Complaints Policy

1. Our Aim

Our aim is to provide the highest possible level of care to our patients. We recognise that things may not always go according to plan, and patients may feel that they have cause to complain about our service.

The practice management and partners are committed to listening to feedback, comments, suggestions, and complaints about the service we offer and the care our patients receive.

2. Complaints Process

Most complaints can be resolved quickly and easily, often at the time they arise and through a discussion with one of our Managers. This should usually be done within 24 hours of any issue arising, which will often prevent the need for a formal complaint.

How to Make a Formal Complaint

If a complaint cannot be resolved through an informal discussion and the patient wishes to make a formal complaint, they should follow the process outlined below:

• Complaints should be made as soon as possible to allow us to investigate the matter effectively.

• Complaints must be made within 12 months of the date the incident occurred or the date the patient became aware of the issue.

• This time limit may be extended if it is still possible to investigate the complaint and there is a valid reason for the delay.

A patient should put their complaint in writing by letter to:

The Practice Manager
Queens Medical Centre

6/7 Queen Street

Barnstaple

EX32 8HY

Alternatively, patients can submit complaints using the 'Contact Us' form on our website or by completing a complaints form available from reception.

3. Complaints on Behalf of Someone Else

We must follow strict medical confidentiality guidelines. If someone wishes to complain on behalf of a patient, we must obtain proof of the patient's permission. A letter signed by the patient concerned will be required, unless the patient is incapable of providing this.

4. What We Do With a Complaint

Once a formal complaint is received, it will be logged onto our system immediately. The Practice Manager will then follow our complaints process and timescales.

• Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days.

• Investigate and provide a full response, including a meeting with the patient where appropriate.

• If more time is needed to investigate, we will ensure we keep the patient informed until a resolution is reached.

When we investigate a complaint, we aim to:
• Find out what happened and what went wrong.
• Provide an apology where appropriate.
• Identify what we can do to prevent the problem from happening again.

6. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

We take all complaints seriously and view them as an opportunity to improve our services. By addressing concerns transparently and constructively, we aim to enhance patient care and ensure a positive experience for all.

If you have any concerns or feedback, we encourage you to reach out so that we can work together to resolve issues effectively.

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective and in line with best practices.