



THE  
**BARIATRIC**  
GROUP

## **Complaints Procedure**

It is the policy of The Bariatric Group to be open and transparent with our patients, their relatives and our stakeholders.

We aim to ensure all our patients receive the best quality care possible and to meet their needs with sensitivity and empathy.

In the event of a patient's or stakeholder's dissatisfaction, we will endeavour to investigate and resolve any issues to the satisfaction of all parties.

### Aims

- To be polite and helpful at all times
- Deal with the complaint in a timely and efficient manner
- Inform the patient/client of the progress of their complaint
- Acknowledge any mistakes we have made and put matters right where possible or refer onto an organisation that may assist if we cannot deal with complaint and put policies in place to ensure service improvement
- Be consistent in our dealings with any complaints and aim for an early and satisfactory resolution

For the purpose of this policy:

A concern is defined as an informal verbal expression of concern about any aspect of service whilst in receipt of or following care or service.

A complaint is defined as a formal expression of dissatisfaction usually in writing about any aspect of service whilst in receipt of or following care or service.

A client who may experience dissatisfaction is defined as anyone who is enquiring, consulting, considering or receiving treatment or care.

A relative or advocate of the person enquiring, considering, consulting or receiving treatment or care with that persons consent.

### Timing of complaint

A patient may make a complaint within 6 months of encountering dissatisfaction. Beyond 6 months any complaint will be reviewed on an individual basis.

### Stages of the resolution process

1. A client makes a complaint either verbally or written.

If verbal the person to whom the dissatisfaction has been expressed should acknowledge the dissatisfaction and apologise and establish the events leading up to the dissatisfaction. A senior member of staff, either clinical or business depending on the type of dissatisfaction, should be informed and involved. The events leading to the dissatisfaction and the outcome should be documented in the patient's notes.

If the dissatisfaction is not resolved the client may wish to make the complaint formal, in writing.

In the event of a formal written complaint the client should be informed that they will receive an acknowledgement of their dissatisfaction within 2 days from the designated manager as per National Minimum Standards (DOH 2002).

The acknowledgement and written response should contain the following basics;

- Acknowledgement of receipt of complaint
- Apology that dissatisfaction has occurred
- List the main reasons of the dissatisfaction/complaint
- Actions to be taken following acknowledgement

In accordance with National Minimum Standards a full written response should be made to the client within 20 working days or a letter explaining the reason for a delay and a full response made within 5 days of a conclusion being reached.

Encourage the client to meet face to face at the earliest opportunity, where possible, to ensure an understanding of the nature of their dissatisfaction and to ensure a swift resolution.

## 2. Investigation

If required a full investigation of the complaint will be managed by the appropriate person and written responses from those members of the team involved will be required.

The designated person responsible for managing complaint shall maintain a record of each complaint which will include details of any investigation, the outcome and any actions taken.

The flow of correspondence with the client will continue until the dissatisfaction is resolved.

The Group Director and Medical Director have responsibility for ensuring the receipt of complaint is acknowledged within 2 working days and for overseeing the ultimate resolving of the complaint.

## 3. Legal Liability

If the client indicates that they wish to pursue legal proceedings they should be informed that this process is separate from the complaints resolution process and the company solicitor would be advised.