



Clarkston Medical Complaints Policy

We make every effort to give the best service possible to everyone who attends our Practice.

However, we are aware that things can go wrong, resulting in a patient feeling that they have a genuine cause for complaint. If this is so, we would like the matter to be settled as quickly, and as amicably, as possible.

To pursue a complaint please contact the Practice Manager who will deal with your concerns appropriately.

Interpreting Service

We can arrange for a meeting with the Practice Manager and an Interpreter for any patient whose first language is not English and needs help with their complaint.

How to make a complaint?

If you have a complaint to make, you can use one of the following options to log your complaint; by emailing the Practice at ggc.gp49214suggestions@nhs.scot, by logging a call with the team to have a member of management call back or by sending a complaint in to the practice in written format:

1. Acknowledge any letter or Complaints Form within 5 working days of receiving it.
2. Deal with the matter as promptly as possible – usually within 20 working days – dependent on the nature of the complaint.

Who can complain?

- Complainants may be current or former patients, or their nominated or elected representatives (who have been given consent to act on the patient's behalf).
- Patients over the age of 16 whose mental capacity is unimpaired should normally complain themselves or authorise someone to bring a complaint on their behalf.
- Children under the age of 16 may also make their own complaint, if they're able to do so.



If a patient lacks capacity to make decisions, their representative must be able to demonstrate sufficient interest in the patient's welfare and be an appropriate person to act on their behalf. This could be a partner, relative or someone appointed under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 with lasting power of attorney.

Appropriate person

In certain circumstances, we need to check that a representative is the appropriate person to make a complaint.

- For example, if the complaint involves a child, we must satisfy ourselves that there are reasonable grounds for the representative to complain, rather than the child concerned.
- If the patient is a child or a patient who lacks capacity, we must also be satisfied that the representative is acting in the patient's best interests.

If we are not satisfied that the representative is an appropriate person, we will not consider the complaint, and will give the representative the reasons for our decision in writing.

Time limits

A complaint must be made within 12 months, either from the date of the incident or from when the complainant first knew about it.

Regulations state that a responsible body should only consider a complaint after this time limit if:

- the complainant has good reason for doing so, and
- It's still possible to investigate the complaint fairly and effectively, despite the delay.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

We keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are not the patient, but are complaining on their behalf, you must have their permission to do so. A Letter of Authority signed by the person concerned will be required, unless they are incapable (because of illness or infirmity) of providing this. Once this Form is completed, we can then proceed with the complaint.



Procedure

We have a two stage complaints procedure. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly however if it is clear that the matter will need a detailed investigation, we will notify you and then keep you updated on our progress.

Stage One – early, local resolution

We will try to resolve your complaint within five working days if possible. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to escalate your complaint to Stage Two.

Stage Two – Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage One.

We also escalate some complaints straight to this stage, if they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days, and we will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be within 20 working days unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time to respond.

Your Rights

If, after receiving our final decision, you remain dissatisfied you may contact the [Scottish Public Services Ombudsman \(SPSO\)](#) and ask them to consider your case. We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.

Address for appointments or visiting:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh EH7 4NS

The Patient Rights Act provided for the establishment of PASS. PASS operates independently of the NHS, and provides free, confidential information, advice and support to anyone who uses the NHS in Scotland. The Service promotes an awareness and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of patients, and can advise and support people who wish to give feedback, make comments, raise concerns or make complaints about treatment and care provided. Further Information can be found at [Patient Advice & Support Service | Citizens Advice Scotland \(cas.org.uk\)](#)