

## **Complaints Policy**

Edinburgh GP is committed to providing high quality care and treatment for our patients through the delivery of safe, effective and person-centred care.

However, we recognise that things can sometimes go wrong. When this happens, we want to respond as quickly as possible and, where we can, try to put things right as soon as we can.

We aim to address all concerns and complaints promptly, courteously and efficiently.

We welcome all feedback and comments about our services.

We value complaints for the feedback they provide, so when we receive criticism, concerns or praise, we listen carefully.

We consider and review all concerns raised and use this information to improve our care, treatment and service.

We will ensure that complaints are handled fairly, consistently and confidentially, and that patients are not disadvantaged because they have raised a complaint.

## **Complaints Procedure**

If you wish to complain about our service or care, we encourage you to do so.

If you are unhappy with our care or service, please inform us so we can do our best to resolve any concerns you have as quickly as possible. We will investigate the matter appropriately, provide an explanation and, where appropriate, an apology, and take any necessary action to resolve the matter and prevent recurrence.

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our actions, lack of action, the care or treatment provided, or the standard of service provided by Edinburgh GP.

You can complain directly to us, or if you prefer, someone can make the complaint on your behalf. This representative could be a relative, friend, carer, advocate or any other person you choose.

If you wish for someone to make a complaint on your behalf, we will normally request your permission to enable us to communicate with the person representing you and to discuss information relevant to your complaint. Where appropriate, we will consider any legal or other circumstances where consent may not be required.

You can complain about things like:

- your care and/or treatment;
- delays;
- a failure to provide a service;
- an inadequate standard of service;
- a lack of information or clarity about appointments;

- difficulty in making contact with us for appointments or queries;
- treatment by, or attitude of, a member of our staff;
- operational or procedural issues;
- our failure to follow an appropriate process;
- concerns about communication;
- your dissatisfaction with our policy or the way in which it has been applied.

The above list is not exhaustive. If you wish to complain about something that is not listed above, we encourage you to raise your concerns with us.

There are also some matters that may not be appropriate to deal with through our complaints procedure, such as:

- a request for a service that Edinburgh GP does not provide;
- a request for a second opinion where the matter is a clinical decision that requires assessment by an appropriately qualified clinician;
- a complaint that has already been fully investigated and concluded, unless there is significant new information or evidence that the matter was not appropriately considered;
- matters that are subject to legal proceedings, where it would not be appropriate for us to continue our investigation;
- matters that fall under another statutory or regulatory procedure rather than our complaints procedure.

Again, this list is not exhaustive. If we believe another procedure, organisation or regulatory body is more appropriate to deal with your concern, we will explain this to you and provide appropriate information wherever possible.

## **How to Make a Complaint**

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by email or in writing.

When making a complaint, please provide the following information:

- your full name and address;
- your phone number, if you are happy to provide this so we can call you to discuss your complaint;
- your email address, if this is your preferred method of contact;
- if complaining on behalf of the person affected, the full name, address and date of birth of that person, together with confirmation that you have their permission to act on their behalf where appropriate.

Please provide as much detail as possible about the complaint, such as:

- what has gone wrong;
- when this happened;
- where this happened;
- who was involved, if known;
- how you would like us to resolve the matter.

This information will help us identify the problem, investigate the circumstances and decide what action, if any, we need to take to resolve matters.

Normally, you should make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about; or
- finding out that you have reason to complain.

Complaints should normally be made no later than 12 months after the event being complained about.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

If we decide that, because of the time that has passed since the incident occurred, we cannot consider your complaint, we will explain the reasons for our decision and advise you of any appropriate external organisation or regulatory body you may contact.

### **How We Respond to a Complaint**

The person who is managing your complaint is:

Kirsty Wales  
Practice Manager / Feedback and Complaints Officer  
E: [manager@edinburghgp.co.uk](mailto:manager@edinburghgp.co.uk)  
T: 0131 202 5454

### **We operate a two-stage complaints procedure.**

We will endeavour to manage your complaint quickly. However, if the matter you have raised requires a detailed investigation, we will let you know and keep you updated on our progress.

### **STAGE ONE: EARLY LOCAL RESOLUTION**

We will do our utmost to address your complaint quickly. Where appropriate and possible, this might include an on-the-spot explanation, apology or clarification if something has clearly gone wrong, together with immediate action to resolve the problem.

If enquiries need to be made to establish what has gone wrong, we will try to resolve and address your concerns within 5 working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We may also consider some complaints immediately at Stage Two if we feel the matter is complex or requires a detailed investigation to fully understand the concerns raised.

If we cannot resolve your complaint at Stage One, we will explain why and advise you of what you can do next. We may suggest escalation to Stage Two.

If you are dissatisfied with our initial response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at Stage Two.

## STAGE TWO – INVESTIGATION

### Stage Two deals with two types of complaint:

- those that have not been resolved at Stage One; and
- those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

### When using Stage Two we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days;
- where appropriate, discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for;
- carry out an appropriate and proportionate investigation;
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and normally within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you why. We will provide you with a revised timescale and keep you updated on the progress of the investigation.

Our response will explain the outcome of the investigation, the reasons for our decision and, where appropriate, any action we intend to take as a result of the complaint.

Where a complaint identifies an opportunity for improvement, we will record and review the learning arising from the complaint and take appropriate action to improve our service.

After you have received our final decision regarding your complaint, if you remain dissatisfied with the care or treatment you received, or with the way your complaint has been handled, you can contact Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS).

Complaints can be made **at any time** to Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland regulates registered independent healthcare services in Scotland and can receive complaints about independent healthcare providers that it regulates.

### Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS)

Independent Healthcare Services

Gyle Square

1 South Gyle Crescent

Edinburgh

EH12 9EB

Telephone: 0131 623 4342

Email: [his.ihsregulation@nhs.scot](mailto:his.ihsregulation@nhs.scot)

You do not have to complete our internal complaints procedure before contacting Healthcare Improvement Scotland. HIS can receive complaints about independent healthcare services directly.

## **Other Sources of Help**

The Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS), delivered through Citizens Advice, provides free and impartial help and support to patients who wish to make a complaint about healthcare. PASS can provide information and support with making a complaint and can help you understand your options.

You can obtain further information about PASS through your local Citizens Advice Bureau or through the Citizens Advice Scotland website.

### **Citizens Advice Scotland**

Website: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland)

Telephone: 0800 028 1456

### **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman**

SPSO Bridgeside House

97-99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh

EH7 4NS

Telephone: 0800 377 7330

Online at: [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-form](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-form)

Website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

We will provide reasonable assistance to patients who may require support to make or communicate a complaint, including where there are communication, accessibility or other barriers.

Complaints can be made in a format that is accessible and appropriate to the individual wherever reasonably practicable.