Practice or any person who works at the practice (clinical or non-clinical) **please let us know.**

The Practice operates a complaints procedure for dealing with complaints which meets national criteria as laid down by the NHS.

To effect lasting improvement the Practice needs to know your problems, views and experiences. **Only by listening to you and acting constructively together can we achieve positive change.**

Our commitment to you

We will **acknowledge** your complaint **within three working days** and aim to have investigated your complaint within a reasonable timescale. Naturally the time taken to investigate your complaint will vary and depend upon its complexity and the number of people concerned. We shall then be in a position to provide you with as full a written response as possible. It may also be appropriate to have a face to face meeting.

When we look into your complaint we aim to:

- Find out what happened and what should have happened.
- Make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned if this is your wish.
- Ensure the complaint is resolved to your satisfaction if possible.
- Make sure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate.
- Identify what needs to be done to ensure the problem does not arise again.

Our principles are

- To get it right.
- To be patient focused.
- To be open and accountable.
- To act fairly and proportionately.
- To put it right.
- To seek continuous improvement.
- To never discriminate against the complainant.

How to Complain

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly. Often we can resolve them at the time they arise and directly with the person concerned.

However, we realise that this is not always the case: If your problem cannot be resolved easily and you wish to complain **please let us know as soon as possible**. This will enable us to establish what happened more easily and provide the necessary response.

You can make your complaint in a number of ways:

- In person or by telephone (please ask to speak to The Practice General Manager 01634 250142).
- The practice has a Complaint Form which you can complete and pass to any member of the practice.
- By email: Please provide as much information as possible then email the Practice General Manager on elms.medical-practice@nhs.net.
- In writing: Please provide as much information as possible and send your complaint to:

The Practice General Manager,
The Elms Medical Practice,
Tilley Close,
Hoo,
Kent ME3 9AE

We aim to try and resolve any complaints to your satisfaction using the

Practice-based Complaints procedure as we believe that this will provide the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong.

However, under the NHS Complaints Regulations 2008 you are entitled to contact NHS England directly.

NHS England Contact details

Telephone: 0300 311 2233

Email: England.contactus@nhs.net

Address: NHS England
PO Box 16738
Redditch
B97 9PT

Complaints can be made up to 12 months after the incident that gave rise to the complaint or from the time the complainant was made aware of it.

Beyond this timescale under the NHS Complaints regulations it is at the discretion of the practice whether or not to investigate the complaint

Complaining on behalf of someone else

The Practice adheres strictly to the rules governing **patient medical confidentiality**. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, the Practice must have a note or letter signed by the person concerned, **providing their consent** to enable further discussion with the appointed third party.

If the patient concerned is unable to provide their consent for whatever reason it may still be possible to deal with the complaint. Please provide the precise details of the circumstances which prevent this in the covering letter.

What to do if you remain dissatisfied

If at the end of the practice-based complaints procedure you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to ask the **Health Service Ombudsmen** to review your complaint. The Ombudsman has powers set down by law and helps to resolve complaints about the NHS.

Health Service Ombudsman

This is a free service but only available after the NHS has had a chance to investigate and try to resolve the complaint.

If you decide to contact the Ombudsman, you should do this as soon as possible after you have exhausted the Practice procedure.

Contact details

Website:	www.ombudsman.org.uk
Phone:	0345 015 4033
Textphone:	0300 061 4298
Email:	phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk
Address:	The Health Service Ombudsman Millbank Tower Millbank London SW1P 4QP

NHS Advocacy Service

This is a free and confidential service available to anyone who wants support to make a complaint to the NHS. Individual assistance is provided throughout the complaints process.

Contact details

Website:	https://nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org
Email:	nhscomplaints@voiceability.org
Phone:	0300 330 5454