

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Purpose

This document outlines the policy at HUTT CITY HEALTH CENTRES related to how complaints are appropriately managed and reported.

Standards

- Minimum regulatory requirement
- Recommended best practice

Scope

All staff employed at HUTT CITY HEALTH CENTRES, AURICLE HEALTH Limited and/or associated organisations.

HCHC Complaints Officer

Name: Pauline Hazeldine Role: Practice Manager

In absence of Practice Manager, issues related to complaints should be raised to the Clinical Director: Dr Philip Harrison

Policy

- Complaints may be received verbally (face to face, or by telephone) or in writing. An oral complaint should always be responded to by the recipient with a low key apology that there is a problem and, if appropriate, an attempt to rectify the problem (e.g. checking when a consultation is likely to take place, if delay is the problem.)
- If the complainant wishes to take the matter further, it is best to remove the issue from the public areas of the practice by taking the complainant to see the Practice Manager or Complaints Officer or the patient's doctor in a separate room.
- The patient should also be informed of their right to the Health and Disability Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner. They should be issued with the relevant pamphlet in order to help them access either Commissioner or their delegated local advocate.
- If the complainant wishes to make a formal complaint then the complaint must be documented. This may be done by the patient or by the person interviewing the patient about the complaint. The complainant should be told that the written complaint will be passed on to the Complaints Officer and that it will be acknowledged within five days.
- The complaint then goes immediately to the designated Complaints Officer, and will be acknowledged in writing within five working days. The Complaints Officer will follow the Complaints Procedure Flow Chart set out below.
- The complaint will then be passed onto the staff member's line manager to investigate.
- Complaints and all actions taken will be documented and the documentation retained by the Complaints Officer.
- Within ten working days of acknowledging a patient's complaint in writing, the Complaints Officer will decide whether or not to accept that the patient's complaint is justified; or if more than 20 working days is needed to investigate the complaint, the Complaints Officer will advise the patient that more time is required to make a decision and why that time is needed.

- After it has been decided whether or not to accept a complaint, the Complaints Officer will advise the patient of:
 - the reasons for any decision;
 - any actions that the practice proposes to take;
 - any appeal procedure that the practice has in place; and
 - the patient's right to complain to the Health and Disability Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner.

Document Management

Version	Date	Author	Status and Changes
1.0	Oct 2010	P J Harrison	
1.1	28 Jul 2015	L M Blackmore	
FINAL	Oct 2015	A Harrison	Review and edit for approval

Next review date: 2018

Responsibility of: Complaints Officer

Complaint Received



Acknowledge the complaint in writing

This must occur within 5 working days of receipt – unless resolved prior to this

- Include all information that is, or may be, relevant to the complaint:
- Include any relevant organisational and external complaint procedures. This includes the availability of:
 - Independent advocates provided under the Health and Disability Commissioner Act
 - The Health and Disability Commissioner and
 - The organisations internal complaints procedure



Investigate the Complaint

This must be done within 10 working days of giving written acknowledgement of the complaint

Decide either to:

- Accept that the complaint was justified
 - Determine how much more time is required to investigate it fully
 - If more than 20 working days are required inform the consumer and the reasons for it; or
- Not accept that it is justified



Inform the Client of this decision as soon as practicable

This must include:

- Reasons for the decision
- Any actions you propose to take
- Any appeal procedure you have in place

Note:

- If a speedy resolution of the complaint is achieved (within 5 working days of receiving the complaint) to the satisfaction of the consumer then the steps outlined here are not required
- Where the process takes more than a month, inform the client about the process on the complaint at intervals of not more than one calendar month