

## If it matters to you, it matters to us...

# Concerns and Complaints – Lowther Medical Centre

### Who is responsible for GP services?

It can be confusing to work out who is responsible and who you can raise your concerns with. North Cumbria Primary Care Alliance (NCPC) and their GP practices are not employed directly by the NHS but they have a contract to provide NHS services.

In line with **NHS England policy** within every GP surgery there has to be a procedure to deal with concerns and complaints, and someone who is responsible for dealing with complaints. In NCPC practices this is usually the Service Delivery Lead (SDL).

If you are unhappy with the treatment or service you, a family member or someone you care for has received from our GP practice, you may want to make a complaint.

This factsheet provides information on how to raise a concern in the first instance, or make a complaint to our general practice.

### Who can raise a concern or make a complaint?

Concerns and complaints can be made by a patient, family member, carer, advocate or nominated individual.

#### Consent

If you want to formally complain on behalf of somebody else we will need their signed consent for us to investigate on their behalf and provide the information to you.

If you are contacting us with an informal concern then we will only need verbal consent from the patient to share information with you.

If the person you are complaining for is unable to understand what is happening we will explain or discuss this with you before we proceed.

Please contact the Practice Manager for further advice about capacity and consent.

### How to complain?

Before raising a formal concern or making a formal complaint you can speak with the Practice Manager. If your query cannot be sorted out by the end of the following working day then you can take the step to formalise your concerns or make a formal complaint to the practice. We take all concerns and complaints very seriously and will investigate thoroughly. At all times your complaint will be dealt with the strictest of confidence. Concerns and complaints are not recorded on your care record.

You can speak with us face to face, on the telephone, email or write to us.

This should be done within 12 months of the event that has caused you to complain, or within 12 months of being aware of the problem.

On receipt of your email or letter, we will acknowledge this within 3 working days and summarise the concerns you are asking us to investigate. We may need to telephone you to discuss some points just to make sure we are recording these accurately.

We will also explain what to expect, and the timeframe for us to deal with the matter.

## How to contact us



Telephone

01946 692241



Email

nencicb-cu.lowthercomplaints@nhs.net



Write to

Complaints  
Lowther Medical Centre  
1 Castle Meadows  
Whitehaven  
Cumbria CA28 7RG

## What information will help us to investigate your concern or complaint?

- Try to be clear in your letter or email. What happened? When did it happen? How did this affect you?
- It is best to complain as soon as possible while the event is still fresh in your mind. If you are unable to do this then make some notes and keep them until you are ready. Write down dates and the names of those involved
- What do you want to happen? How would you like things to be put right?  
Perhaps, you want an apology, a meeting to discuss the issue or for us to learn from the experience

You can ask for help if you need support on putting your complaint together. You can contact your local advocacy provider at [admin@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk](mailto:admin@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk) and your local Healthwatch can provide support and information at [info@healthwatchcumbria.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchcumbria.co.uk)

Keep a note of anyone involved in your complaint. Write down the names and positions of the people involved in, and dealing with your complaint. Make sure you keep copies of any emails or letters you get; you may need to refer to them in the future.

## If you are not happy with how your complaint is answered

When the investigations are complete, you will be given a final response. If you are not happy, tell the practice manager to see if there is anything else they can do.

On the letter they give you, it will also tell you how to get your complaint looked at again. The Health Service Ombudsman is completely independent of the NHS and Government.

Write to:

Millbank Tower  
Millbank, London  
SW1P 4QP

Telephone no:

03459154033  
(local rate service)

Email:

[phso.enquiries@ombudsman.co.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.co.uk)

## Complaints and queries relating to out of hours services

GP practices at times receive queries relating to out of hours service however NCPC are not responsible for these services in North Cumbria. Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) commission out-of-hour services and in North Cumbria this is Cumbria Health on Call (CHOC)

For information on making a complaint to CHOC, they can be contacted at

[CHOC.Governance@choc.nhs.uk](mailto:CHOC.Governance@choc.nhs.uk), or alternatively to the CCG at [enquiries@northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk)