



ALPHA  
HOSPITAL GROUP

## PATIENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Making a complaint

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 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.

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.

The Complaints Team will be pleased to deal with any complaint and welcomes all forms of feedback. A member of the Complaints 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. 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.

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;

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.

### **Ways to provide feedback or make a complaint:**

***In person*** – ask to speak to Reception

***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](mailto:complaints@alphahospitalgroup.co.uk) or by post to

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

### **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.

### **Complaining on behalf of someone else**

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we have to know that you have his or her permission to do so. A note signed by the person concerned will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness ) of providing this.

**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](mailto: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.

**Alpha Hospital Group**

Address:

16 Carden Place, Aberdeen, AB10 1FX

Telephone: 01224 232428

**Comments, and suggestions:**

[info@alphahospitalgroup.co.uk](mailto:info@alphahospitalgroup.co.uk)

**Complaints:**

[complaints@alphahospitalgroup.co.uk](mailto:complaints@alphahospitalgroup.co.uk)