

Under the NHS Complaints procedure, complaints are usually investigated only if they are made within 12 months of the event, or within 12 months of you becoming aware of the matter. However, this 12 month limit does not apply if there were good reason for not making the complaint within the time limit or despite the delay; it is still possible to investigate matters effectively and fairly.

### **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 0154033**

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

At Stour Surgery we try to ensure that all patients are pleased with their experience of our service and we try to take complaints very seriously. If you need to complain, you will be dealt with courteously and promptly so that the matter is resolved as quickly as possible.

We learn from every mistake that we make and we attempt to respond to patient's concerns in a caring and sensitive way.



# **How to make Comments Suggestions & Complaints**

**49 Barrack Road  
Christchurch  
Dorset  
BH23 1PA**

**Telephone No: 01202 464500**

## **Comments, Suggestions & Complaints**

This leaflet explains how you can make suggestions, comments and complaints about services provided by Stour Surgery.

We welcome your comments, both positive and negative, as they let us know when we get it right and where there is room for improvement.

## **Letter of Appreciation**

If you have been happy with the care you have received, please let us know. Letters to the Practice Manager or individual doctors are very much appreciated.

## **Suggestions**

If you have any suggestions for making changes or improvements to the way we provide services, please complete our Friends and Family Questionnaire and place it in the box in Reception.

You may wish to contact our nearest **Practice Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** which is based at the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospital. The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offer confidential advice, support and information on health-related matters. They provide a point of contact for patients, their families and their carers. They can:

- help you with health-related questions
- help resolve concerns or problems when you're using the NHS

- tell you how to get more involved in your own healthcare

PALS can also give you information about the NHS complaints procedure, including how to get independent help if you want to make a complaint.

Alternatively, you can contact  
The Independent Advocacy Service (ICAS)  
C/O Clarendon House  
9-11 Church Street  
Basingstoke  
Telephone: 0845 120 3782  
Website: <http://www.seap.org.uk/icas/index/html>

## **Making a Complaint**

If you are unhappy with any aspect of your care or service, please let us know as soon as possible. We operate an in-house practice complaints procedure as part of the NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our complaints system needs to meet national criteria.

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know as soon as possible. Complaints should be addressed to our Practice Manager.

We will acknowledge your complaint within 10 working days - either orally or in writing - and offer to discuss the matter. We will include in the discussion how the complaint will be handled and the likely period for completion of the

investigation and responding to you. We will send a written response as soon as reasonably practicable after completing the investigation, which will include:

- An explanation of how the complaint has been considered
- The conclusions reached, including any matters for which remedial action is needed and will be taken
- Details of your right to take this complaint to the parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman

## **Complaining on Behalf of Someone Else**

You can also make a complaint on someone else's behalf (e.g. an elderly relative) if they are unable to do this personally. However you must have their written permission.

## **NHS Complaints Procedure**

We hope that if you have a problem you will use our in-house complaints procedure. We believe this will give us the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and will give us the opportunity to improve our practice.

Alternatively, you may choose to make your complaint orally, in writing or electronically to NHS England:

By telephone: 03003 11 22 33  
By email: [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net)  
By post: NHS England, PO Box 16738,  
Redditch, B97 9PT