

ASPEN MEDICAL PRACTICE

Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Feedback

Patient Information Leaflet

We welcome feedback

Aspen Medical Practice wants every patient to receive safe, respectful and effective care. If something has gone well, or if something has gone wrong, please tell us. Raising a concern or complaint will not affect your care. We will treat you fairly and with respect.

If the problem can be sorted out quickly

Many concerns can be resolved informally by speaking to the member of staff involved or to a manager. We will try to put things right as soon as possible. If this does not resolve the issue, or you would prefer to make a formal complaint, you can use the options below.

How to make a complaint

You can complain in the way that works best for you. You do not have to put it in writing.

- Online: use the feedback and complaints form at www.aspenmedicalpractice.nhs.uk/feedback-complaints/
- By telephone: call the Practice on 01452 337733.
- In person: speak to a member of staff at the Practice.
- By letter: write to Aspen Medical Practice, marked for the Complaints Manager.
- Through a representative: someone else can complain for you if they have permission or legal authority.

Please raise complaints as soon as possible. NHS complaints should normally be made within 12 months of the event, or within 12 months of becoming aware of the problem. We may still consider a complaint outside this time if there is a good reason for the delay and it can still be investigated fairly.

What helps us understand your complaint

We can usually help more when a complaint is in the patient's own words. Please tell us, as simply as possible, what happened, when it happened, what the main problem is, how it affected the patient, and what the patient would like to happen next.

It is okay to use AI or other help to write a complaint. However, if a letter is very general or sounds like a standard message, it can be harder for us to understand the real issue. This can slow things down and may mean we need to ask for more information. A short message in the patient's own words is often more helpful than a long AI-written letter.

If you need help because of language, disability, learning disability, mental health needs, or communication difficulties, we will do our best to support you to tell us about your experience in a way that works for you.

What happens after we receive your complaint

We will acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days. Where appropriate, we may contact you to confirm the issues, the outcome you are hoping for, and how and when we will respond. We usually aim to respond within 40 working days. If we need longer, we will explain why and agree a revised timescale.

How we investigate and respond

We investigate fairly and proportionately. Depending on the complaint, we may review records, appointment history, documents and call recordings; speak to staff involved; seek clinical input; and consider safeguarding, Duty of Candour, significant event review or other governance processes.

Our response will usually summarise your concerns, explain what we looked at and what we found, include an apology where appropriate, explain any learning or changes, and tell you what you can do next if you remain unhappy.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

We must follow medical confidentiality rules. If you complain for another person, we will usually need their consent before sharing confidential information. If the patient cannot give consent, we will consider the circumstances and follow legal, confidentiality and best-interests guidance. For children and young people, we will consider competence, parental responsibility and confidentiality.

Support, adjustments and communication

We will make reasonable adjustments where needed, such as information in another format, interpreters, extra time, or support from a representative, advocate, family member or carer. Please tell us what would help.

We understand complaints can involve distress and strong feelings. We will consider the complaint fairly. If communication becomes unreasonable, abusive or unsafe, we may set clear boundaries; any decision will be proportionate, explained and reviewed.

Learning from complaints

Formal complaints are logged and reviewed. We identify themes, take action where needed, and share learning across the Practice. Learning may be discussed through Practice Learning Time or Significant Event Analysis. Actions are assigned to a named owner and reviewed for completion and effectiveness.

If you do not want to complain to the Practice

We hope you will give us the opportunity to respond. However, you may contact NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board about primary care services in Gloucestershire. You can also seek support from PALS or advocacy services at any stage.

NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board / PALS

NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board

Sanger House, 5220 Valiant Court, Brockworth, Gloucester

Telephone: 0300 421 1500

PALS telephone: 0800 015 1548 / 01452 566698

Email: glicb.pals@nhs.net Website: www.nhsglos.nhs.uk

If you remain unhappy after our final response

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP

Helpline: 0345 015 4033

Website: www.ombudsman.org.uk Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

Care Quality Commission

The CQC does not investigate individual complaints for patients, but uses feedback to inform monitoring, inspection and regulation work.

Website: www.cqc.org.uk