

## Newson Health's Complaint Management Process

### Receiving and acting on a patient complaint

The purpose of this policy is for patients who use services, or others acting on their behalf, to be assured that:

- their comments and feedback are listened to and acted on effectively.
- they will not be discriminated against for raising a complaint.

The aim of this policy and accompanying procedures is that a complaint raised made by patients or their relatives is listened to and acted upon effectively by:

- having systems in place to deal with comments and complaints, including providing patients who use our services with information about that system.
- supporting patients who use our services and their nominated representatives to make comments or complaints.
- considering fully, responding appropriately, and resolving, where possible, any comments or points of feedback.

Newson Health Limited has established processes for dealing with the complaints, irrespective of its nature, which complies with the [Health and Social Care Act 2008](#).

Our ultimate objective is to give our patients the highest possible standard of service and we try to deal with any complaint as quickly as possible.

Patients are asked that in the event of any feedback or matter they wish to discuss that this is forwarded to the clinic management team by emailing [newsona@newsonhealth.co.uk](mailto:newsona@newsonhealth.co.uk).

We shall acknowledge complaints within 5 working days and aim to have considered the complaint within 10 working days of the date when it was raised.

We shall offer an explanation, or a meeting as appropriate. If there are any delays in this process, we will keep the patient informed.

When we consider a complaint, we shall aim to:

- Find out what happened and what went wrong.
- Make it possible for the complainant to discuss the problem with those concerned.
- Make sure the complainant receives an apology where appropriate.
- Identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.

At the end of the investigation the response and resolution will be discussed with the patient in detail, either in person or in writing.

### Complaining on behalf of someone else

If the complaint is received on behalf of someone else the rules of patient confidentiality will be kept.

A note signed by the person concerned will be needed unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this to allow the issue to be investigated.

Our Newson Health complaint process has 3 key stages:

1. Local resolution
2. Appeals to senior management
3. Appeals to Chief Clinical Officer & Operations Director/ Clinical Directors

#### Stage 1- Local resolution

All complaints, whether written or verbal, are documented either by the member of staff receiving the complaint or the operations management team. If the member of staff is not capable of resolving the complaint, written details are passed onto the operations management team. Staff will always escalate a complaint if it meets the criteria set by the Clinical Directors.

#### Stage 2- Appeal to senior management

The preferred outcome is local resolution of a complaint however if the complainant is dissatisfied after the initial response, they may direct their complaint to the senior management team. If the complainant is still not satisfied with the stage 2 responses, they may then direct their complaint to the Clinical Directors or Chief Clinical Director & Operations Director of Newson Health Limited.

#### Stage 3- Appeal to Clinical Directors or Chief Clinical Director & Operations Director

The Clinical Directors or Chief Clinical Director & Operations Director will review all aspects of the complaint and respond by either confirming the findings and actions taken in stages 1 and 2 of the process, or they may reach a separate conclusion as to the appropriate outcome.

## Payments and refunds

In some cases, it may be appropriate to waive fees or offer a refund. This must be authorised by the management team. If a complaint indicates their intent to start litigation, then a compensation payment is not appropriate.

## Complaints of a clinical nature

The management team will inform the Clinical Directors of a clinical or serious complaint made against a Newson Health Clinician by a patient. Similarly, the Newson Health Clinician should always inform the management team and Clinical Directors of any complaints made against them.

If the complaint is about the management team or administrative staff, then the manager must follow the procedure and inform the Clinical Directors or Chief Clinical Officer & Operations Director.

## Accessibility of Comments and Complaints Policy

Staff will make the Complaints Policy accessible to patients and relatives:

- (a) A copy of this Complaints Policy is available on our website [www.newsonhealth.co.uk](http://www.newsonhealth.co.uk)
- (b) Staff will provide help to any patient or relative of any patient who wishes to make a complaint.
- (c) A copy of the Complaints Policy will be provided to any patient or patient's relative on request.

## Staff Training on Complaints Management

All staff (including those with practising privileges) will receive a copy of the Complaints Policy and will receive training on management of complaints and complaints handling process at the time of induction.

## Definition of a Complaint

- A complaint is an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction about any matter reasonably connected with the services provided by a member of staff the administrative or clinical staff.
- All complaints, either written or made orally, are registered in our complaints system.
- A complaint which is resolved within 10 working days will be marked 'closed' or 'resolved' on the Complaints Register.
- If we don't hear back from the complainant within 10 working days having attempted to resolve the complaint, we will conclude the matter resolved.
- Where the complaint relates to a breach of statutory regulations and the organisation is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) patients can contact the CQC.

## Timescales for Handling and Investigating Complaints

All complaints will receive oral or written acknowledgement within 5 working days of receipt.

If attempts to contact the complainant orally or written to ascertain more detail are unsuccessful or we receive no reply to our written acknowledgement we will deem the matter resolved after 10 working days.

If full resolution is not possible within 10 working days, we will email the complainant explaining the reason for the delay and a full response will be made within 20 working days of the original date of complaint.

## Notification of Outcome of Complaint

Complainants will be notified of the outcome of their complaint and any actions taken as a result of the complaint immediately upon conclusion of the process and within the timescales given above.

## Complaints Register

A register will be kept of complaints containing the following information:

- (a) Date of complaint
- (b) Name of complainant
- (c) Nature of complaint and details of staff involved
- (d) Action taken to investigate the complaint
- (e) Outcome and action taken as a result of the complaint
- (f) Date of full response to complainant

The register shall be kept for 5 years from the date of the last entry.

## Records of Complaints

All correspondence relating to a complaint will be kept for 5 years.

A register will be kept of all complaints including appropriate details, including outcome.

Complaints will be reported to the Newson Health Group Board monthly. The report produced for the Board of Newson Health Group will detail the nature and outcomes of complaints. The Board will be made aware of:

- (a) Number of complaints received
- (b) Nature of complaints and details of staff involved

- (c) Resolutions of complaints
- (d) Actions taken in response to complaints
- (e) Details of any complaints relating to Members of staff which have progressed to litigation or to GMC hearings.