

NHS Complaints How it works for you

Sue Stone
Acting Complaints Manager

Friday 3 September 2010
Wills Hall, University of Bristol

1



2

Objectives

- Give an overview of the NHS Complaint process
- Who can raise a concern and who can they be raised with
- Timescales
- Who is able to provide support
- Learning from Complaints/concerns

3

NHS Constitution Principle & Rights – Complaints & Redress

Patient and Public – your rights and NHS pledges to you

- You have the right for your complaint to be dealt with efficiently, and properly investigated,
- Know the outcome of any investigation into your complaint,
- Take your complaint to the independent Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman if you're not satisfied with the way the NHS has dealt with your complaint,
- Make a claim for judicial review if you think you've been directly affected by an unlawful act or decision of an NHS body, and
- Receive compensation if you've been harmed

4

Complaint Regulations

- Pilot sites testing a simpler two stage process - 2008
- Department of Health – Listening, Responding, Improving
- **The Local Authority Social Services & NHS Complaints [England] Regulations – April 2009**
 - Simpler system – integrated/consistent across organisations/agencies – joint responses
 - Patient focussed
 - Demonstrate changing attitudes to complaints

5

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

- Series of publications entitled “Principles of Good Complaint Handling, Good Administration and Remedy “
- The core of these principles are
 1. Getting it right
 2. Being customer focused
 3. Being open and accountable
 4. Acting fairly and proportionately
 5. Putting things right
 6. Seeking continuous improvement.

6

Who can make a complaint

- Patient
- Relative/carer/parent
- Advocate of a patient such as ICAS
- Solicitor/legal advisor
- Member of Parliament/councillor

7

When can I make a complaint?

- up to 12 months from date of the incident
- or
- up to twelve months from becoming aware of issue*

* Discretion can be used to investigate complaints outside of these timescales

8

Complaints Process – Stage 1

- Following your contact with the organisation involved in the complaint or the Primary Care Trust you can expect an acknowledgment within 3 working days on receiving your complaint
 - Discussion with complaint staff on agreed response time
 - Look at options to resolve the complaint such as a meeting
 - How you would prefer to receive the response to the investigation – written or verbal
- Investigation is undertaken and response provided
- Complaint signed off by Senior Executive ie Chief Executive

9

Complaints Process – Stage 2

- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman investigation if the complainant feels that they have suffered an injustice or hardship from the complaint
 - further in-depth review of documentation provided by organisation
 - Decision made that no further action is required or there is a recommendation for the organisation
 - PHSO works with relevant parties to achieve a satisfactory resolution

10

Who is able to provide support?

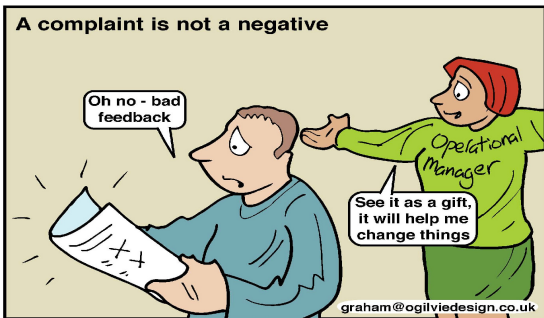
- PALS [Patient Advice and Liaison Service]
 - PALS are available in NHS Trusts in England
 - Primary Care, Mental Health, Acute, Ambulance
- Advocacy Services
 - ICAS [Independent Complaints Advocacy Service]

11

Learning from Complaints

- Change in the culture of the NHS in the way complaints are viewed
- Patients have much greater say/choice
- Commissioners take much more notice
- Important form of consultation/engagement
- Essential for organisations to demonstrate effective use of public resources

12



13

White Paper

- Equity and Excellence - Liberating the NHS
- HealthWatch England & local HealthWatch
 - Local independent organisations [based on LINKs] will provide help, information and support, and stand up for your rights. HealthWatch will be able to help you:
 - find out what services are available
 - make informed choices
 - voice a concern or make a complaint
 - have your say in the services delivered locally.

14

White Paper

Your opportunity to take part in the consultation

Consultation ends Monday 11 October 2010

Further details can be found on

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_117782

15

Objectives

- An overview of the NHS Complaint process
- Who can raise a concern and who can they be raised with
- Timescales
- Who is able to provide support
- Learning from Complaints/concerns

16

Any questions?

17

· Contact details

Sue Stone
Acting Complaints Manager
NHS Somerset
Wynford House
Yeovil
BA22 8HR

complaints@somerset.nhs.uk

18