**Complaints Procedure**

**Making a complaint**

Most problems can be sorted out quickly and easily, often at the time they arise with the person concerned and this may be the approach you try first.

Where you are not able to resolve your complaint in this way and wish to make a formal complaint you should do so, by phoning the practice and asking to speak to one of the practice management team and explaining you wish to complain as soon as possible after the event and ideally within a few days, as this helps us to establish what happened more easily. In any event, this should be:
within 12 months of the incident; or
within 12 months of you discovering that you have a reason to complain and the detail to support your complaint.

If you are a registered patient you can complain about your own care. You are unable to complain about someone else’s treatment without their written consent. See the separate section in this leaflet.

We are able to provide you with a separate complaints form to register your complaint and this includes a third-party authority form to enable a complaint to be made by someone else. Please ask at reception for this. You can provide this in your own format providing this covers all the necessary aspects.

**Complaining on behalf of someone else**

We keep to the strict rules of medical and personal confidentiality. If you wish to make a complaint and are not the patient involved, we will require the written consent of the patient to confirm that they are unhappy with their treatment and that we can deal with someone else about it.

Please ask at reception for the complaints form which contains a suitable authority for the patient to sign to enable the complaint to proceed.

Where the patient is incapable of providing consent due to illness, accident or incapacity it may still be possible to deal with the complaint. Please provide the precise details of the circumstances which prevent this in your covering letter.

Please note that we are unable to discuss any issue relating to someone else without their express permission which must be in writing unless the circumstances above apply.

We may still need to correspond direct with the patient or may be able to deal direct with the third party and this depends on the wording of the authority provided.

**What we do next**

We look to settle complaints as soon as possible. If it is a verbal or telephone complaint it can usually be resolved almost immediately or within a few working days.

We will usually acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within 3 working days, and aim to have looked into the matter within 10 working days. You may then receive a formal reply in writing, or you may be invited to meet with the person(s) concerned to attempt to resolve the issue(s). If the matter is likely to take longer than this we will let you know, and keep you informed as the investigation progresses.

When looking into a complaint we attempt to see what happened and why; to see if there is something we can learn from the issues you have raised; and make it possible for you to discuss the issue(s) with those involved if you would like to do so.

When the investigations are complete your complaint a final response sent to you. Where your complaint involves more than one organisation (eg social services) we will liaise with that organisation so that you receive one coordinated reply if we can although this is not always possible. We may need your consent to do this. Where your complaint has been sent initially to an incorrect organisation, we may seek your consent to forward this to the correct person to deal with.

The final response letter will include details of the result of your complaint and also your right to escalate the matter if you are not satisfied with our response.

**If you wish to put your complaint in writing, please send it to:**

The Complaints Manager

Rydal Group Practice

375 High Road

Woodford Green

IG8 9QJ

Or call 020 8504 0532 stating clearly that you wish to make a complaint