



## London Heart Clinic - How to Contact Us to Make a Complaint

If you have a complaint or concern regarding our services, we encourage you to reach out. Your feedback helps us improve our services and provide better care. Below are the ways to contact us:

### 1. By Email

- **Email Address:** admin@londonheart.clinic
- Please include details of your complaint, your contact information, and any preferred contact times in your message.
- We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within **2 working days** and provide a full response within **28 days**.

### 2. By Phone

- **Contact Number:** 0203 330 0033
- You may speak to a member of our staff directly. They will assist you and, if necessary, connect you with the relevant team member or manager.
- Our front-line team will address any immediate concerns and assist with documenting your complaint.

### 3. By Mail

- You may also send a letter detailing your complaint to our physical address:
  - **London Heart Clinic**
  - Unit 1 Manhattan Business Park, Westgate, W5 1UP

### 4. Independent Complaint Adjudication Services

- For cases that require external arbitration, we participate in the Independent Healthcare Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS).
- **ISCAS Contact Information:**
  - 70 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1EU

If you need further assistance or information on our complaints process, please feel free to contact us directly through any of the above methods. Thank you for your feedback and for helping us improve our services.



# LONDON HEART CLINIC

## COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCESS

Policy No	C004
Responsible Person	Anika Jivraj
Date Issued	Jan 2024
Next Review Date	Every two years
Authorised by	
Version No	03



Title	<b>Complaint Policy and Process</b>
Author	
Responsible Person	Anika Jivraj
Authorised	Anika Jivraj
Issue Date	Jan 2024
Review Date	Every two years unless review required earlier
Policy No and Version	C004 Version 03
References	GMC Good Medical Practice 2013; DoH Listening Responding Improving; CQC Fundamental Standards
Appendix	1 to 4
Scope	All individuals in the employ of this establishment <i>(‘employ’ means any person who is employed, self-employed, volunteer, working under practising privileges or contract of service with this establishment)</i>

## Complaints Policy and Process

### Aim

To ensure that all patient concerns and complaints are dealt with promptly with due care and consideration, resulting in satisfactory conclusions and improvement in delivery of care where appropriate.

### Policy

LHC accepts the rights of patients (and their relatives or representatives if appropriate) to make complaints and to register comments and concerns about the services received, and further accept that they (the patients) should find it easy to do so. LHC welcomes complaints and looks upon them as opportunities to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services.

This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by patients and their relatives, carers and advocates are taken seriously.

The policy is not designed to apportion blame, to consider the possibility of negligence or to provide compensation. It is not part of the company’s disciplinary policy.

This policy ensures that a duty of candour is accepted and delivered by all clinicians, support and administrative staff.

LHC believes that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints leads to an aggravation of problems, service user dissatisfaction and possible litigation. LHC supports the idea that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted at a local level between just the complainant and the company.

### Aim of the Complaints Procedure

LHC aims to ensure that its complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented and that patients feel confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.



*Specifically it aims to ensure that:*

- Patients and their representatives are aware of how to complain and that LHC provides easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints.
- A named person will be responsible for the administration of the procedure.
- Every complaint is acknowledged within 2 working days.
- All complaints are investigated and responded to in writing within 28 days of being made.
- Patients (and their representative if appropriate) will be updated on the progress of the investigation if the 28 working days cannot be met.
- Complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively, with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to both service users and staff.

### **Responsibilities**

The registered manager is responsible for following through complaints for the company. All complaints are reviewed at the Clinical Governance Committee meetings.

### **Complaints Procedure**

#### **Verbal complaints**

LHC accepts that all verbal complaints, no matter how seemingly unimportant, must be taken seriously.

Front-line care and administration staff who receive a verbal complaint are expected to seek to solve the problem immediately. If they cannot solve the problem immediately, they should offer to get their line manager to address the problem.

Staff are expected to remain polite, courteous, sympathetic and professional to the complainant. They are taught that there is nothing to be gained by adopting a defensive or aggressive attitude.

At all times in responding to the complaint, staff are encouraged to remain calm and respectful.

Staff should not accept blame, make excuses or blame other staff.

If the complaint is being made on behalf of the patient by a relative or other representative (advocate), it must first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the patient, especially if confidential information is involved. (It is very easy to assume that the advocate has the right or power to act for the service user when they may not). If in doubt it should be assumed that the patient's explicit permission is needed prior to discussing the complaint with the advocate.

After talking the problem through, the manager or member of staff dealing with the complaint will suggest a course of action to resolve the complaint. If this course of action is acceptable then the member of staff should clarify the agreement with the complainant (advocate) and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (i.e. through another meeting or by letter) and the patient.

If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable to the complainant or the patient, then the member of staff or manager will ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing to the registered manager. The complainant should be given a copy of the company's complaints procedure if they do not already have one.

Details of all verbal and written complaints must be recorded in the Complaints Register and the patient's file.

### **Serious or written complaints**



**Preliminary steps:**

When LHC receives a written complaint it is passed to the named complaints manager who records it in the Complaint Register and sends an acknowledgment email/letter within 2 working days to the complainant (if the complaint is received via email then the acknowledgement is returned via email and likewise for a letter)

The manager also includes a leaflet detailing LHC' procedure for the complainant.

If necessary, further details are obtained from the complainant; if the complaint is not made by the patient but on the patient's behalf, then consent from the patient, preferably in writing, must be obtained from the complainant

If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice could be sought from a legal advisor. If legal action is taken at this stage, any investigation by the organisation under the complaints procedure immediately ceases

*NOTE Where possible verbal communication should be started with the complainant as soon as possible. All verbal communication must be recorded in the complaint record.*

**Investigation of the complaint by LHC:**

Immediately on receipt of the complaint, the complaints manager will start an investigation and within 14 days should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned

If the issues are too complex to complete the investigation within 28 days, the complainant will be informed of any delays.

Where the complaint cannot be resolved between the parties, an arbitration service (LHC subscribe to the Independent Healthcare Sector Complaints Adjudication Service - ISCAS) will be used. ISCAS and its findings will be final to both parties. The cost of this will be borne by LHC.

**Meeting:**

If a meeting is arranged, the complainant will be advised that they may if they wish bring a friend or relative or a representative such as an advocate

At the meeting a detailed explanation of the results of the investigation will be given and also an apology if it is deemed appropriate (apologising for what has happened need not be an admission of liability)

Such a meeting gives the company management the opportunity to show the complainant that the matter has been taken seriously and has been thoroughly investigated.

**Follow-up action:**

After the meeting, or if the complainant does not want a meeting, a written account of the investigation will be sent to the complainant. This includes details of how to approach the Care Quality Commission if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome

The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting are recorded in the Complaint Book and any shortcomings in company procedures will be identified and acted upon



The company management / clinical governance committee formally reviews all complaints at least every three months as part of its quality monitoring and improvement procedures to identify the lessons learned.

### **Vexatious Complainers**

LHC takes seriously any comments or complaints regarding its service. However, there are service users who can be treated as vexatious complainers due to the inability of the company to meet the outcomes of the complaints, which are never resolved. Vexatious complainers need to be dealt with by the arbitration service in order that the time factor required to investigate repeatedly becomes less of a burden on the organisation, its staff and other service users.

They can share information with CQC but only when they feel it is appropriate. CQC will redirect individual complaints to them, and they will inform CQC about outcomes that point at regulatory failures.

### **Complaints that involve clinicians or other healthcare professionals**

Complaints made about the clinical care delivered at LHC are treated seriously. The manager will immediately seek advice from the medical director who will take advice from the GMC and/or the MDU or other indemnity organisation. The manager will work with the medical director to resolve the complaint. (Note: if the complaint is made about the medical director then the manager will share the complaint with another clinician).

### **Complaints that involve children**

Complaints involving children are to be treated seriously and investigated with care. If the complaint is of a safeguarding nature then the safeguarding lead must be contacted immediately and will lead the investigation.

### **Training**

The registered manager is responsible for organising and co-ordinating training on the complaints procedure.

All staff receive training in dealing with and responding to verbal and written complaints. The complaints policy and procedures are included in new staff members' induction training. In order to learn from mistakes, staff group meetings and supervisions are used to discuss formal complaint issues, in order that all staff can share and learn from the experiences.

### **External bodies**

LHC will give the contact details of both the regulator Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the Independent Healthcare Sector Complaints Adjudication (ISCAS) to all complainants in the clinic's Complaint Information leaflet "Listening, Responding and Improving"

The Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Citygate

Gallowgate

Newcastle Upon Tyne

NE1 4PA

Telephone 03000 616161

Independent Healthcare Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS)

70 Fleet Street

London

EC4Y 1EU



Appendices to this policy

Appendix 1 Patient Complaint Information leaflet

Appendix 2 Complaint holding letter

Appendix 3 Complaint record

Appendix 4 Complaint register



LONDON HEART CLINIC

Appendix 1

**Patient complaint information leaflet**





LONDON HEART CLINIC

Appendix 2

**Complaint holding letter**



Appendix 3

Patient Complaint Record

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Problem/complaint received by:.....	nature of complaint:
Date received: .....	Ref .....

Patient name:.....Patient No .....

Address.....

Telephone number:..... Best time of day to be contacted on phone:.....

If complaint is being made on behalf of the patient please note relationship to patient:.....

Contact number:..... Best time of day to be contacted on phone:.....

Nature of complaint / problem

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\*Signed by: ..... on .....

Referred to: ..... on ...../...../..... time:.....

*\*Please note: If a patient is unable to put his/her complaint in writing, please use this form to record the complaint and indicate that you are writing it on behalf of the patient and ask them to sign at the end of the statement to confirm it is accurate and you have permission to refer it on.*

