

If you have a complaint or concern about the service that you have received from the doctors or staff working for Rydal Group Practice, you are entitled to ask for an explanation. We operate an in-house practice complaints procedure for dealing with complaints which is in line with the NHS Complaints Procedure.

HOW TO COMPLAIN

Firstly, we would like to say that we always aim to be able to resolve any complaint quickly, simply and with minimal fuss without the need for you to write to us. We like to resolve issues and complaints on the spot or as quickly as possible. Making complaints can be difficult, time consuming and emotional and we do not want you to experience any unnecessary upset when you are already unhappy about something we have or have not done for you or the person for whom you are raising the issue/making the complaint.

As mentioned, we hope that we can sort most problems out easily and quickly - often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. However, if we cannot sort your issue(s) out straight away or as quickly as you want them resolved and you want to make a formal complaint, please do so **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** - ideally within a matter of a few days. Doing this will help us to establish exactly what happened more easily. If doing that is not possible your complaint should be submitted within 12 months of the incident(s) that caused the problem; or within 12 months of discovering that you have a problem. You should address your complaint in writing to the Complaints Manager. If it is easier, you can use this [form](#). The Complaints Manager will make sure that we deal with your concerns promptly and in the correct way. You should be as specific and concise as possible so that the issues are clear and we understand not only the issues you are raising but also what you would like us to do about them if you can.

You can get free support, at any time, from your local independent complaints advocacy service.

This is provided by Voiceability which is an Independent Complaints Advocacy Service. You can contact them by telephone: - 0300 303 1660 or by email: helpline@voiceability.org. They can write letters for you and help you present your case, if you wish.

COMPLAINING ON BEHALF OF SOMEONE ELSE

Please note that the Practice keeps strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality which means that if you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we must have their explicit written permission to do so. An authority signed by the person concerned will be needed unless they are incapable (because of illness or infirmity) of providing this in which case a legal authority will be required eg enduring power of attorney or an Order of the Court of Protection. A Third Party Consent Form is provided below.

WHAT WE WILL DO

We will usually acknowledge your written complaint within 3 working days and we will aim to have fully investigated within 25 working days of the date it was received. If investigations are expected to take longer we will explain the reason for the delay and tell you when we expect to finish. When we look into your complaint, we will investigate the circumstances; give you the outcome of our investigations as they relate to the issue(s) about which you have complained; make sure you receive an apology if this is appropriate and take steps to make sure any problem does not arise again. We may offer a meeting with relevant people at the practice to discuss your complaint and the issues you have raised if this is thought to be a helpful intervention in order to resolve your complaint.

You will receive a final letter setting out the result of any practice investigations.

TAKING IT FURTHER – see NHS Complaints Procedure below.

The NHS complaints procedure

Most medical care and treatment goes well, but things occasionally go wrong, and you may want to complain. So where do you start? Every NHS organisation has a complaints procedure. To find out about it, ask a member of staff, look on the hospital or trust's website, or contact the complaints department for more information. You may want to make positive comments on the care and services that you've received. These comments are just as important because they tell NHS organisations which factors are contributing to a good experience for patients.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

If you are not happy with the care or treatment you have received or you have been refused treatment for a condition, you have the right to complain, have your complaint investigated, and be given a full and prompt reply. [The NHS constitution](#) explains your rights when it comes to making a complaint. You have the right to:

- have your complaint dealt with efficiently, and properly investigated,
- know the outcome of any investigation into your complaint,
- take your complaint to the independent [Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman](#) if you are not satisfied with the way the NHS has dealt with your complaint,
- make a claim for judicial review if you think you've been directly affected by an unlawful act or decision of an NHS body, and
- receive compensation if you've been harmed.

From the 1st July 2023 the way members of the public make a complaint about GP services to the commissioners is changing and now, instead of contacting NHS England, patients need to contact NHS North East London.

If you have a comment or complaint about GP services, we always try to resolve it locally. If you prefer you can contact the NHS North East London complaints team directly as follows:	
Telephone	0208 221 5750 (this will be a voicemail facility to leave a message)
Email	Nelondonicb.complaints@nhs.net
Write to	Complaints Team, NHS North East London ICB, 4th Floor, Unex Tower, 5 Station Street, London E15 1DA

If you have any comment or complaint about a hospital, mental health or community trust please contact them directly.	
If you have a comment or complaint about any other local health service please contact North East London ICB who will be able to help:	
North East London ICB	
Telephone	0208 478 5151
Website	Home - NHS North East London (icb.nhs.uk)

In general, NHS England commissions most primary care services like GP and dental services. ICBs oversee the commissioning of secondary care such as hospital care and some community services.

- Find your local [Integrated Care Board](#)

WHEN SHOULD I COMPLAIN?

As soon as possible. Complaints should normally be made within 12 months of the date of the event that you're complaining about, or as soon as the matter first came to your attention.

The time limit can sometimes be extended (so long as it's still possible to investigate the complaint). An extension might be possible, such as in situations where it would have been difficult for you to complain earlier, for example, when you were grieving or undergoing trauma.

WHERE DO I START?

Since April 2009, the NHS has run a simple complaints process, which has two stages.

1. Ask your GP, hospital or trust for a copy of its complaints procedure, which will explain how to proceed. Your first step will normally be to raise the matter (in writing or by speaking to them) with the practitioner, e.g. the nurse or doctor concerned, or with their organisation, which will have a complaints manager. Alternatively, if you prefer, you can raise the matter with the relevant commissioning body such as the NHS England or a local ICB. The process is called local resolution, and most cases are resolved at this stage.
2. If you're still unhappy, you can refer the matter to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP who is independent of the NHS and government. Call 0345 015 4033

WHO CAN HELP?

Making a complaint can be daunting, but help is available.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service

Officers from the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) are available in all hospitals. They offer confidential advice, support and information on health-related matters to patients, their families and their carers. Find your local PALS office.

NHS Complaints Advocacy Service

Since April 1 2013, individual local authorities have a statutory duty to commission independent advocacy services to provide support for people making, or thinking of making, a complaint about their NHS care or treatment.

Depending on who your local authority has contracted NHS complaints advocacy services are supplied by different service providers. You should contact [your local authority](#) if you wish to know who your advocacy provider is.

Alternatively, you can check the providers listed below to see if they are covering your area. NHS complaints advocacy providers:

- [POhWER](#)
- [Voice Ability](#)

We will continue

to enhance the list of providers as and when we receive more information from NHS England or local authorities.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can be a great source of advice and support if you want to complain about the NHS, social services or local authorities. You can [find your local Citizens Advice Bureau](#) on its website.

NHS Choices complaint process

In the event that a complaint is made about a piece of content that cannot be resolved by the NHS Choices journalist, the matter will be escalated to the Chief Editor.

Note: NHS Choices is only responsible for the content of this website and any operational issues about it. If you wish to make a complaint about our content or any operational issues, please take a look at the detailed information on [NHS England complaints policy \(PDF, 482kb\)](#).

