



Llanishen Court Surgery

Practice Procedure for Dealing with Concerns

The Practice procedure for dealing with concerns about our service is based upon NHS (Concerns, Complaints and redress Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations that came into force on 1 April 2011 and “Listening to People”.

Our Practice, as a provider of NHS Services, is regarded as a “responsible body”. We have published our procedure for dealing with concerns to ensure there is leadership and a clear line of accountability for responding to concerns.

A concern means any complaint or notification of an incident relating to the care or service provided, including matters affecting patient safety.

Nominated and Responsible Persons

In line with the Regulations, our Practice has a nominated responsible officer and a senior investigations manager.

The responsible officer – ultimately ensures that the Practice complies with the concerns procedure, that actions identified as necessary during any investigations that are taken and that any relevant lessons are learned. This person, or someone authorised on their behalf must sign all complaint responses, or take responsibility for complaints signed off on their behalf, for example if that person is on annual leave.

The responsible officer for our Practice is Dr E Henderson.

The senior investigations manager is the person to whom concerns should be addressed and who will acknowledge receipt of the concern, they will carry out the investigations and identify any concerns about services or patient safety that need to be addressed in the Practice and prepare formal responses, which are then reviewed with the responsible officer.

The senior investigations manager for the Practice is the Practice Manager.

Raising Concerns

Concerns can be raised: verbally, electronically or in writing. If a concern is raised verbally, the Practice will document this and a written record will be shared with the complainant.

Acknowledgement and Discussion

All concerns will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt (weekends and bank holidays not included). The Practice will offer a listening discussion, which can be face-to-face, by phone, or by video. The Practice will identify any communication or accessibility needs and provide reasonable adjustments, including interpretation or advocacy support where required.

Stage one – Early Resolution

Early resolution will be considered in the first instance. The aim is to resolve the concern quickly through explanation, action and, where appropriate, an apology. Early Resolution must be completed within 10 working days from the date the concern is acknowledged.

The outcome of Early Resolution will be documented and confirmed in writing to the person raising the concern.

If Early Resolution is not suitable, or if the concern cannot be resolved within this timeframe, the matter will progress to Stage Two for a proportionate investigation.

Stage two – Investigation

If Early Resolution is not suitable or does not resolve the concern, the matter will progress to Stage Two for a proportionate investigation. At this stage, the Practice will take a closer look at what happened, informed by the listening discussion or by the information provided in the concern. The level of investigation required at this stage is often more detailed, and therefore the time taken to complete it may be longer.

A clear timescale for the investigation will be agreed with the person raising the concern, and updates will be provided if this changes. Once the investigation is completed, a written response will be issued summarising the findings, any actions taken, and the learning identified. A listening meeting will be offered to discuss the outcome.

The written response should do the following:

- Summarise the nature and substance of the matter or matters raised in the concern;
- Describe the investigation undertaken;
- Contain an apology where appropriate;
- Explain learning and improvement actions taken in light of the outcome of the investigation;
- Contain details of the right to notify the concern to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales;
- Offer the person notifying the concern the opportunity to discuss the contents of the response with the responsible officer or a person acting on their behalf;
- Be signed by the responsible officer or a person acting on their behalf.

The practice will cooperate with other responsible bodies where a concern spans primary and secondary care, or health and social care.

If a person remains dissatisfied after the Practice's response, they may contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Who can raise a concern?

Most concerns will normally be raised by current or former patients, or their nominated representatives.

Patients aged 16 and over, who do not lack mental capacity should raise their concern themselves. The Practice will consider accepting concerns from parents of children aged 15 and under, however, children in this age group who are able to do so, may raise their own concern. Where a concern is notified by a child the Practice must provide the child with such assistance as the child may reasonably require to pursue the concern.

If a person lacks mental capacity to make decisions for themselves, the representative must demonstrate sufficient interest in their welfare to be an appropriate person to act on their behalf. This could be someone appointed under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 with lasting power of attorney.

If someone other than the patient is raising a concern, the Practice must satisfy themselves that there are reasonable grounds for the concern being notified by the representative and ideally, have

authority from the patient in the form of signed, written consent. If it is not so satisfied, then the Practice must notify the representative in writing and state the reason for its decision.

Time Limits

A concern can be notified no later than 12 months from the date on which the concern occurred, or 12 months from the date the person first became aware of the issue

Complaints Advocates

If a patient requires help to raise a concern and does not have family/friends to assist, support can be sourced from:

www.llaiswales.org

www.hiw.org.uk

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Complainants who are unhappy with the Practice's response can refer their concern to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
Ffordd Yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ

The concern must be referred to the Ombudsman within 12 months of the final correspondence at completion of local resolution – usually the final response letter. The Ombudsman has direction whether or not to investigate a concern, and will consider only when injustice or hardship arises from failure in a service, or failure to provide a service or maladministration.

Review of Concerns

The Practice reviews all concerns on an annual basis to reflect upon events that occurred throughout the year and to ensure that any changes that were identified as necessary were implemented. An anonymised summary of the annual concerns including lessons learned and statistics is made available by the Practice for review by the Local Health Board together with any complaints received. The Practice also reviews some concerns at significant event reviews – particularly where there has been a clinical or procedural problem. The discussion is anonymised and the team made up of clinicians and administration staff who review the event to determine if any action could have avoided the situation.

Useful Contacts:

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board Headquarters University Hospital of Wales (UHW)
Concerns Department
Tel: 029 2074 2202
Tel: 029 2074 4095
Email: concerns@wales.nhs.uk

Llais
Tel: 0845 644 7814
Tel: 029 20 750112
Email: Cardiff&valeadvocacy@llaiscymru.org
Email: Cardiff&valeenquiries@llaiscymru.org