

COMPLAINTS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Everyone has the right to expect a positive experience and a good treatment outcome. In the event of concern or complaint, patients have a right to be listened to and to be treated with respect. Service providers should manage complaints properly, so customers' concerns are dealt with appropriately. Good complaint handling matters because it is an important way of ensuring customers receive the service they are entitled to expect. Complaints are a valuable source of feedback; they provide an audit trail and can be an early warning of failures in service delivery. When handled well, complaints provide an opportunity to improve service and reputation.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

We aim to provide a service that meets the needs of our patients and we strive for a high standard of care;

We welcome suggestions from patients and from our clinicians and staff about the safety and quality of service, treatment and care we provide;

We are committed to an effective and fair complaints system; and

We support a culture of openness and willingness to learn from incidents, including complaints.

It is my aim to always have satisfied patients, to meet your expectations of care and service and to resolve any complaints as efficiently, effectively and politely as possible.

I take complaints very seriously, your health and safety is paramount and we investigate them in a full and fair way and take great care to protect your confidentiality.

We learn from complaints to improve our care and service. I will never discriminate against patients who have made a complaint.

If you are not entirely satisfied with any aspect of my care or service please let me know as soon as possible.

If a patient complains on the telephone, via email or in person, I will listen to your complaint and may ask questions and for evidence to allow us to address your concerns fully and promptly.

I always offer an opportunity and free consultation to come in to discuss concerns and be reassessed and have colleagues on hand if needed for a second opinion.

After the re assessment; If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction within 24 hours or if you complain in writing, we will acknowledge it in writing within 3 working days and will aim to provide a full response in writing as soon as practicable.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Patients are encouraged to provide suggestions, compliments, concerns and complaints and we offer a range of ways to do it.

Patients are encouraged to discuss any concerns about treatment and service with their treating clinician [or alternate], or they can complete our customer feedback form.

Clinicians and staff can also use the feedback form to record any concerns and complaints about the quality of service or care to customers.

All complainants are treated with respect, sensitivity and confidentiality.

All complaints are handled without prejudice or assumptions about how minor or serious they are. The emphasis is on resolving the problem.

Patients and staff can make complaints on a confidential basis or anonymously if they wish and be assured that their identity will be protected.

Patients, clinicians and staff will not be discriminated against or suffer any unjust adverse consequences as a result of making a complaint about standards of care and service.

MANAGING COMPLAINTS

All clinicians and staff are expected to encourage patients to provide feedback about the service, including complaints, concerns, suggestions and compliments.

Clinicians and staff are expected to attempt resolution of complaints and concerns at the point of service, wherever possible and within the scope of their role and responsibility.

RESOLUTION

The process of resolving the problem will include:

an expression of regret to the consumer for any harm or distress suffered;

an explanation or information about what is known, without speculating or blaming others;

considering the problem and the outcome the consumer is seeking and proposing a solution; and confirming that the patient is satisfied with the proposed solution.

If the problem is resolved, clinicians and staff are expected to complete the Suggestion for Improvement form to record feedback from patients.

Our clinicians and staff will consult with their manager if addressing the problem is beyond their responsibilities.

IF THE COMPLAINT IS NOT RESOLVED

Complaints that are not resolved at the point of service, or that are received in writing and require follow up, are regarded as formal complaints.

Our clinicians and staff refer complaints to [complaints manager/clinical director] if:

After attempting to resolve the complaint, they do not feel confident in dealing with the complainant; or

The outcome the complainant is seeking is beyond the scope of their responsibilities Or;

They or the complainant believe the matter should be brought to the attention of someone with more authority and their insurers.

If the complaint is not resolved at the point of service, clinicians and staff are expected to provide the complainant with the formal complaints policy.