

Complaints Policy

Alchemy

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1. Reason for Policy

Clients must be able to expect a positive experience and good treatment outcome at Alchemy. In the event of a concern or complaint, patients have a right to be listened to and treated with dignity and respect. Alchemy views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has made the complaint. Good complaint handling is an important way of ensuring service users receive the service they are entitled to, therefore it is a vital component of the organisation's practice. Complaints are a valuable source of feedback; they provide an audit trail and can be an early warning of failures in service delivery. When handled well, complaints provide an opportunity to develop the service and organisation's reputation.

2. Policy Statement and Aims

We aim to provide a service that meets the needs of our patients and we strive for the highest standard of care. We welcome suggestions from service users about the safety and quality of service, treatment and care we provide.

We are committed to an effective and fair complaints system.

We support a culture of openness and willingness to learn from incidents, including complaints.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all service users and staff.

4. Procedure

How to make a complaint:

By Email: ,

By Letter: 17 Montgomery Street, East Kilbride, G74 4JS

In Person: Alchemy premises at the above address.

Alchemy's aim is to provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint. Staff will encourage patients to provide feedback about the service, including complaints, concerns, suggestions and compliments. The organisation will attempt to resolve any complaints and concerns at the point of service, wherever possible, and within the scope of their role and responsibility. A complaint may be made by any person who receives or has received services, or a person who is affected, or likely to be affected, by the action, omission or decision which is the subject of the complaint. Consequently, at Alchemy:

Service users are encouraged to provide suggestions, compliments, concerns and complaints and we offer a range of ways to do it.

Service users are encouraged to discuss any concerns about treatment and service with their treating clinician (or alternative), or they can complete our customer feedback form.

All complainants are treated with respect, sensitivity and confidentiality.

All complaints are handled without prejudice or assumptions about how minor or serious they are. The emphasis is on resolving the problem.

Service users can make complaints on a confidential basis or anonymously if they wish and be assured that their identity will be protected.

Service users will not be discriminated against or suffer any unjust adverse consequences because they have made a complaint about standards of care and service.

5. Managing complaints

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the care that Alchemy provides. All complaints must be made no later than 12 months after the date on which the matter that the subject of the complaint occurred on or, if later, the date on which the matter of the complaint came to the notice of the complainant. Alchemy will ensure that:

Our complaints procedure is made public so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.

All staff will know how to act/respond on receipt of a complaint.

All complaints are fully and fairly investigated in a timely manner.

Complaints, wherever possible, will be resolved and relationships repaired.

Information is gathered to help improve what we do.

Any member of staff who receives a complaint, whether by phone, in writing or in person, should:

Write down the facts of the complaint,

Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number,

Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure,

Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take,
Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant ' s own words, and
Document in complaint log book.

6. Complaint Resolution

All complaints will be acknowledged and, where possible, this will be in writing unless in exceptional circumstances where it may be verbal (if made verbally it must be followed up in writing as soon as is possible). The process of resolving the problem will include:

- an expression of regret to the consumer for any harm or distress suffered;
- an explanation or information about what is known, without speculating or blaming others;
- considering the problem and the outcome the consumer is seeking and proposing a solution;
- confirming that the service user is satisfied with the proposed solution.

If the problem is resolved, a record of suggestion for improvement to record service user feedback will be kept.

Complaints that are not resolved at the point of service, or that are received in writing and require follow up, are regarded as formal complaints. In the case of a formal complaint:

A full and thorough investigation into the complaint will be performed by Alchemy.

A written response to the complainant will be issued as promptly as possible detailing:

How the complaint has been considered,

A meaningful apology where it is due,

Reference to any records, documents or guidelines that have been considered,

Conclusion and evidence as to how the decision was reached, and

What has been done to put things right.

After attempting to resolve the complaint, if the complainant does not feel confident in how the complaint has been dealt with or the outcome the complainant is seeking is beyond the scope of the person dealing with the complaint ' s experience, the practitioner should seek advice from a more experienced practitioner or their insurer.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland can be contacted at any time at the details in section 10.

7. Responsibilities

Alchemy is responsible for the investigation and resolution of formal complaints, conducting risk assessments, liaising with complainants, maintaining a register of complaints and other feedback, providing regular reports on informal and formal complaints, and monitoring the performance of the complaints procedure. The organisation will take a proactive approach to complaint handling and make changes where complaints provide recommendations for changes in policy or procedures.

Alchemy will:

Ensure appropriate action is taken to resolve individual complaints,

Act on recommendations for improvement arising from complaints,

Ensure there is meaningful reporting on trends in complaints,

Ensure compliance and review of the complaints policy,

Notify insurers, and

Consult with professional registration bodies, and others where necessary.

8. Promoting Feedback

Information regarding Alchemy feedback and complaints processes and external complaints bodies that service users can contact, such as Health Improvement Scotland, is available for patients to access within the clinic and publicly on social media. This can also be provided on request.

9. Risk Assessment

After receiving a formal complaint, Alchemy will review the issue and decide what action should be taken, consistent with the risk management protocol.

Assessing Resolution Options

Formal complaints are normally resolved by direct negotiation with the complainant, but some complaints are better resolved with the assistance of an alternative disputes resolution provider.

Alchemy will sign post the complainant to an appropriate external body if:

There is a serious question about the adequacy and safety of a health practitioner;

The complaint raises complex issues that require external expertise, or

The complaint cannot be resolved internally to the service user ' s satisfaction.

Alchemy undertakes to signpost patients to approved (by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (Alternative Disputes

Resolution Service Provider [Citizens Advice] in accordance with The Alternative Disputes Resolution Regulations (2015) and undertakes to co-operate and comply with the recommendations made by Health Improvement Scotland who can be contacted 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.ihcregulation@nhs.scot

10. Timeframes

On receipt of a complaint, Alchemy will endeavour to acknowledge complaints in writing or in person within 48 hours.

The acknowledgment will provide contact details for the person who is handling the complaint, how the complaint will be dealt with and how long it is expected to take.

If a complaint raises issues that require notification or consultation with an external body, the notification or consultation will occur within three days of those issues being identified.

Formal complaints are investigated and resolved within 10-35 days.

If the complaint is not resolved within 20 days, the complainant will be provided with an update.

12. Records and Privacy

Alchemy will maintain a complaint logbook and patient feedback record, with records of informal feedback (suggestions for improvement and service user feedback forms) and formal complaints. Personal information in individual complaints is kept confidential and is only made available to those who need it to deal with the complaint as per data protection laws.

Complainants are given notice about how their personal information is likely to be used during the investigation of a complaint.

Individual complaints files are kept in a secure filing cabinet in the Clinic premises and in a restricted access section of the computer system 's file server.

Patients are provided with access to their medical records (in accordance with the confidentiality policy).

Others requesting access to a patients ' medical records as part of resolving a complaint are provided with access only if the patient has provided authorisation (in accordance with the confidentiality policy).

13. Open Disclosure and Fairness

Complainants are initially provided with an explanation of what happened by Alchemy based on the known facts. At the conclusion of an inquiry or investigation, the complainant is provided with all established facts, the causal factors contributing to the incident and any recommendations to improve the service, and the reasons for these decisions.

Service users can make a formal complaint to Healthcare Improvement Scotland at any time by following the procedure detailed at:

http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/inspecting_and_regulating_care/independent_healthcare/ihc_complaints_procedure.aspx