

Gloucestershire Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)

Complaints Policy

MISSION

The Gloucestershire LINK will help influence, improve or change the way local Health & Social Care services are planned and delivered

The Gloucestershire LINK is a network of local people, groups and community organisations who want to help shape health and social care services commissioned and provided in Gloucestershire. It is a mechanism for gathering the views of people throughout Gloucestershire communities so that these views can be made known to health and social care commissioners and providers. The Gloucestershire LINK aims to be inclusive and will not discriminate on the grounds of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The Gloucestershire LINK has statutory duties and powers and will act in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

This document provides information to anyone who wants to complain about the work of the Gloucestershire LINK, or conduct of any member of the Gloucestershire LINK, or the Host organisation (GRCC).

All complaints will be treated as confidential. This means that the complaint will be seen only by the people who are directly involved in processing, handling and responding to the complaint except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. where any person is at risk of serious harm, intending to harm others or intending to carry out a serious crime).

Complaints can be a valuable source of information. These may relate to: accuracy of reports, use of Statutory Powers, behaviour or competence of the LINK or Host organisation. The Gloucestershire LINK will do its best to use the learning derived from complaints as a tool to improve practice.

The Gloucestershire LINK will:

- Deal with complaints efficiently and fairly
- Keep complainants fully informed of progress relating to their complaint
- Seek to achieve a resolution which is satisfactory to both the complainant and the Gloucestershire LINK

Lodging a Complaint

- Complaints about the Gloucestershire LINK or its members should, where possible, be made in writing and forwarded to the Stewardship Board Chair / Vice Chair or via the Host Organisation
- Complaints about the Host organisation should be made to the Chief Executive of the Host and will be dealt with through the Host organisation's own complaints procedure.

How the Gloucestershire LINK deals with complaints

Where possible, individuals should make their complaint in writing so that the LINK has a formal written record of the complaint. If a complainant is unable to write to the LINK, other arrangements will be made to ensure equality of access to the complaints process.

Stage 1

Step 1

- The complaint will be recorded by the host organisation and referred to the Chair / Vice Chair of the Stewardship Board. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged in writing within five working days by the host organisation

Step 2

- The Chair / Vice Chair, members of the Governance Group and a representative from the Host will make the initial decision on whether an investigation is appropriate. If it is, they will appoint a minimum of three representatives of the LINK (including at least one member of the Stewardship Board) who will decide the form and timescale of the investigation
- The member, against whom the concern has been raised, will be informed of the nature of the complaint in writing
- The member will be given an opportunity to respond. This can be either in writing or at an interview arranged at a mutually convenient time
- The response will be shared with the complainant
- The appointed representatives will consider all of the information presented, make a decision on whether the complaint is justified
- If the complaint is deemed justified, the appointed representatives will make recommendations as to the appropriate action(s) to the LINK Stewardship Board for their consideration
- If the complaint is not upheld, the appointed representatives will record the reasons for their decision, and advise the parties accordingly

- A written record will be kept of all proceedings including any decision of the LINK Stewardship Board

Step 3

- The complainant and the member concerned will be informed of the outcome within five working days of the final decision
- Recorded delivery will be used for these notifications

Stage 2

- If either party is not satisfied with the decision, an independent facilitator will be offered

Additional advice when making a complaint

When making a complaint by letter, you should include:

- Your name and contact details
- Who or what has caused your concerns
- When and where the event(s) happened
- Any other relevant information

You should also keep accurate records of:

- Telephone calls related to the complaint, who you spoke to, when and what the calls were about
- All your papers and correspondence relating to the complaint
- Details of any visits or meetings

The Gloucestershire LINK Complaints Policy does NOT cover:

- Complaints or concerns about the National Health Service, or the Social Services or any private provider: These should be dealt with through their respective complaints procedure. (See Appendix One)
- Complaints that are being pursued through litigation

Information about where to send a complaint about the National Health Service, or the Social Services

If you have any complaints about any aspect of Gloucestershire's Adult Social Care services, the customer services team are there to help. Please write to:

Gloucestershire County Council
Freepost Plus RRAY-LAYL-HKJX
Customer Services Team
Shire Hall
Westgate Street
Gloucester TL1 2TG

Telephone 01452 427614 or
visit the website www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/feedback or
email customerservices@gloucestershire.gov.uk

If you have any complaints about the treatment or services provided by a local community hospital or NHS treatment outside of hospital e.g. district nursing, health visiting, community therapy services, out of hours services please write to:

NHS Gloucestershire
The Chief Executive
NHS Gloucestershire
Sanger House,
5220 Valiant Court
Gloucester Business Park
Brockworth Gloucestershire GL3 4FE

Freephone: 0800 015 1548
Email: community.pals@glos.nhs.uk

If you have any complaints about the treatment or services provided by Gloucestershire Royal or Cheltenham General Hospitals please write to:

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
The Patient Experience Team
Gloucestershire Royal Hospital,
Great Western Road
Gloucester GL1 3NN

Telephone: 0800 019 3282
Email: pals@gloucestershirehospitals.nhs.uk

If you have any complaints about mental health or learning disability treatment or services in Gloucestershire please write to:

2gether NHS Foundation Trust
The Chief Executive
Rikenel
Montpellier
Gloucester GL1 1LY

Freephone: 0800 015 1548
Email: community.pals@glos.nhs.uk

If you have any complaints about ambulance services please write to:

Great Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust
The Chief Executive
Head Office
Jenner House
Langley Park
Chippenham SN15 1GG

Telephone: 01249 858500
Email: pals@gwas.nhs.uk

If you are unhappy with the service you or others have received from a hospital, doctor, dentist, local surgery or any other NHS service, you can get free, independent and confidential advice by writing to

Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)
Premier House
Unit 3
Willowsite Park
Canal Road
Trowbridge Wilts BA14 8RH

Telephone 01225 762723
Email: trowbridge.icas@seap.org.uk