**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The practice is open to comments and suggestions and recognises that speed, sympathy and a willingness to listen may be all that is necessary to resolve a complaint.

We always try to offer you the best services possible, but there may be times when you feel that this has not happened. If something has gone wrong or fallen below standard, we welcome the opportunity to improve and avoid a recurrence.

The purpose of this leaflet is to explain what to do if you have a complaint. If you are unhappy with something, you can speak to anyone who is dealing with your treatment or care and they will try to resolve the problem straight away.

We would hope to resolve any problems you may have as early as possible by offering you an appropriate explanation and apology. The Practice Manager is the practice designated complaints manager.

**HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?**

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, it should be made in writing and addressed to the Practice Manager Marie-Clare O’Neill. A copy of a complaints form can posted to you or can be downloaded from our website.

If you do wish to make a complaint we would ask you to let us know as soon as possible after the event, normally within a few days however no later than six months. Please include contact details, who or what is being complained about, where and when the events of the complaint happened and where possible what you would like us to do – offer an apology, or an explanation or make changes to services.

We have a duty of confidentiality to patients. Complaints from a third party must, where possible, have the written consent of the individual concerned.

If you do not feel able to approach someone in the practice, you may contact the Strategic Planning and Performance Group

**HOW IS MY COMPLAINT DEALT WITH?**

We think it is important to deal quickly, thoroughly, openly, honestly and objectively with any complaints received. The practice will aim to address your concerns fully, provide you with an explanation and discuss any action that may be needed.

This is the procedure that we follow:

* All written complaints will be acknowledged within three working days of being received by the Practice.
* A full investigation of the complaint will be undertaken
* A written response to the outcome of the complaints investigation will be forwarded to you within 10 working days.
* You may be offered an appointment with the practice manager and a doctor. You are welcome to bring a friend or relative with you to the meeting to discuss the outcome of your complaint.
* You will be kept informed of any reason why there may be a delay in dealing with your complaint, for example, if enquiries are taking longer than expected.
* The practice is required to provide the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (Formerly known as the Health and Social Care Board) with anonymised copies of all written complaints within 3 working days of completion of the process.

We hope that you will feel satisfied that we have dealt with the matter thoroughly.

We cannot deal with questions of legal liability or compensation but we hope we can look into and, put right any problem.

**WHO ELSE CAN I CONTACT?**

We hope, if you have a problem, you will make use of our Practice Complaints Procedure. We believe this will provide the best chance of putting right whatever has gone wrong and an opportunity to improve our practice. This does not affect your right to approach SPPG, if you feel you cannot raise your complain with us or you are dissatisfied with the result of our investigation.

Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG).

Complaints Officer.

12–22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS

Email: complaints.sppg@hscni.net

Tel: 028 95363893

The Patient and Client Council

The council works on behalf of patients in all areas of health and social care.

They will:

• Work with health and social care organisations to improve the services as a result of concerns raised

• Give you information on how to complain and who to complain to

• Help you to write letters of complaint

• Make telephone calls for you about concerns

• Go with you to meetings about a complaint and help with the process

Patient Client Council 1st Floor Lesley House 25-27 Wellington Place Belfast BT1 6GQ

Freephone 0800 917 0222 Email:  info@pcc-ni.net

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)

If you use the Practice’s complaints procedure it will not affect your right to refer your complaint to the Ombudsman if you wish. Please note; complaints should normally be forwarded to the Ombudsman within 6 months of the completion of our internal complaints process.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)

Progressive House 33 Wellington Place Belfast BT1 6HN

Freephone 0800 34 34 24 Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk