**Policy on Patients Making a Complaint about our services**

**Policy Statement**

The implementation of this policy will ensure a suitable framework exists within lambeth Walk Group Practice and to manage **Patients Making a Complaint about our services** whilst still providing optimal care for our patients.

**Making a Complaint**

Most problems can be sorted out quickly and easily, often at the time they arise with the person concerned and this should be the approach you try first.

Where you are not able to resolve your complaint in this way and wish to make a formal complaint you should do so, preferably **in writing** as soon as possible after the event and ideally within a few days, as this helps us to establish what happened more easily. In any event, this should be:

 Within 12 months of the incident,

 or within 12 months of the subject of the complaint coming to your notice

If you are a registered patient you can complain about your own care. You are unable to complain about someone else’s treatment without their written authority.

We are able to provide you with a separate complaints form to register your complaint. Please ask at reception for this. You can al-so write your complaint in your own format providing this covers all the necessary aspects.

**Send your written complaint to:**

Sarah Cross, Lambeth Walk Group Practice, 5 Lambeth Walk, London, SE11 6SP

**What we do next**

We look to settle complaints as soon as possible. We will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days, and aim to have looked into the matter within 10 working days. You may then receive a formal reply in writing, or you may be invited to meet with the person(s) concerned to attempt to resolve the issue. If the matter is likely to take longer than this we will let you know, and keep you informed as the investigation progresses.

When looking into a complaint we attempt to see what happened and why, to see if there is something we can learn from this, and make it possible for you to discuss the issue with those involved if you would like to do so.

When the investigations are complete your complaint will be determined and a final response sent to you.

Where your complaint involves more than one organisation (e.g. social services) we will liaise with that organisation so that you receive one coordinated reply. We may need your consent to do this. Where your complaint has been sent initially to an incorrect organisation, we may seek your consent to forward this to the correct person to deal with.

The final response letter will include details of the result of your complaint and also your right to escalate the matter further if you remain dissatisfied with the response.

**Complaining on Behalf of Someone Else**

We keep to the strict rules of medical and personal confidentiality. If you wish to make a complaint and are not the patient involved, we will require the written consent of the patient to confirm that they are unhappy with their treatment and that we can deal with someone else about it.

Please ask at reception for the Complaints Form which contains a suitable authority for the patient to sign to enable the complaint to proceed.

Where the patient is incapable of providing consent due to illness or accident it may still be possible to deal with the complaint. Please provide the precise details of the circumstances which prevent this in your covering letter.

Please note that we are unable to discuss any issue relating to someone else without their express permission, which must be in writing, unless the circumstances above apply.

We may still need to correspond directly with the patient, or may be able to deal direct with the third party, and this depends on the wording of the authority provided

**If you are Dissatisfied with the Outcome**

**Address**: NHS England

PO BOX 16738

Redditch

B97 9PT

**Tel:** 03003112233

**Email:** England.contactus@nhs.net

If you have already made a complaint to the Practice or the CCG and you are not happy with the outcome, you have the right to approach the Ombudsman. The contact details are:

**The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman Millbank Tower Millbank London SW1P 4QP**

**Tel: 0345 0154033**

**Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk**

*The Practice Complaints Manager is: Sarah Cross, Practice Manager*

We are always keen to receive feedback from our patients, about the Practice and the services we offer.

Please let us know what you think!

Is there anything we do especially well? Is there anything we could improve?

You can fill in our online comments form at www.lambethwalkgp.com on the ‘about us’ page

You can ask at reception to register to join our patient focus group

*or*

You can ask to speak to our Practice Manager, Sarah Cross