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# The Clinic Cheshire.

## Complaints Policy

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## **1. Introduction**

A complaint is an expression of displeasure or dissatisfaction with a person, service received, or item purchased. At The Clinic Cheshire we recognise the need to have a policy in place should such complaints arise.

We strive to provide high quality services that are safe and effective, should we not meet this, we are committed to resolving issues or concerns about the service to ensure the patient is satisfied.

We believe that we are able to learn from all complaints and continually improve the quality of the care and service that we deliver.

This policy outlines the commitment to treat all complaints and concerns about the service provided.

Information about the complaint process is available to all patients so that are able to raise any concerns.

## **2. Scope**

This policy is not standing alone and should be read and adhered to in conjunction with The Clinic Cheshire Ltd other policies and procedure documents.

The policy applies to complaints made against services or staff at The Clinic Cheshire. It applies to all directors and employees of The Clinic Cheshire Ltd irrespective of age, race, colour, religion, disability, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation or marital status, domestic circumstances, social and employment status, HIV status, gender or trade union membership.

## **3. Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to:

- a. Establish a clear process within complaints so that they can be managed and properly investigated in a non-judgemental, appropriate and timely manner.
- b. To enable staff at The Clinic Cheshire to sympathetically manage complaints at a local level.
- c. Ensure that patients know how to complain.
- d. Ensure that patients feel confident that their complaint will be dealt with seriously, investigated appropriately and findings will be learned from.

e. Compliance with this policy will ensure that patients will meet the standards of the:

- Regulations of the Healthcare and Social care Act 2008 (regulated activities) Regulations 2014
- Independent sector code of practice management of patient complaints.

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

The manager is responsible for investigating complaints.

All staff will incident report all complaints and inform the manager.

We are all responsible for;

- Treating a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- Deal with each complaint promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- Respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- Learning from complaints, so that we can improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- Formally write their complaint in writing to The Clinic Cheshire within 8 weeks of the issue arising.
- Raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff
- Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date.

#### **5. Who can make a complaint?**

A complaint can be made by a person who has directly been affected by an omission or action.

A complaint can be made on behalf of a person following them using the service.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally and at times are a result from unrealistic expectations of treatment. Therefore, in the first instance we have adopted a complaint prevention stature –

- Ensure clients have a realistic expectation of treatment results
- Ensure clients are aware of potential benefits and risks

## 6. Complaints process

A complaint can be made by:

- a) By telephone or in person and made verbally. In any case a written record of the complaint that describes the issues requiring investigation must be kept. This must be agreed with the complainant and ideally signed.
- b) In writing either by email or by letter. This should be addressed to the manager.

There is a two-stage process:

### Stage 1 - Local Resolution

A complaint made at the facility within eight weeks of the event or as soon as the matter first came to the attention of the complainant, a written acknowledgement letter or email will be provided by 10 working days upon receipt of the complaint, unless the full response can be sent within 15 days.

The Clinic Cheshire will offer to discuss the complaint at a time agreed with the patient, either by telephone, face to face meeting, letters or e-mail.

The Clinic Cheshire will inform the client about how the complaint will be handled and the likely time that the investigation will take to be completed. If they do not wish to discuss the complaint, we will still inform them of the expected timescale for completing the process.

The overall process for the final response should be completed 8 Weeks of receiving the complaint.

### *Formal stage: Written Response:*

If the complainant wishes to formally raise their concerns, they must put their complaint in writing to The Clinic Cheshire. Once the investigation into the concerns has been completed by the company director, a letter acknowledging all points raised by the complainant will be sent. The response should include an explanation of how the complaint has been considered, the conclusions reached in respect of each specific part of the complaint, details of any necessary remedial action and any actions taken or will be taking as a result of the complaint.

The complainant should be informed at the end of the letter how to access the next stage of the complaints process if the complainant remains unsatisfied.

### Stage 2 – Independent Review

If the complainant is dissatisfied, they should have the option to escalate their complaint to the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS)

Complaints to ISCAS should be in writing within 6 months of the final response letter received

at stage 1

### **Recording Complaints**

The complaint will be kept on file/ database and maintained to include all details of the investigation and outcome by the manager.

The Clinic Cheshire will hold a comprehensive record of any investigations including correspondence such as emails, letters and telephone discussions with time and date stamps where possible.

Any actions implemented to improve the service as a consequence of a complaint should be recorded.

### **7. Learning from Complaints**

The objective of the complaints procedure is not to apportion blame but to investigate the complaint with the aim to satisfy the complainant and learn from lessons for improvements in delivering a safe and responsive service.

Recommendations made as a result of the investigation or any findings made by the manager should be addressed accordingly.

### **8. Confidentiality**

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and The Clinic Cheshire maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint will be judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.