



Feedback and Complaints Procedure

We aim to provide you with the highest quality of care possible. If you have any complaints or concerns about the service that you have received from the doctors or staff working for this hospital, please let us know. We welcome all forms of feedback and use it to improve our services. We thank you for taking the time to help us to identify areas of concern, achieve resolution wherever possible and take action so that the same problems do not happen again.

Alpha Hospital Group will be pleased to deal with any complaint and welcomes all forms of feedback. When receiving services or care, you or any of your relatives or other representatives can:

- give feedback;
- make comments;
- raise concerns;
- make a complaint

Who can make a complaint?

A complaint can be made by you or someone representing you. We will accept complaints brought by third parties such as a friend, relative or an advocate as long as you have authorised the person to act on your behalf and provided your consent.

We are committed to making our services easy to use for all members of the community. We will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you to access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

Ways to provide feedback or make a complaint:

You can complain in person at the place where you have received care, treatment or advice, or where the incident that you want to complain about happened.

In person – ask to speak to Brooke Blackman, Operations Manager

In writing – some complaints may be easier to explain in writing – Please include your full name, date of birth, as much information as possible about what happened, where and when and how you would like it to be resolved. You can send your complaint to the Hospital for the attention of the Management Team via email at complaints@alphahospitalgroup.co.uk or by post to:

Alpha Hospital Group
Attn: Management Team
16 Carden Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1FX

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A member of the Management Team will explain the complaints process to you and make sure that your concerns are dealt with promptly. Our process is informed by guidance from [Health Improvement Scotland](#) and [NHS Model Complaints Handling Procedure](#).

We understand that you may feel frustrated or upset and want to feed that back to us. Please consider we have a responsibility to ensure the well-being of both our staff and clients. Therefore, we request that you treat those handling your concerns or complaints with respect. In some instances, the behaviour of certain individuals becomes unacceptable, particularly when it involves abusing our staff or undermining our policies. In such cases, we must take steps to safeguard our team. Additionally, we evaluate how such conduct affects our ability to perform our duties and offer services to others.

How long have I got to make a complaint?

We hope that most problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know **as soon as possible** – ideally within a matter of days or at most a few weeks – because this will enable us to establish what happened more easily. If it is not possible to do that, please let us have details of your complaint:

- Within six months of the incident that caused the problem; or
- Within six months of discovering that you have a problem, provided that is within 12 months of the incident.

What issues can I complain about?

Below is a list of issues a complaint may be related to. This list is not exhaustive:

- care and/or treatment in respect of our medical/clinical service;
- lack of information and clarity about services.
- delays in treatment or responses;
- inadequate standard of service;
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff;
- environmental or domestic issues;
- operational and procedural issues;
- a failure to follow the appropriate process;

What can't I complain about?

There are some situations or complaints that may not be for Alpha Hospital Group to investigate and attempt to resolve. The complaints procedure does not apply to the following complaints or circumstances:

- a complaint arising out of an alleged failure to comply with a request for information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002(a);
- a complaint about which the person making the complaint has commenced legal proceedings (whether or not these have concluded), or where Alpha Hospital Group reasonably considers that legal proceedings are so likely that it would not be appropriate to investigate the complaint under this procedure; and

- a complaint, the subject matter of which has previously been investigated and responded to by Alpha Hospital Group.
- to consider a routine first-time request for a service;
- a request for a second opinion in respect of care or treatment;
- matters relating to NHS care or treatment;
- matters relating to services not provided by Alpha Hospital Group.

What we shall do

Our complaints procedure is designed to make sure that we settle any complaints as quickly as possible. Our complaints handling procedure has two stages:

Stage 1 – Early Resolution

We shall acknowledge your complaint within five working days and aim to resolve as quickly as possible. Some complaints require additional enquiries and investigations. If required, we aim to have investigated your complaint within 10 working days of the date you raised it. We shall then be in a position to offer you an explanation, or a meeting with the people involved. When we investigate your complaint, we shall aim to:

- find out what happened and what went wrong;
- make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned; if you would like this
- make sure you receive an apology, where appropriate;
- identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again;

At the end of the investigation your complaint will be discussed with you in detail, either in person or in writing. If we cannot resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why. If you do not agree with our response, we will provide suggestions for next steps. Next steps may include moving your complaint to Stage Two.

Stage 2 – Investigation

Stage two focuses on complaints that were not resolved in Stage One and those that require additional investigations.

During this stage, we aim to:

- acknowledge your complaint within five working days;
- discuss your complaint with you to understand your continued dissatisfaction and learn what outcome you are looking for; and
- provide a full response with outcomes and response to your resolution within 20 working days. We will inform you if our investigation requires more time and will keep you updated on the progress and revised time limits.

Our response will include:

- show that staff have looked into your complaint;
- reply to all the points you made;
- offer you an apology if things have gone wrong;
- explain what action has been taken or will be taken to stop what you complained about happening again;

- if necessary, explain why Alpha Hospital Group cannot do anything more about certain aspects of your complaint;
- offer you the chance to talk to a member of staff if there is anything in the letter you don't understand.

Expectations for outcomes:

The complaints procedure at Alpha Hospital does not guarantee financial compensation as an outcome. We would recommend seeking an independent, legal professional who can advise on compensation requests.

If we have fully investigated your complaint and you're unhappy with our response, or the way we handled your complaint, you can ask the **Independent Complaints Reviewer** to look at it.

The Independent Complaints Reviewer can't normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our feedback and complaints procedure;
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than 12 months ago;
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.
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Information about the Independent Complaints Reviewer

The Independent Complaints Reviewer is the final stage for complaints about Alpha Hospital Group. If you remain dissatisfied with Alpha Hospital Group after its feedback and complaints procedure has concluded, you can ask the Independent Complaints Reviewer to look at your complaint. They cannot normally look at complaints:

- where you have not gone all the way through Alpha Hospital Group's feedback and complaints procedure;
- more than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; or
- that have been or are being considered in court.
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The Independent Complaints Reviewer contact details are:

Dorothy Armstrong, ICR@daprofessional.net

Healthcare Improvement Scotland is the regulator for independent healthcare services across Scotland and can accept complaints at any time from a complainant. Contact details are:

Healthcare Improvement Scotland

Independent Healthcare Team

Gyle Square, 1 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9EB

T: 0131 623 4342

E: hcis.clinicregulation@nhs.scot

Help us get it right

We constantly try to improve the service we offer. Please let us know when you think we have done something well or if you have any suggestions as to how we can do something better.