**HEACHAM GROUP PRACTICE**

45 Station Road Heacham

King’s Lynn

Norfolk PE31 7EX

Tel: 01485 572769

**Making a Complaint**

Most problems can be sorted out quickly and easily with the person concerned, often at the time they arise, and this may be the approach you try first. We know that misunderstandings can occur, and we would always try to discuss any suggestions or problems directly with our patients.

In the first instance please discuss your complaint with a member of staff. Where the issue cannot be resolved immediately, please contact the Practice Manager who will try to resolve the issue and offer you further advice on our complaint procedure.

Where you are not able to resolve your complaint in this way and wish to make a formal complaint you should do so, preferably in writing (but this can be verbally)as soon as possible after the event and ideally within a few days, giving as much detail as you can, 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 becoming aware of the matter

If you are a registered patient, you can complain about your own care. You are not normally able to complain about someone else’s treatment without their written authority.

**Send your written complaint in the first instance to:**

Heacham Group Practice, 45 Station Road, Heacham, King’s Lynn, PE31 7EX

The practice Complaints Manager is: Steven Lloyd

**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. In the event the patient is deceased, then we may agree to respond to a family member or anyone acting on their behalf or who has had an interest in the welfare of the patient.

Please ask at reception for the Complaints Form, which contains a suitable authority for the patient to sign to enable the complaint to proceed. Alternatively, we will send one to you to return to us when we receive your initial written complaint.

Where the patient is incapable of providing consent due to illness, accident or mental capacity, it may still be possible to deal with the complaint. Please provide the precise details of the circumstances that 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. You may also find that if you are complaining on behalf of a child who is capable of making their own complaint, we will expect that child to contact us themselves to lodge their complaint.

We may still need to correspond directly with the patient, or may be able to deal directly with the third party. This depends on the wording of the authority provided.

**Help making a complaint**

If you are unable to raise your complaint with us or would like external advice about raising a concern or making a complaint, you can contact the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service (POhWER).

**NHS Complaints and Advocacy**

POhWER, PO Box 14043

Birmingham, B6 9BL

Tel: 0300 456 2370

E-mail: [pohwer@pohwer.net](mailto:pohwer@pohwer.net)

You may also approach Healthwatch or NHS Complaints and Advocacy for help or advice;

**Healthwatch**

[www.healthwatch.co.uk](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk)

**What We Do Next**

We aim to settle complaints as soon as possible. We will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days and aim to have fully investigated your complaint within 28 working days of the date it was received. If we expect it will take longer, we will explain the reason for the delay and tell you when we expect to finish. You will 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.

When looking into a complaint, we attempt to see what happened and why, to see if there is something we can learn from this and make it possible for you to discuss the issue with those involved if you wish to do so.

When the investigations are complete, a final written response will be sent to you.

The final response letter will include details of the result of your complaint and also your right to refer the matter further to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (details shown later in this document) if you remain dissatisfied with the response.

**You may also make your complaint directly to NHS England, who commission our service:**

**By telephone: 0300 311 22 33**

**By email: england.contactus@nhs.net**

**By post: NHS England, PO Box 16738,   
Redditch, B97 9PT**

However, they usually prefer that you contact the surgery first as that can usually clear up the complaint

**If you are dissatisfied with the outcome**

You have the right to approach the **Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman**  
Their contact details are:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman  
Millbank Tower  
30 Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4QP

Tel: 0345 015 4033

Website: [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)