

Complaints Procedure

Use this procedure to manage all complaints. If possible, resolve concerns informally in person or over the phone before they reach the stage of a formal complaint.

The complaints officer manages the complaints procedure, unless they have a [conflict of interest](#).

Managing a complaint

See also [Complaints](#)

Complaints may be received in person, by phone, email, or in writing. If the complainant is unable to visit the practice in person to discuss their complaint, arrange an online meeting.

Update the complaints register at each step, or if progress is made. These are the mandatory timeframes specified by the Code, but you can resolve complaints or communicate progress to the complainant at any stage in this process. There should never be more than one month between your communications with the complainant.

Keep all identifying complaint details confidential in accordance with the [Health Information Privacy Code 2020](#).

Step:	Actions:
Complaint made	1. Receive the complaint: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refer the complaint to the complaints officer.• Ask the person to complete the complaints form, or transcribe verbal complaints as accurately as you can. Clarify their concerns and ask what kind of resolution they are looking for.• If possible, check the person is happy with what you have written.
	2. Document the complaint: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter details of the complaint into the complaints register.• Advise the staff member/s involved.• Advise senior management of serious complaints as soon as possible.
Within 5 working days of receiving complaint	3. Acknowledge complaint in writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer the complainant the opportunity to discuss their concern in person, either with or without the staff member involved.• Advise them of their right to bring a support person or advocate to all meetings.

Within 10 working days of sending acknowledgement 4. **Investigate the complaint:**

- Gather relevant information.
- Talk to the complainant and the person who is the subject of the complaint about what happened.
- Interview any other relevant people.

5. **Decide whether you accept that the complaint is justified, or not.**

Let the complainant know:

- if more time is needed to investigate
- if more than an additional 20 days will be needed.

Within 20 working days of sending acknowledgement 6. **Communicate your progress to the complainant.**

days of sending acknowledgement

[If you have reached a decision](#)

[If you have not yet reached a decision](#)

Give clear, honest information in accordance with our [open disclosure](#) policy.

20+ working days 7. **Keep the complainant updated:**

- Provide an update on progress at least once every 4 weeks.
 - Write to report your findings once you have reached a decision (follow **If you have reached a decision** in step 6).
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