

A PATIENT'S GUIDE

# MAKING COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

# Introduction

HCA Healthcare UK is committed to delivering safe, high-quality, cost-effective healthcare. We will do our best to ensure the time you spend in our hospitals is as comfortable as possible and to provide you with excellent personal and professional care, but there may be times when your expectations are not met. We therefore appreciate all feedback regarding the care and service that you, your family or others experienced during your visit and this leaflet explains how we deal with concerns or complaints you may wish to raise.

# Patient satisfaction questionnaire

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we encourage our patients to provide feedback so that we can take into account your views and priorities and one way to do this is via our Patient Satisfaction Questionnaires.

We provide these Questionnaires to all inpatients and day-patients treated in our facilities or following an outpatient appointment. The feedback received from the surveys remains anonymous and is

reviewed monthly, as well as quarterly, and this information is shared throughout the organisation to help inform how we can improve.

We will respond to any concerns considerably, quickly and as effectively as possible. All comments and complaints are always taken seriously, regardless of their nature: such as medical, nursing, our accommodation, food or administration.

# Other ways of raising an issue or concern

We hope you find your stay at our facilities to be comfortable and that you do not have any concerns about the care you receive. If you do encounter any problems, however small, we ask that you let us know as soon as possible. Please highlight any concerns as soon as they arise to a member of staff, rather than waiting, so that we can try and resolve these in a timely fashion. You can provide feedback as follows:

## During your visit to our facility (outpatients/HCA Healthcare Primary Care Services)

Each facility has a centre manager, please ask to speak to them directly, or ask to see the senior person on site if the manager is not available if you have a concern. Where they are able to, they will resolve your concern immediately.

If you remain dissatisfied please see section below entitled 'The Complaints Process'.

## During your stay in hospital

Each area has a manager: please ask to speak to them directly as they will always be happy to help; or ask to see the senior person on duty. If you remain dissatisfied please see section below entitled 'The Complaints Process'.

## On your discharge from hospital

As previously outlined, you also have the opportunity to complete our Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire. Each questionnaire is reviewed and action is taken as required by each of our hospitals/ outpatient centres.

## After your discharge from hospital

Please write to the hospital's Chief Executive Officer of the relevant facility. The hospital's contact details can be found on the HCA UK website:

<https://www.hcahealthcare.co.uk/feedback-and-complaints>

# The complaints process

There may be occasions when you wish to express your concerns/complaint in writing. HCA UK's complaints policy ensures your concerns are investigated and that you are given a full reply. This guide outlines our patient complaints procedure.

Any complaint that we receive is treated in confidence. We undertake to investigate all complaints courteously and sympathetically and to keep you updated and provide a response as soon as our investigation is completed.

Complaints should be made within six months of the event to enable a fair and thorough response. If complaints are raised outside of this time period, you

may find the hospital are unable to look into your concerns as they are unable to conduct an effective investigation into the issues raised.

## What are the first steps?

Before making a complaint, it is important to establish what you may want to achieve.

**Under our complaints policy, we can:**

- Carry out an investigation and offer an explanation for what happened
- Take steps to help put the matters right and reassure you that we have done so.

## Our complaints procedure has three stages and involves the following people and/or organisations:

### 1. LOCAL RESOLUTION

Your complaint will be handled and responded to by the local HCA UK hospital's senior management team/Chief Executive Officer.

### 2. INTERNAL REVIEW

Your complaint will be reviewed by the HCA UK Group Chief Executive.

### 3. INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL ADJUDICATION

HCA UK is a subscriber member of the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS) who can undertake an external independent review of your complaint on your behalf.

# What happens if I make a verbal complaint?

## Informal complaint

If you make a verbal complaint to a member of staff, it is a good idea to make a note of when you did this and who you spoke to. The department manager/

staff member will attempt to resolve your complaint immediately and if this is not possible, the complaint will be further investigated.

# How do I make a written complaint?

## Stage 1 formal complaint

It is helpful to put all formal complaints in writing.

**Your email or letter should include:**

- Who or what has caused your concerns
- Where and when the events took place
- What action you have already taken, if any
- What outcome you want from your complaint.

The hospital/clinic Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge your complaint within three working days of receipt, unless a full reply can be sent within five working days of receiving it. All complaints are taken seriously and are handled openly and honestly in a bid to be fair to all concerned and to conclude matters to the satisfaction of all parties as soon as practically possible. All documentation will

be forwarded to the manager handling your complaint.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring your complaint is investigated fully and the hospital will provide you with a written response (via post or email) within 20 working days, or if the investigation is still ongoing provide a written update every 20 working days with an explanation of the reason for the delay.

As part of investigating your complaint, the Chief Executive Officer or a senior manager will offer a meeting with you (or a call) to help ensure we fully understand the issues you have raised and your desired outcome.

After the meeting, if no further action is proposed, the hospital will send you a full written response.

# What happens if I am not happy with the response?

Our aim is to deal with your complaint as quickly as possible. If you are not satisfied with our response, please do inform the hospital/clinic's Chief Executive Officer outlining why and they will try to resolve your outstanding concerns and reach a satisfactory conclusion for you.

It is always our intention to resolve complaints, but if you remain dissatisfied with the response, you can ask for an internal review as part of stage 2 of our complaints process.

# What does an internal review involve?

## Stage 2 formal complaint

The internal review (stage 2) is the responsibility of the Group Chief Executive Officer of HCA Healthcare UK. Please write to:

**HCA Healthcare UK**  
**Group Chief Executive Officer**  
**2 Cavendish Square**  
**London W1G 0PU**

If you are dissatisfied with the hospital/clinic's response, you can write to the Group Chief Executive Officer at the address above.

You will need to do this within six months of the date of the final local written stage 1 response.

You will receive an acknowledgment of our stage 2 review within three working days of receipt (unless a full reply can be sent within five working days). The Group Chief Executive Officer will ensure a comprehensive review is completed of your complaint. This will include a review of the correspondence and handling of the concerns you have raised at a hospital/clinic level. You will be offered a meeting (or a call) to help us in resolving your concerns. This review will either confirm the decisions and actions taken at stage 1 or offer an alternative solution.

You will receive a written response (via post or email) within 20 working days, or if the review is still ongoing we will provide a written update every 20 working days with an explanation of the reason for the delay until the matter is resolved.



# What happens if I'm still unhappy?

If you remain dissatisfied following the completion of the internal review of your complaint, you can request an independent external adjudication by the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS).

You can request an independent adjudication of HCA Healthcare UK's decision by writing to:

**Independent Sector Complaints  
Adjudication Service  
CEDR, 3rd Floor  
100 St. Paul's Churchyard  
London  
EC4M 8BU**

**[www.iscas.org.uk](http://www.iscas.org.uk)**

**Tel: 020 7536 6091**

**Email: [info@iscas.org.uk](mailto:info@iscas.org.uk)**

You will need to write to the ISCAS Secretariat within six months of the final decision of our internal review. You will need to clarify in writing which aspects of your complaint you wish to refer to adjudication and give your consent to the ISCAS adjudication process and the release of any relevant case and clinical records. The Secretariat will then inform us of your request for adjudication, and we will then send all the relevant information to the Secretariat as requested.

You will not have to pay a fee for this service as the costs are met by HCA Healthcare UK's ISCAS membership.

ISCAS will confirm with us if your complaint has completed stages 1 and 2 and then will request clarification from you that you are willing to agree to the terms of ISCAS. ISCAS will then appoint a Principal Adjudicator, who is independent of ISCAS and its membership, and who will agree the key points of your complaint with you.

They will provide a written acknowledgement to complainants of their request for independent external adjudication within three working days of receipt of the request.

ISCAS will keep you updated on the progress of the adjudication of your complaint and will do this, at a minimum, every 20 working days.

The adjudication process is intended to bring about a final resolution of the complaint for both parties. It is important that you understand the binding nature of the adjudication process:

- The finality of the decision by the adjudicator
- Any decision and/or goodwill gesture awarded by the adjudicator brings the complaint process to a close.

The Independent Adjudicator will consider a wide range of remedies, including asking the ISCAS provider member:

- to provide an explanation and apology, where appropriate

- to take action to put things right
- to share details of how the organisation has learnt from the complaint and any changes made as a result
- to offer a goodwill payment in recognition of shortfalls in complaint handling, inconvenience, distress, or any combination of these, up to a limit of £5,000. Please note that any goodwill payment awarded by the Independent External Adjudicator should take account of any claim that the ISCAS member has against the complainant (e.g. for unpaid hospital fees).

Please be assured that where any aspect of your complaint might give rise to a clinical negligence claim, your right to seek independent legal advice remains.

Do please note that any remedies or goodwill payments that have previously been offered at stage 1 and/or 2 will be rescinded if you should choose to proceed to Stage 3.

## What if my complaint is about the use of my data?

If you would like to raise concerns about the way your data has been used, you should contact our Data Protection team via email on [DPO@HCAHealthcare.co.uk](mailto:DPO@HCAHealthcare.co.uk)

The Data Protection team will look into your concerns and provide you with a response and resolution.

If you are dissatisfied with the response you may choose to escalate your concerns to the Information Commissioner's Office. <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/data-protection-complaints/>

# What happens if my healthcare provider is in Scotland?

If your complaint or concern is relating to care in Scotland, you can contact Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) at any point during or after your care.

As outlined above complainants will be encouraged in the first instance to try and resolve the relevant issue(s) through the service/provider's own complaints procedure.

HIS will also encourage complainants to use the providers and Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS) complaints processes.

HIS recognises the ISCAS complaints management framework in the independent healthcare sector as it operates a Complaints Code of Practice that sets out the standards which subscribers agree to meet when handling complaints about their services.

If you do not wish to do this, or if you are not satisfied with the outcome, then HIS will assess the complaint for investigation under their standards.

If you wish to raise your complaint to HIS, you can make your complaint in person, by phone, by email or in writing:

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

Call: 0131 623 4342

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

**For further information** please see:

[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)

## Questions

If you have any questions about the HCA Healthcare UK Complaints Policy, please contact the Chief Executive Officer at the relevant hospital/clinic.

Contact details can be found on the HCA UK website: [hcahealthcare.co.uk](http://hcahealthcare.co.uk)

Connect with us



## Our group

The Harley Street Clinic  
The Lister Hospital  
London Bridge Hospital  
The Portland Hospital  
The Princess Grace Hospital  
The Wellington Hospital  
The Wilmslow Hospital  
Private Care at Guy's  
HCA UK at University College Hospital  
The Christie Private Care  
The Harborne Hospital  
HCA UK Laboratories  
HCA UK Primary Care  
Sarah Cannon Research Institute

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