



CROPREDY SURGERY

Dr J Wright & Dr C Day

POLICY – COMPLAINTS

Introduction

The objectives of the complaints' policy are as follows.

- Any complaint is dealt with in an effective and timely manner
- The complainant is given the opportunity to air their grievance
- Where possible the complainant is given an explanation for the actions about which they are complaining
- To ensure that the complainant has been treated fairly and allowed to state their case in full whether or not the problem can be resolved.

Responsible Person and Complaints Manager

The responsible person for handling complaints is Dr J Wright, senior partner and the complaints manager is the Practice Manager.

Who can make a Complaint?

A complaint may come from a patient, carer, relative or a visitor to the practice.

It may also be made by someone acting on behalf of the patient or person involved, providing that they have their written consent to divulge information gained in the course of the doctor-patient relationship. *(See Appendix 1 for a copy of the Authority to Provide Medical Information)*

Time Limits

Complaints are best dealt with as close in time to the incident as possible when memories are fresh and information easily available. In any case, complainants should make their complaint known within twelve months of the event or within twelve months of becoming aware that they have something to complain about. This time limit may be extended if there are good reasons why the complaint could not be made earlier and despite the delay, it is still possible to investigate matters effectively and fairly.

If achievable, a verbal complaint should be resolved immediately by means of an explanation or an apology, as appropriate. If the complaint is resolved to the patient's satisfaction not later than the next working day then it will not be included in the formal complaints arrangements.

Complaints will be recorded on a verbal complaint form which will be scanned to the patient's EMIS record. *(See Appendix 2 for the Verbal Complaints form)* Complainants will be given a copy of the form and it will later be used to inform service improvements.

If the complaint is resolved to the patient's satisfaction not later than the next working day, they will not be included in the formal complaints process laid out in this policy. The Practice complaints procedure is available via the website www.cropreddy-surgery.co.uk , in leaflets in the waiting room and on the practice leaflet.

If no satisfactory outcome can be reached and a written complaint is to follow, the complainant will be given a copy of the practice complaints leaflet or when the formal complaint arrives, a leaflet will be issued with the acknowledgement letter. The leaflet outlines the procedure for formal complaints.

The Practice Manager will respond to a formal, written complaint within three working days and aim to resolve matters within ten working days. If it is not possible to meet this deadline, the complainant will be kept informed of progress and the reasons for delay.

To whom should I complain?

Local Resolution

The first stage in the NHS complaints procedure is local resolution. Complaints should immediately be referred to the Practice Manager. Where this is not possible, the complainant will be offered an appointment with the Practice Manager or she will contact them by telephone at the earliest opportunity, but within three working days.

All complaints are investigated by the Practice Manager ensuring a fair and open appraisal of the complaint. Every effort is made by the Primary Health Care Team (PHCT) to resolve the grievance at local level and, when it has been resolved, any lessons learned and changes implemented.

Local resolution aims to resolve complaints quickly using the most appropriate means, such as, face to face meetings or conciliation. Conciliators, like mediators, are independent people who can assist in resolving a complaint and ensure that both parties' views are heard and understood.

If a patient complains directly to the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust the Practice will work with the PCT to resolve the issue. The Practice will cooperate with the PCT and agree the handling of the complaint whether it is to be by the PCT or by the Practice. If it is to be by the Practice then the acknowledgement will be sent within three working days.

The local discussion with the patient will include how the complaint will be handled and the likely period for completion of the investigation and response to the patient. The investigation will be appropriate, efficient and speedy keeping the individual informed as far as reasonably practicable of the progress of the investigation.

Once the investigation is complete, a written response will be sent to the complainant as soon as practicably possible. This may be in electronic form if the complainant has consented. The response will be signed by Dr Wright or the Practice Manager and the report must contain the following

- An explanation of how the complain has been considered

- ❑ The conclusions reached, including matters for which remedial action is needed as specified by the complainant, Dr Wright or the Practice Manager
- ❑ Confirmation that remedial action has been or is proposed to take place
- ❑ Details of the complainant's right to take the matter to the Health Service Commissioner under the 1933 Act

Monitoring and Recording

Each complaint will be monitored and recorded as follows

- ❑ The subject matter and outcome of each complaint
- ❑ The fact that the complainant was notified of the specified response period and any change to that period
- ❑ Whether the report was sent within that period

An annual report will be produced as soon as practicable after the 31 March for the preceding 12 months and a copy sent to the PCT or produced for any person on request. The report will include

- ❑ The number of complaints received
- ❑ The number of complaints shown to be well founded
- ❑ The number of complaints that the practice has been informed have been passed to the Ombudsman
- ❑ A summary of the subject matter of the complaints
- ❑ Any matters of general importance arising
- ❑ Way in which complaints were handled
- ❑ The issues raised and action taken or is to be taken to improve services as a consequence of the complaints

The Health Service Ombudsman

If after local resolution the complainant is still dissatisfied, they may complain to the Health Service Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is completely independent of the NHS and Government and may be contacted at Milbank Tower, Milbank, London, SW1P 4QP telephone number 0345 015 4033 or by email www.ombudsman.org.uk

What does the Complainant Expect to Achieve?

Complainants may be angry or upset when they make their complaint but it is useful to try and identify what they hope to achieve by complaining. Are they expecting

- an apology,
- an opportunity to talk through what went wrong,
- an explanation of what happened,
- satisfaction that the NHS has been improved by drawing attention to the problem or making a suggestion, or
- reimbursement of fees paid?

An understanding of the expectation may allow a clearer focus for the complaint and a better resolution for the complainant.

Communication

A notice is posted in the waiting room telling patients that the procedure exists and that complaints procedure leaflets are available at the reception desk.

Verbal complaints forms and authorisation to provide medical information forms are available at the reception desk.

A copy of the policy will be available from the website www.cropreddy-surgery.co.uk together with the leaflet.

All staff will have seen and read the complaints procedure and have access to it on paper (available in the Practice Manager's office) or electronic form (on the shared computer drive).

Policy Implemented	2002	
Review dates	March 2006	Reviewed Lynne Jones, Practice Manager
	March 2007	Reviewed Lynne Jones, Practice Manager
	March 2008	Reviewed Lynne Jones, Practice Manager
	April 2009	Reviewed Lynne Jones, Practice Manager
	April 2010	
Author of original policy	Barbara Ware, Practice Manager	



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FORM OF AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE MEDICAL INFORMATION

I, *(name)*

of *(address)*

formally consent to the disclosure of information concerning my condition, treatment and my other medical information relevant to this complaint only, to

(Name of person making the complaint)

of *(address)*

Signed

Print Name

Date

Please return this form to

Mrs Lynne Jones
Practice Manager
Cropredy Surgery
Claydon Road
Cropredy
Banbury OX17 1FB



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VERBAL COMPLAINT

If you need advice or guidance on completing this form, please see the Practice Manager or if unavailable, one of the Partners.

Complainant	Patient
Name	Name
Address	Address
Telephone no.	Patient no
Status (patient, carer etc)	Telephone no
Date of Complaint	Date of Birth
Complaint received by	

Details of the Complaint with answers given

Is the person satisfied with the action taken?	Yes/No
If yes , please make a note below to expand on your answer.	
If no , please answer the following.	
Have you made the complainant aware of the formal complaint process and given them a leaflet? If so what action do they intend to take next?	
Would the complainant like to speak to the Practice Manager on the telephone/by appointment? If so have they given a contact number and convenient time to call?	
Do they intend to write and formally complain?	