

# The Edinburgh Practice

## Complaints Policy

### **Introduction**

The Edinburgh Practice aims to provide a high level of care across all services. The practice is committed to ensuring that those who use its services are readily able to access information about how to make a complaint and that issues raised are dealt with promptly and fairly. We ensure that the care of people who make complaints about our services will not be adversely affected because they have complained. Indeed, information derived from complaints provides an important source of data to help us to make improvements in our service provision. Complaints' correspondence is stored and recorded separately from clinical records.

The key objectives of this policy are:

- Each complaint is investigated promptly, fairly and thoroughly.
- Lessons are identified and action taken when appropriate.
- Communication with the complainant is timely, suitable, satisfactory and that appropriate remedial actions are taken.
- Complainants have confidence that their concerns are heard and addressed.

### **Making a suggestion:**

We have a dedicated Quality Improvement Officer, Ms Pauline Bannerman, to ensure that we continuously focus upon our quality standards.

Should you feel more comfortable suggesting an improvement to our service rather than making a formal complaint, you can do so by emailing us at [improvements@edinburghpractice.com](mailto:improvements@edinburghpractice.com) or alternatively, you may leave a suggestion in our suggestion box which is located in all our reception areas. We welcome feedback and suggestions from everyone availing of our services.

### **Who can complain?**

A complaint may be made by a service user, a person acting on behalf of a service user, or anyone who has been affected by any action/omission/decision of The Edinburgh

Practice. Where a complainant is acting on behalf of a service user, written consent must be obtained from the service user before a response can be sent. Where the service user is a child without capacity, a complaint may be made by the parent or guardian. Where the service user has died, the complaint may be made by the named next of kin or by a person nominated by the named next of kin. In other circumstances where the complainant may have difficulty complaining on their own behalf or have other requirements (e.g. vulnerable children and adults, or people with mental health difficulties) management will review each situation in light of current legal requirements and offer help and support to a complainant as appropriate.

### **How you can make a complaint**

You can complain:

- In person
- By telephone
- Through a member of our staff
- Through an advocate or representative
- Email or Letter

*Should a complaint be made orally, we may ask that you please put the complaint in writing for logging purposes. If you are unable to put this in writing, a member of the team may log the complaint on your behalf with the points raised and will provide you with a copy of the complaint to review to ensure all information is accurate.*

### **Responsibility**

Our Practice Manager, Ms Kelly Alexander, has overall responsibility for handling complaints made about administrative or operating services at The Edinburgh Practice.

Our Clinical Lead, Dr Julia Hannon, has overall responsibility for handling complaints made about clinical services received.

We will provide as far as is reasonably practical:

- any help you need to understand the complaints procedure; or
- advice on where you may get that help.

### **How we handle complaints**

We will acknowledge a complaint as soon as possible but certainly within three working days and give you the name and contact details of the person investigating it. We will keep you informed about the progress of the investigation. We aim to have all complaints resolved within 14 working days unless we agree a different time scale with

you. When we have finished investigating, we will either email or call you to discuss the outcome, and if requested, will write to you with:

- The complaint outcome
- Any action we have taken; and
- Our proposals to resolve your complaint.

### **Stage 1 – The Complaint**

Upon receiving the complaint, the appropriate member of the management team will either write to the complainant via email or letter or may arrange a telephone consultation. Management will take a record of the conversation for the complaint file and for monitoring purposes. At this stage, management will attempt to resolve the complaint. Should the complainant remain dissatisfied, the complainant must refer to stage 2.

### **Stage 2 – Further Complaint**

Should the complainant remain dissatisfied with the outcome of their initial complaint, then the client can opt to write a letter or email to The Edinburgh Practice. Where a complainant is unable to put the complaint down in writing, a member of staff at The Edinburgh Practice will take note of the complaint for you and will read the information provided by you back to you or will send a copy of the complaint to you via email or post.

The complaint will then go to the Senior Management Team for review.

### **Stage 3 – Further Investigation and Final Outcome**

Senior Management at The Edinburgh Practice will step in should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint and will do so by reviewing all information gathered by both the staff involved with the complaint and the complainant.

Senior Management will notify the complainant in writing to either request further information or to notify the complainant of the decision and reasoning for the decision. Senior management will aim to reach out to the complainant with feedback within 14 days of the further review being made.

The Senior Management Team's decision is final.

### **Redress**

Should management feel that the complainant is upheld, redress will be offered in compensation. In order for redress to be offered, management will make their decision based on inconvenience incurred by the complainant.

Examples of redress include:

- An apology, either written or verbal from the co-ordinator, staff member of consultant.
- A report outlining how we will be improving or developing our policies/procedures where the complainant helped bring to our attention.
- Agreement to review employees/associates work performance.

- In exceptional circumstances, financial compensation may be offered at the discretion of the Clinical Director.

### **Recording and Monitoring Complaints**

All complaints will be recorded and kept on encrypted electronic files held by Senior Management. Complaints will be regularly reviewed and monitored.

### **Time limits**

You should complain as soon as you can after the date on which the event occurred or came to your notice. If you complain more than 6 months later past the initial occurrence or event, we may be unable to investigate the complaint appropriately.

### **Further steps**

Once we have dealt with your complaint, if you are not happy with the outcome you can refer your complaint to Healthcare Improvement Scotland at:

Programme Manager  
Independent Healthcare Services Team  
Healthcare Improvement Scotland  
Gyle Square  
1 South Gyle Crescent  
Edinburgh  
EH12 9EB

**Tel:** 0131 623 4342 (10am-2pm, Monday to Friday)

**Email:** [his.ihsregulation@nhs.scot](mailto:his.ihsregulation@nhs.scot)

More information on how to make a complaint about The Edinburgh Practice or our services with Healthcare Improvement Scotland can be found here: [http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our\\_work/inspecting\\_and\\_regulating\\_care/independent\\_healthcare/ihc\\_complaints\\_procedure.aspx](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/inspecting_and_regulating_care/independent_healthcare/ihc_complaints_procedure.aspx)