

The Avenue Family Practice



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www.dublingp.ie

Service User Policy

The Avenue Family Practice staff and GP's are committed to dealing effectively with any complaints you may have about our service.

If we got something wrong, we will apologise and where possible we will try to put things right. We also aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain to improve our services.

When to use this policy

When you complain to us, we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes, you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by us, for example, withdrawal of your medical card, and we will advise you about how to make your concerns known.

Informal resolution

If possible, we believe it is best to deal with things as soon as possible and in the easiest and most direct way. If you have a complaint, raise it with the person you are dealing with. He or She will try to resolve it for you there and then. However, they may need time to look into it and will respond to you within five working days.

If there are any lessons to learn from addressing your complaint, the member of staff will draw them to our attention. If the member of staff can't help, they will explain why and you can then ask for your complaint to be formally investigated.

How to complain formally

You can make a complaint in any of the ways below:

- You can ask for a copy of our complaint form
- You can get in contact with our Practice Manager on 8336568, if you want to make your complaint over the phone.
- You can use the form on our website at www.dublingp.ie
- You can email us at avenuefamilypractice@gmail.com with subject 'Service User Complaint'

- You can write a letter to us at the following address;
The Practice Manager, The Avenue Family Practice,
59 Collins Avenue East, Killester, Dublin 5
- We also have complaint forms available at the reception desk.

What should you include in your complaint

- Remember to state your name, address and telephone number and email if applicable and whether you are acting on behalf of someone else.
- Briefly describe what your complaint is about stating relevant dates and times, if applicable
- List your specific concerns starting with the most important concern
- Be clear about what you are hoping to achieve (for example, an apology, explanation etc.)
- State your preferred method of communication
- Attach copies of documents relevant to your complaint (if any)

Dealing with your complaint

- We will formally acknowledge your complaint with five working days and let you know how we intend to deal with it.
- We will ask you to tell us how you would like us to communicate with you and establish whether you have any particular requirements, for example if you have language difficulties.
- We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way.
- We will make sure that your interactions with us in the future do not suffer just because you have made a complaint.
- If you are making a complaint on behalf of somebody else, we will need their agreement to you acting on their behalf.

Investigation

- We will tell you who we have asked to investigate your complaint.
- We will set out to you our understanding of your complaint and ask you to confirm that we have got it right.

The person looking at your complaint will usually need to see files we hold relevant to your complaint. If you don't want this to happen, it is important to tell us.

If there is a simple solution to your problem, we will ask you if you are happy to accept this.

We will aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible and expect to deal with the vast majority within 30 working days.

If your complaint is more complex we will:

- Let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate
- Tell you how long we expect it to take

- Give you regular updates on any progress made

The person who is investigating your concerns will aim first to establish the facts. The extent of this investigation will depend on how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are.

In some instances, we may ask to meet you to discuss your complaint.

When investigating your complaint, we will look at relevant evidence. This could include files, notes of conversations, letters, emails etc. If necessary, we will talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies and any guidance.

Outcome

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found in keeping with your preferred form of communication. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If we find that we got it wrong, we will tell you what and why it happened. If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

If we got it wrong, we will always apologise.

If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint and you are a medical card holder you can contact the complaints officer of the HSE on 1850 241850 or email to: yoursay@hse.ie

If you are a private service user you can lodge a complaint with the Irish Medical Council, email complaints@mcirl.ie

Learning lessons

We take your complaint seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we have made. The GP Partners and practice management considers a summary of all complaints on a regular basis as well as details of any serious complaints.

Where there is a need for change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it by.

What if you need help

Our staff will aim to help you make your complaint known to us. If you need extra assistance, Advocacy services are available and details of Advocacy Groups can be found here: <http://www.healthcomplaints.ie/resources/where-to-get-help-and-advocacy/>

What we expect from you

In times of trouble or distress, some people may act out of character. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a complaint.

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We, therefore, expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence.