

Complaints Policy



Our Commitment

At Carolside Medical Centre, we are committed to providing safe, effective and high-quality care to all patients. We welcome feedback as an opportunity to learn and improve our services. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the care or service you have received, we will listen to your concerns and aim to resolve them fairly, respectfully and promptly.

How to Make a Complaint

We encourage patients to raise concerns as soon as possible. In many cases, issues can be resolved quickly by speaking directly with a member of staff at the time the concern arises.

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the Practice Manager, who is responsible for overseeing the complaints process.

Complaints can be submitted:

- By completing the online complaints form on our website.
- By contacting the practice and requesting a management call-back.
- In writing by sending a letter to the practice.

Information to Include

To help us investigate your complaint, please provide:

- Your full name, address and preferred contact details.
- The name, address and date of birth of the person affected (if you are complaining on someone else's behalf).
- A clear description of what happened.
- When and where the incident occurred.
- Any relevant supporting information.
- The outcome you are seeking.

Who Can Make a Complaint?

- A current or former patient.
- Someone authorised to complain on a patient's behalf.
- A child under 16 who is able to make their own complaint.

Patients aged 16 or over who have the capacity to do so should normally make their own complaint or give permission for someone else to act for them.

If a patient lacks capacity, another person may complain on their behalf if they can show they are acting in the patient's best interests and are appropriate to represent them. This could include a partner, family member, or someone with legal authority to act for the patient.

Complaints Made by Representatives

When a complaint is made on behalf of a patient, we must be satisfied that the person is authorised to act for them and is doing so appropriately. This includes ensuring that children who are able to make their own complaint can do so themselves, and that anyone acting for an adult who lacks capacity is acting in the

patient's best interests. If we decide that a representative is not suitable to act on the patient's behalf, we will explain our decision in writing.

Interpreter Support

Interpreter services can be arranged for patients whose first language is not English and who require assistance in discussing or making a complaint.

Confidentiality

Patient confidentiality will be maintained throughout the complaints process.

If you make a complaint on behalf of another person, we will normally require their written consent before discussing personal or medical information. A signed Letter of Authority should be provided unless this is not possible because of illness or incapacity.

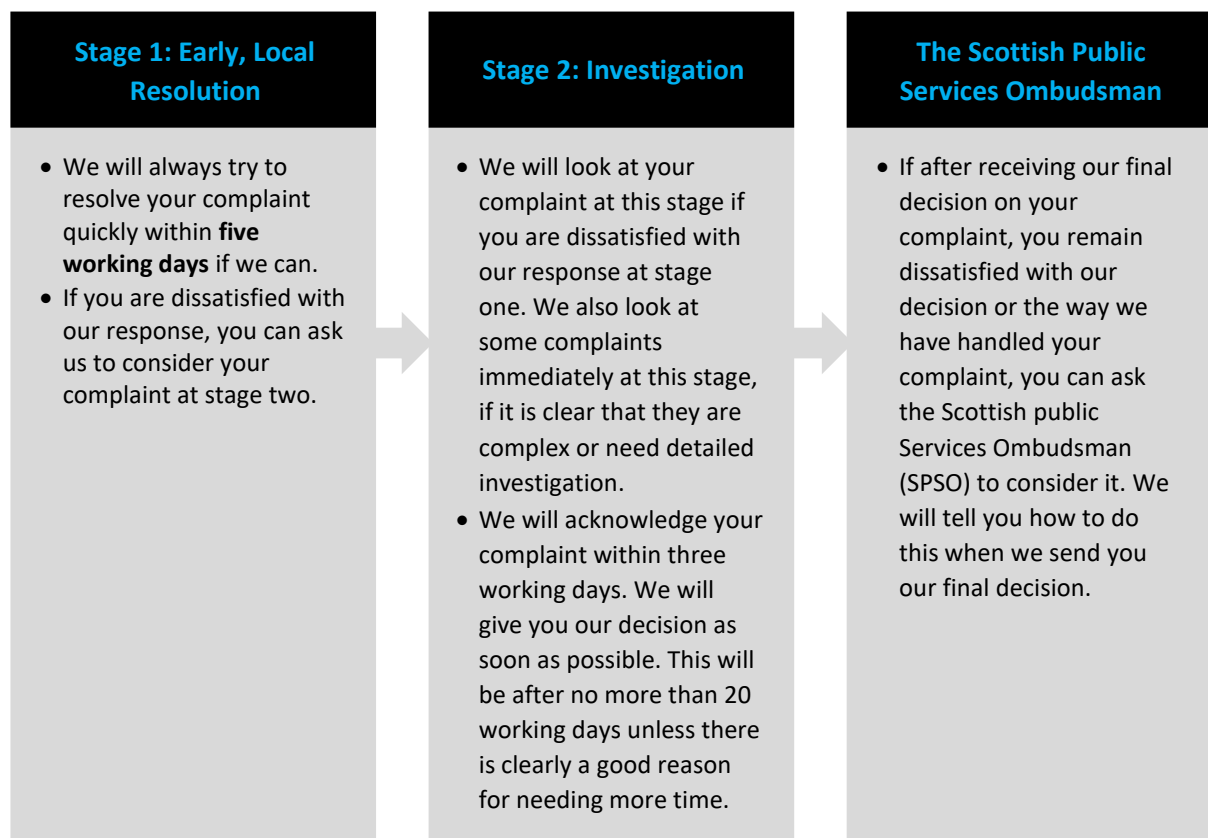
Time Limits

Complaints should normally be made within 12 months of:

- The incident giving rise to the complaint; or
- The date when the matter first came to your attention.

Complaints submitted after this period may still be considered where there is a good reason for the delay and a fair investigation remains possible.

Our Complaints Procedure



Stage 1 – Early Resolution

We will try to resolve straightforward complaints quickly and locally, normally within five working days.

Stage 2 – Investigation

If a complaint is complex or cannot be resolved at Stage 1, it will be investigated in more detail.

At this stage we will:

- Acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receipt.
- Carry out a thorough investigation.
- Provide a written response as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days.

Where additional time is required, we will explain the reasons and keep you updated on progress.

If You Remain Dissatisfied

If you remain dissatisfied after receiving our final response, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (**SPSO**) to consider your complaint.

The **SPSO** cannot normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure, so please make sure it has done so before contacting the **SPSO**;
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago; or
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Bridgeside House

99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh

EH7 4NS

Telephone: 0800 377 7330

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

Information on how to contact the SPSO will be included with our final response.

Independent Advice and Support

The **Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS)** provides free, confidential and independent advice to people using NHS services in Scotland.

PASS can provide information and support to anyone wishing to give feedback, raise a concern or make a complaint about NHS care or treatment.

Further information is available through the Patient Advice and Support Service via Citizens Advice Scotland.