

Abertillery Group Practice

In-House Practice Complaints/Concern Procedure

Patient Information Leaflet

If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from the doctors or any of the staff working in this practice, please let us know. We operate an in-house complaints procedure as part of the NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our complaints system follows guidance issued by the Welsh Government and is known as 'putting things right'.

Raising your concern

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.

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** 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 raise a concern about your own care. You are not able to raise a concern about someone else's treatment without their written authority. See the separate section in this leaflet.

We are able to provide you with a separate form to register your concern 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.

Send your written concern to:

Mrs Angela Williams Practice Manager/Nominated Complaints Officer, Abertillery Group Practice, The Bridge Centre, Foundry Bridge, Abertillery NP13 1BA

What we do next

We aim to resolve concerns as soon as possible.

We will acknowledge receipt of your concern within three working days, and aim to have looked into the matter and respond to you within 30 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. 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 concern 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 would like to do so.

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

Where your concern involves more than one organisation (e.g. social services) we will liaise with that organisation so that you receive one coordinated reply. We may need your consent to do this. Where your concern 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 concern and also your right to escalate the matter further if you remain dissatisfied with the response.

Raising a concern on behalf of someone else

We keep to the strict rules of medical and personal confidentiality. If you wish to raise a concern 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 concerns form, which contains a suitable authority for the patient to sign to enable the concern to be investigated.

Where the patient is incapable of providing consent due to illness or accident, it may still be possible to deal with the concern. 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.

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

Raising a concern directly with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

Our In-House complaints procedure does not affect your right to approach the Health Board directly if you feel you cannot raise your complaint with us or you are dissatisfied with the result of our investigation. Please contact:

- The Customer Contact Centre on: **01495 745656**; a member of staff in the Contact Centre will take your details and a summary of your concern and will pass this to the most appropriate person. You will receive a call back within 48 hours when your concerns can be discussed in more detail and if possible resolved at this stage.
- Emailing your concerns to Puttingthingsright.ABHB@wales.nhs.uk

- Should you prefer, a Raising a Concern Form is available which you can complete and email from the following web page:
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/866/page/87012>
- Write a letter to: Judith Paget, Chief Executive, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, St Cadoc's Hospital, Lodge Road, Caerleon, Newport NP18 3XQ

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome

You have the right to approach the Public Health Service Ombudsman for Wales. The contact details are:

The Public Health Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ

Tel: 0300 790 0203

Fax: 01656 641199

Website: www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk

You may also approach your local community health council for help or advice

If you need help to raise a concern, Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council (CHC) can help you do this. The CHC is an independent body and can provide information, advice and support to members of the public who may wish to raise a concern.

The CHC can support you to raise a concern and give advice on the most appropriate course of action. You can contact your local CHC at the following address:

The Advocacy Service
Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council
Raglan House
6-8 William Brown Close
Llantarnam Business Park
Cwmbran
NP44 3AB

Tel: 01633 838516

e-mail: enquiries.aneurinbevanchc@waleschc.org.uk

To access the CHC website go to www.patienthelp.wales.nhs.uk/gwent (opens in new window)