

Making a complaint

A guide for patients

Introduction

At Newson Clinic, we are fully committed to delivering safe, effective and responsive healthcare. We want to ensure our patients feel comfortable raising concerns or making complaints and that we make it easy to do so.

Patient feedback

We encourage patient feedback so that we can understand your unique perspective, views and priorities.

Patient feedback questionnaire

Our patient questionnaire is shared with you following your consultation. The feedback is reviewed regularly and shared with all departments to ensure we respond to emerging themes and trends.

Informal feedback

We always find it helpful when patients feedback to us about their experiences and offer their suggestions. Not everyone has time to fill in a formal questionnaire, so we take equal notice of a short summary of your experience and any suggestions for improving our service.

If you have any feedback, please email: feedback@newsonhealth.co.uk

How to raise a concern or complaint

If you do encounter any problems, however small, we ask that you tell us as soon as possible. We expect all our staff respond to any concerns considerately and effectively.

During your visit:

If you have a concern, please ask to speak to the senior person on site. Where possible, they will resolve your concern immediately. If you remain dissatisfied please see the section below entitled 'The Complaints Process'.

After your visit:

Sometimes it is only after you return home that you realise that you want to give feedback or raise a concern.

Please email: feedback@newsonhealth.co.uk

If you wish to write to us, please do so at:

F.A.O Operations Performance Manager

Newson Clinic

Winton House

Church Street

Stratford-upon-Avon

CV37 6HB

For any serious concerns or complaints please follow our complaints process.

Our complaints policy ensures more serious concerns are documented clearly, investigated promptly and that you are given a full explanation.

All complaints are treated in confidence. We will ask your permission before we take statements from staff or take other action which might compromise your anonymity with anyone involved in your complaint. We will aim to respond within recognised timelines.

What are the first steps?

Before making a complaint, it is important to establish what you may want to achieve. Under our complaints policy, we can:

- Carry out an investigation and offer an explanation for what happened.
- Take steps to help put the matters right.
- Where applicable, make immediate changes that prevent or reduce the risk of a similar problem recurring.
- Log your complaint together with any similar complaints and examine it in the context of our wider clinical governance framework to ensure we learn any lessons.

Our complaints procedure has three stages and involves the following people and organisations:

Stage 1: Local investigation and resolution

The complaints team will be responsible for responding to your complaint, assisted by a senior clinician or senior administrator depending on the expertise needed to investigate your complaint.

Stage 2: Internal review

Your complaint and it's handling will be reviewed by our Registered Manager and operations team.

Stage 3: Independent External Adjudication

Newson Clinic is a member of the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS) who can undertake an external and independent review for you.

An informal verbal complaint:

If you make a verbal complaint to a member of staff, the staff member will attempt to resolve your complaint immediately. It is a good idea to make a note of the time and date and who you spoke to.

If immediate resolution is not possible the member of staff will explain how your complaint will be investigated and when can expect to be contacted with an update and by whom.

They will send an email follow up acknowledging your complaint and setting a timeline for a reply. If you

are not happy with the progress of the informal process at any time please email feedback@newsonhealth.co.uk requesting that your complaint is escalated into our formal written complaint process.

Stage 1 - Formal written complaint:

It is helpful to put all formal complaints in writing. Complaints should be made as soon as possible and within 6 months of the date of the event complained about, or within 6 months of the matter coming to the attention of the complainant. Your email or letter should include:

- Who or what has caused your concerns.
- Where and when the events took place.
- What action you have already taken, if any.
- What outcome you want from your complaint.

The complaints team will acknowledge your complaint within three working days of receipt unless a full reply can be sent within five working days of receiving it.

As part of investigating your complaint, the complaints team may offer to meet with you (or to have a call) to help ensure we fully understand the issues you have raised and your desired outcome.

After the conclusion of our internal investigation and any meetings, the complaints team will ensure Newson Clinic provide you with a written response (via post or email) within 20 working days. If the investigation is still ongoing (we anticipate only for rare, unusually complex problems) we will provide a written update every 20 working days with an explanation of the reason for the delay.

If you are dissatisfied with the initial response, you can ask for an internal review as part of stage 2 of our complaints process.

Stage 2 - Internal review of a formal complaint

The internal review (stage 2) is the responsibility of the Registered Manager and can be requested by any patient dissatisfied with a stage 1 response.

Please write to:

**F.A.O The Registered Manager
Newson Clinic
Winton House
Church Street
Stratford-upon-Avon
CV37 6HB**

Or email: feedback@newsonhealth.co.uk F.A.O The Registered Manager

You will need to do this within six months of the date of the final written stage 1 response from the complaints team. You will receive an acknowledgment of the stage 2 review within three working days of receipt (unless a full reply can be sent within five working days).

The Registered Manager, or another senior member of the team not involved with the original complaint

or the stage 1 process, will ensure a comprehensive review of your complaint is completed. This will include a review of the correspondence and handling of the concerns you have raised. You will also be offered a meeting (or a call) to help us in resolving your concerns. This review will either confirm the decisions and actions taken by the complaints team or offer an alternative solution.

You will receive a written response (via post or email) within 20 working days. If the review is still ongoing, we will provide a written update every 20 working days with an explanation of the reason for delay until the matter is resolved. Extending past 20 working days is a rare occurrence.

What happens if I'm still unhappy?

If you remain dissatisfied following the completion of the internal review of your complaint, you can request an independent external adjudication by the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS). You can request an independent adjudication of CentralHealth London LLP's decision by writing to:

Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service

CEDR, 3rd Floor

100 St. Paul's Churchyard

London

EC4M 8BU

Web: www.iscas.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7536 6091

Email: info@iscas.org.uk

You will need to write to ISCAS Secretariat within six months of the final decision of our internal review. You will need to clarify in writing which aspects of your complaint you wish to refer to adjudication and give your consent to ISCAS process and the release of any relevant case and clinical records. The Secretariat will then inform us of your request for adjudication, and we will then send all the relevant information to the Secretariat as requested. You will not have to pay a fee for this service as the costs are met by Newson Clinic's ISCAS membership.

ISCAS will confirm with us if your complaint has completed stages 1 and 2 and then will request clarification from you that you are willing to agree to the terms of ISCAS. ISCAS will then appoint a Principal Adjudicator, who is independent of ISCAS and its membership, and who will agree the key points of your complaint with you. They will provide a written acknowledgement to complainants of their request for independent external adjudication within three working days of receipt of the request.

ISCAS will keep you updated on the progress of the adjudication of your complaint and will do this, at a minimum, every 20 working days.

The adjudication process is intended to bring about a final resolution of the complaint for both parties. It is important that you understand the binding nature of the adjudication process:

- The finality of the decision by the adjudicator

- Any decision and/or goodwill gesture awarded by the adjudicator brings the complaint process to a close.

The Independent Adjudicator will consider a wide range of remedies, including asking the ISCAS provider member:

- To provide an explanation and apology, where appropriate
- To act to put things right
- To share details of how the organisation has learnt from the complaint and any changes made as a result
- To offer a goodwill payment in recognition of shortfalls in complaint handling, inconvenience, distress, or any combination of these, up to a limit of £5,000.

Where any aspect of your complaint might give rise to a clinical negligence claim, your right to seek independent legal advice remains.

Questions:

If you have any questions about Newson Clinic's policy, please contact the complaints team at the above postal or email addresses.