| Patient Complaints and Concerns Procedure | |
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| **Policy Lead:** | Practice Manager |
| **Deputies:** | Assistant Practice Managers<br>Jane Fish<br>Beth Baker |
| **Framework:** | Listening to People – NHS Wales Complaints, Incidents and Redress Process (2026) |

**1. Purpose**

The Practice is committed to providing a high standard of care and service to all patients. We welcome feedback, comments and concerns as an opportunity to understand patients' experiences, address issues and improve the services we provide.

The Practice will handle all complaints in accordance with the NHS Wales Listening to People: Complaints, Incidents and Redress Process, ensuring that patients are listened to, treated fairly and with compassion, and kept informed throughout the process.

**2. Raising a Concern or Complaint**

Patients can raise a concern or complaint:

- In person or verbally to a member of staff.
- By telephone.
- In writing or by email.
- Through a representative, with appropriate authority or consent.

Concerns may relate to any aspect of the Practice's services, including clinical care, communication, access to appointments, staff conduct or administration.

Staff receiving a complaint must listen respectfully, remain professional and ensure the concern is passed promptly to the Practice Manager or designated Complaints Lead.

Patients should normally raise concerns within 12 months of the incident or becoming aware of the matter. Exceptions may be considered where there are reasonable grounds for a delay.

**3. Practice Complaints Contact Details**

Complaints Lead: Practice Manager – Matthew Haynes
Practice: North Cornelly Surgery / Stormybrook Surgery

Addresses:
North Cornelly Surgery
Heol Fach, North Cornelly, Bridgend, CF33 4LD

Stormybrook Surgery
Waunbant Road
Kenfig Hill
Bridgend
CF33 6DE

Telephone:
North Cornelly: 01656 740 345
Stormybrook: 01656 746 611

Email: Practice.Manager.w95034@wales.nhs.uk

How to submit a complaint:

Concerns can be raised verbally, by telephone, in writing or by email. Written complaints should be marked for the attention of the Practice Manager.

The Practice Manager is responsible for receiving, recording, acknowledging and coordinating the investigation and response to complaints.

**4. Stage One – Listen and Act (Early Resolution)**

The Practice will initially seek to resolve concerns as quickly and informally as appropriate, where this is suitable and acceptable to the patient.

- All concerns will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.
- As part of the acknowledgement, the patient will be offered a listening discussion, either face-to-face, by telephone or by video.
- The discussion provides an opportunity for the patient to explain what happened, how it affected them and what outcome they would like to achieve.
- Patients will be listened to with empathy and without judgement. Their communication needs, preferred contact method and any support or advocacy requirements will be considered.
- A written record of the discussion and agreed actions will be maintained.

The Practice will consider early resolution for all appropriate concerns, with the aim of resolving the matter within 10 working days from the date of acknowledgement.

Early resolution may include an explanation, an apology, clarification of events or an appropriate service improvement.

If a patient declines a listening discussion, this will be recorded and the proposed next steps confirmed in writing.

**5. Stage Two – Investigate, Respond and Learn**

Where early resolution is unsuccessful, inappropriate or the concern is more serious or complex, the Practice will undertake a proportionate investigation.

The investigation may include:

- Reviewing relevant medical records and documentation.
- Obtaining accounts from staff involved.
- Seeking clinical advice where necessary.
- Identifying whether procedures or policies have been followed.
- Considering whether any further action or service improvement is required.
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The patient will be kept informed of progress, any delays and the anticipated timescale for a response.

Following the investigation, the Practice will provide a clear written response in plain language, explaining:

- What has been investigated.
- The findings and conclusions.
- Any apology or explanation, where appropriate.
- Any actions taken or improvements identified.
- Any further steps available to the patient.

Where appropriate, the patient will be offered an opportunity to discuss the investigation findings and response.

**6. Support for Patients**

The Practice will ensure that patients are supported throughout the complaints process. Patients will be informed of their right to access independent complaints advocacy through Llais Complaints Advocacy, which provides free and independent support to people raising concerns about NHS services in Wales.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary, including providing information in alternative formats or languages.

A patient will not be treated unfairly or disadvantaged because they have raised a complaint or concern.

**7. Serious Concerns, Patient Safety and Duty of Candour**

Where a concern identifies a patient safety incident, potential harm or a significant clinical risk, it must be escalated promptly to the appropriate GP Partner or clinical lead and the Practice Manager.

The Practice will consider its responsibilities under the NHS Wales Duty of Candour, Duty of Quality and relevant patient safety reporting arrangements.

Where a concern involves another NHS organisation, the Practice will liaise with the relevant Health Board or organisation to ensure the matter is appropriately managed.

GP practices are not directly responsible for administering the NHS financial redress scheme. Where applicable, the Practice will cooperate fully with the Health Board in any investigation or redress arrangements.

**8. Recording, Monitoring and Learning**

All complaints and concerns will be recorded in the Practice's complaints register, including:

- Date received and acknowledgement date.
- Nature of the concern.
- Listening discussion offered and outcome.
- Actions taken and investigation findings, where applicable.
- Date and outcome of the response.
- Any learning or improvements identified.

The Practice Manager will monitor complaints and concerns, identify recurring themes and report significant issues and learning to the GP Partners.

Learning from complaints will be used to improve patient experience, staff training, communication and the quality and safety of services.

**9. Further Advice and Escalation**

If a patient remains dissatisfied, they may seek independent advice and support from Llais Complaints Advocacy or contact the relevant Health Board complaints team or the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, as appropriate.

Patients will be provided with relevant contact details and information about their options.

**10. Review**

This procedure will be reviewed regularly and updated in line with changes to NHS Wales guidance, legislation and the Practice's requirements.

**11. External Support and Further Advice**

Llais – Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy (Wales)
Llais provides free, independent support and advocacy to people who wish to raise a concern or complaint about NHS services in Wales.
Website: https://www.llaiswales.org/
Telephone: 029 2023 5558 (national contact number – check before publishing).

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
If a patient remains dissatisfied and wishes to pursue their complaint further, they may be able to refer the matter to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.
Website: https://www.ombudsman.wales/
Telephone: 0300 790 0203.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Where a concern relates to services provided by the Health Board, patients can contact its Putting Things Right / concerns team for advice.
Website: https://ctmuhb.nhs.wales/