

VICTORIA PARK MEDICAL CENTRE

Complaints Procedure – Patient Leaflet

Overview of the Complaints Process

Please see if you can resolve your issue with practice informally (practice to resolve within 24 hours). Please ask to speak to the Practice Manager either over the telephone or face to face.

If you are unable to obtain satisfaction following an informal conversation with the Practice Manager, or if you prefer not to discuss the issue with us verbally, then you can proceed to making a formal complaint. You can do this by completing the attached form or by emailing or writing to the Practice Manager.

You can complain directly to the Practice or alternatively to NHS England, although there are some exclusions and time limits.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days.

We will investigate your complaint as quickly as possible and give you the outcome in writing, usually within 10 working days. If our investigation is going to take longer than this, we will keep you informed of the timescale in which you can expect us to respond to you.

If you are unhappy with the outcome you can refer your complaint to a higher authority.

Introduction

If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from the doctors or staff working at Victoria Park Medical Centre, you are entitled to ask for an explanation. We operate a practice complaints procedure as part of the NHS system for dealing with complaints.

We try to distinguish between 'grumbles and **complaints**'. Our receptionists and secretarial staff can normally deal with grumbles and other minor matters quickly and efficiently, often at the time they arise.

Local Resolution

If you have a complaint about our services we will try to resolve this with you in the practice. The Practice Manager is the staff member nominated to handle complaints. Arrangements are in place to handle any complaints that are received in their absence.

In the first place, the practice would welcome the opportunity to try and resolve your complaint. Under local resolution you are able to complain to

the organisation responsible for commissioning the services provided by the practice. This is NHS England.

If you complain about the practice to NHS England, there are two alternative options

Option A NHS England decides that it can handle the complaint. NHS England must seek your consent to send the details of your complaint to the practice. This is to enable them to obtain any relevant information from the practice

Option B NHS England may consider that it is more appropriate for the practice to answer the complaint, in which case it must seek your consent to ask the practice to investigate and respond

Important You must choose at the outset whether to make your complaint to the practice or to NHS England. If you make your initial complaint to the practice and do not agree with our response you cannot then seek a review from NHS England. You do have the right to refer your complaint to the Ombudsman

How to complain

You can complain in 2 ways:

- Verbally – face to face or by telephone
- In writing to the Practice Manager

A complaint form is included at the end of this information leaflet. If you are complaining in writing, please feel free to use the form. Alternatively, you may write your own letter or send an email.

Oral complaints resolved within 24 hours

It may be possible to resolve a simple oral complaint within 24 hours and wherever possible the practice will seek to do this for you. Complaints dealt with in this way fall outside the regulations

All other complaints

All other complaints are governed by the regulations and will result in a formal written response being made to you.

If you require any help to make your complaint, the practice can assist you with this. For further information about this, contact the Practice Manager.

Complaining on behalf of somebody else

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of patient confidentiality and data protection. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we have to

know that you have his or her permission to do so. A signed note by the person concerned will be needed.

In certain circumstances, the regulations impose a duty upon the practice to satisfy us that the representative is an appropriate person to make a complaint.

Exclusions

The Complaints Procedure excludes:

- Complaints that were first made orally and which were resolved to the complainants satisfaction within one working day
- Complaints about the same subject matter as a complaint that has previously been made and resolved
- Complaints alleging failure by the practice to comply with a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Time Limits

A complaint should be made within 12 months from the date on which the matter occurred or from when the matter came to the attention of the complainant.

A complaint may be considered outside the time limit if the complainant has good reason for not making the complaint within the limit. The practice will also consider whether it is still possible to investigate the complaint fairly and effectively.

How will we handle your complaint?

- We will record the date we received your complaint and acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days
- We will offer you the opportunity to discuss your complaint
- Your complaint will be promptly investigated
- We will advise you of the outcome of the investigation in writing
- We will take any necessary action in light of the outcome of the complaint

During the complaints process you will be treated with respect and courtesy and if required we will help you so far as is reasonably practical to understand our procedures and advise on where you may be able to obtain assistance.

Ombudsman

If you are not satisfied with our response you can refer your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (you must do this within 12 months of the completion of the local resolution). The Ombudsman can also

consider complaints about the administration of the complaints procedure itself.

Useful contacts and websites

The Practice Manager
Victoria Park Medical Centre
Victoria Park Drive
Bridgwater
TA6 7AS.
Tel: 01278 437100
Fax: 01278 437103

NHS England

You can complain or give feedback:

By post to:

NHS England
PO Box 16738
Redditch
B97 9PT

By email to: england.contactus@nhs.net

If you are making a complaint please state: '**For the attention of the complaints team**' in the subject line.

By telephone: 0300 311 22 33

Our opening hours are: 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, except Wednesdays when we open at the later time of 9.30am. We are closed on bank holidays.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/complaint/>

Ombudsman

If you need advice, call 0345 015 4033. Lines are open 8:30 am - 5:30 pm, Monday to Friday. Calls are charged at local or national rates.

<https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint>

VICTORIA PARK MEDICAL CENTRE

Complaint Form

Complainant's details

Name _____

Address _____

Patient's details (where different from above)

Name _____

Address _____

Date of birth _____ Usual GP _____

(We will need the signed written authority of the patient for you to act on their behalf)

Details of complaint (including date(s) of events and persons involved
please continue overleaf if necessary)

Complainant's Signature _____ **Date** _____