

Complaints and compliments about us

If you are dissatisfied with CBC Health Federation or any of the services we deliver, you can complain. You can also let us know if you think there is something we have done well.

We aim to provide the best possible experience for our service users in all of the services we provide. If you think we should have done something differently in how we have handled your care, or how we have treated you, please let us know.

Our Urgent Primary Care Services, comprising GatDoc and Enhanced Access, are services we provide on behalf of general practices in Gateshead. We also provide Pharmicus, Spriometry and Vaccination services.

Our services are delivered from different locations within Gateshead. Information about our services can be found on this website.

COMPLAINTS

The information below sets out the process to follow should you wish to complain about your experience.

Making a Complaint

Most problems can be sorted out quickly and easily, often at the time they arise. Your concerns can be reviewed immediately by raising them with the person concerned or service manager. This might be the approach you wish to try first and might give you the response you require without having to take the matter further.

Where you are not able to resolve your concerns 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. 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.

As a 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 on 'complaining on behalf of someone else'.

You can provide us with your complaint in a variety of ways; by email, by post or verbally. When you submit your complaint it would be helpful if you could be clear what you would like to achieve as a result of this, so that we can try to resolve the matter to your satisfaction.

You can [find out more about the NHS complaints procedure on the NHS website](#).

Where your complaint involves more than one organisation (e.g. a service within the Trust) we will liaise with that organisation so that you receive one coordinated reply. 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. Complaints relating to the services we deliver are handled by our Quality and Governance Team based at our Head Office, who will work closely with the relevant service manager/clinical lead to provide a full written response.

Send your written complaint to:

Quality and Governance Team
CBC Health Federation
Building 7 Queens Park
Queensway North
Team Valley
Gateshead
NE11 0QR

Or email to: cbchealth.governance@nhs.net

If you wish to speak to someone regarding your experience in one of the **Urgent Primary Care Services**, please ring: 0191 445 5860/61 and ask to speak to the service manager.

If your concern relates to either **Pharmicus, Spirometry or Vaccinations**, please ring: 0191 497 7710 and ask to be put through to the service manager for the relevant department.

What we do next

We look to resolve complaints as soon as possible. In the first instance we may check with you to see if we can resolve your complaint by providing you with further information or clarification about any of the concerns you have raised. If we can't do that, we will acknowledge receipt within three working days, and aim to have looked into the matter within one calendar month. You may then receive a formal reply in writing. If the matter is likely to take longer than this, we will let you know, and keep you informed as the investigation progresses. Where the complaint involves another organisation, the timescale to provide a response might be a little longer, to allow us to factor in some time to liaise with the organisation(s) involved.

When looking into a complaint we will attempt to see what happened and why; to see if there is something we can learn from this. If failings are identified during the investigation, any necessary improvements will be made to the quality of services. When the investigations are complete a final response will be sent to you and it will be possible for you to discuss the issue with those involved if you would like to do so. The final response letter will include details of the outcome of your complaint and also your right to escalate the matter further if you remain dissatisfied after receiving the response.

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, we will require written consent from the patient to confirm that they are unhappy with their treatment and that we can deal with someone else about it. Please contact us at the address above or by email to cbchealth.governance@nhs.net and we will send a third-party consent form for the patient to sign, to enable the complaint to proceed.

Where a patient is a child or an adult incapable of providing consent due to illness, accident or if they have died or lack mental capacity, it may still be possible to deal with the complaint. You should

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 directly with the patient, or may be able to deal directly with the third party, and this depends on the details of the consent provided.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome

If you remain dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, or think we have not acted properly or fairly, you have the right to approach the Health Service Ombudsman. The contact details are:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP
Tel: 0345 0154033
Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk

You may also approach other agencies for help or advice:

The Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICA) is also able to provide you with independent advice and support on the following number Freephone: 0808 802 3000 or email ica@carersfederation.co.uk. They can help you put your complaint in writing and attend meetings with you; however, the ICA Team does not investigate complaints.

COMPLIMENTS

If you think there is something we have done well, please tell us.

Our process for dealing with compliments is less formal, and we would be happy to hear from you. You can email us at cbchealth.governance@nhs.net, or complete the compliment form on our website.

For information about what we do with personal data see our privacy notices on our website. You will find them on our Governance page.