Ailsa Surgery Complaints Handling Procedure

Ailsa Surgery is committed to providing high quality care and treatment to our patients through safe effective person -centred care. We understand, however that sometimes things go wrong. If you feel that you have reason to complain about your experience at the surgery please inform us and we will endeavour to put things right. If we cannot resolve matters in the way you want, we will explain why it is not possible to do as you suggest.

### What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as:

*Any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.*

We understand that your complaint may involve more than one NHS body or service, or relate to both health and social care services, or it may be about someone working on our behalf. Our complaints procedures cover all of these possibilities

### Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us. You can make a complaint directly to us, or if you would rather have someone make the complaint on your behalf, we can deal with your representative. This could be a relative, a carer, a friend or any other person whom you chose. We can also give you information about advocacy services, and about the Patient Advice and Support Service, which can help you to make your complaint. If you agree to someone making the complaint on your behalf, it is important for you to know that we will need to ask for your permission for us to deal with that person.

### What can I complain about?

* your care and/or treatment;
* delays;
* an inadequate standard of service;
* a lack of information and clarity about appointments or queries;
* treatment by or attitude of a member of our staff;
* environmental or domestic issues;
* operational and procedural issues;
* Our failure to follow the appropriate process; and
* Your dissatisfaction with our policy.

This list is not exhaustive. If you wish to complain about something that does not appear on this list we encourage you to do so.

### What I can’t complain about?

* a routine first-time request for a service, for example a request for an appointment or a request for a specific course of treatment;
* a request for a second opinion in respect of care or treatment;
* matters relating to private healthcare or treatment;
* matters relating to services not provided by or funded by the NHS;
* a previously concluded complaint or a request to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision;
* a complaint made by an employee of the NHS Board or health service provider or other person in relation to their employment contract;
* a complaint that is being or has been investigated by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO);
* a complaint arising from a suggested failure to comply with a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act; and
* a complaint about which you have commenced legal proceedings, or have clearly stated that you intend to do so, rather than pursue the matter using the NHS complaints procedure.

We realise it is not possible to list everything that you cannot complain about. If other procedures can help you resolve your concerns we will give information and advice to help you.

### How do I complain?

You can complain in person at the place where you have received the care, treatment or advice, or where the incident that you want to complain about happened. You can also complain by phone or in writing.

Wherever possible we encourage you to speak to a member of staff. It is easier for us to receive complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of staff at the service you are complaining about. They will always try to resolve any problems immediately if it is possible to do so.

If making a complaint, please tell us:

* your full name and address, and your email address if this is your preferred method of contact;
* the full name, address and date of birth of the person affected if you are complaining on behalf of someone else;
* as much detail as you can about the complaint;
* what has gone wrong;
* when did this happen;
* where did this happen;
* how you would like us to resolve the matter.

This information will allow us to clearly identify the problem and decide what we need to do to resolve matters.

### How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally you must make your complaint within 6 months of;

* the event you want to complain about; or
* finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that a time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why. If we decide that because of the time that has passed since the incident occurred, we cannot consider your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman SPSO) to review our decision.

### How long do I have to make a complaint?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

*Stage 1 - Early, local resolution*

Ailsa Surgery aims to resolve complaints quickly .This could mean an immediate apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong and immediate action to resolve the problem.

Sometimes we will have to make enquiries before we can respond to your complaint. We will give our response at Stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we cannot resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We may suggest that you take your complaint to stage2. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you receive our initial response.

*Stage 2- Investigation*

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint, those which have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

We will:

* Acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days;
* where appropriate we will discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcomes you are looking for; and
* give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

Should our investigation take longer than 20 days we will inform you of this. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on the progress of your complaint.

### What if I am still dissatisfied?

If you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have dealt with your complaint after receiving our full response, you can ask the SPSO to look at it .

The SPSO **cannot** usually look at:

* a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure;
* events that happened , or that you have become aware of , more than one year ago;
* a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

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| You can contact the SPSO: |
| In person:SPSOBridgeside House99 McDonald RoadEdinburghEH3 4NS | By post:SPSOFreepost SPSO |
| Freephone 0800 377 7330Online [www.spso.orguk/contact.us](http://www.spso.orguk/contact.us)Website [www.spso.org.uk](http://www.spso.org.uk)Mobile site: <http://m.spso.org.uk> |

The Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS) is an organisation that provides free and confidential advice and support to patients and other members of the public in relation to NHS Scotland. The service promotes an awareness and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of patients and can advise and support people who wish to make a complaint to the NHS. Further information and contact details can be found at [www.patientadvicescotland.org.uk](http://www.patientadvicescotland.org.uk)

Please address all correspondence in the first instance to Dr McKeeve