



Complaints Policy

Despite the best intentions complaints may arise. Tenambit Medical Centre deals with complaints in a courteous and understanding manner. Perceptions of what is reasonable, and fair can change when patients are unwell or anxious.

Patient satisfaction affects health outcomes, and our practice acknowledges that patient complaints are an important source of customer feedback. Our Practice provides patients with the opportunity to provide compliments, complaints or suggestions.

This might be through the provision of information in the practice information sheet or brochures/posters about the following:

- Practice Commitment to quality of care through responding to patient feedback
- Practice process for receiving and responding to patient complaints.
- State health care complaint bodies (list is available on Safety and Quality council website)
- Office of the federal privacy commissioner.

Our Practice also has a suggestion box in the waiting room and conducts patient feedback surveys via Voice of the patient feedback surveys routinely.

Handling Complaints

When Tenambit Medical Centre receives a complaint, staff are to follow this process in order to minimise further anxiety and hostility, potentially leading to litigation.

1. Notify the Practice Manager about the complaint
2. Complete an incident report as soon as possible.
3. Take the patient into a private area of our practice (if the complaint is provided verbally)
4. Listen carefully to the patient, take notes and repeat key messages to ensure that the complaint is understood.
5. Assure the patient that the complaint will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated
6. Document the complaint in a file note format and place a copy in the patient's file
7. Write up the complaint in the management spreadsheet under complaints.
8. Alert the treating GP
9. Acknowledge the complaint in writing within 2 business days and place a copy in the patient's file
10. Provide the patient with updates during the investigation to assure them the matter has not been overlooked

Standard 5.13

11. If a clinically based complaint, alert the treating GP's medical defence company for appropriate action
12. Decide and action the appropriate remedy and notify the patient verbally and in writing
13. Record all contact with the patient including written responses in their health record
14. Hold a practice meeting to review the case and to see how to avoid the situation in the future.
15. Refer to the disciplinary policy for any further action that may be required.

If the outcome of the complaint is not satisfactory to the patient, they are able to refer the complaint to the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC).

<https://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au/understanding-complaints/make-a-complaint-online>