

# COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

**DATE ADOPTED:                   SEPTEMBER 2005**  
**DATE REVIEWED                 NOVEMBER 2007**

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the management of complaints, concerns or enquiries.

All complaints, concerns or enquiries received by North East Valley Division of General Practice will be dealt with in a consistent manner, enabling speedy and effective solutions.

This policy recognizes the principle of the right to communicate a complaint, concern or enquiry and for these matters to be treated with courtesy and respect.

This policy also applies to relationships internal to the operations of the Board and Divisional staff.

## **Definitions**

A complaint is a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction about an action, a proposed action, or failure to act in a proper and responsible manner at governance and operational levels. This includes any failure by the North East Valley Division of General Practice to observe published policies, practices, and procedures.

A concern is a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction of a less serious nature than a complaint. Concerns may be dealt with by provision of advice, assistance, or referral.

An enquiry is a written or verbal approach of a minor nature by a member or service provider which can be satisfied by the provision of written or verbal information, advice, assistance, clarification or referral about a matter.

## **Principles**

- Members, staff, and other consumers of services provided by the Division are entitled to communicate complaints, concerns or enquiries
- Communications conveying complaints, concerns or enquiries represent an opportunity for strengthening relationships and improving operations and are regarded as evidence of a positive working and service culture.
- Members, staff and others conveying complaints, concerns or enquiries will be treated fairly and with respect. Any issues raised will be taken seriously. Courtesy, transparent processes, and follow up communications are to be evident throughout.

## **Making and Managing Complaints**

Complaints, concerns or enquiries may be made in writing, in person, by phone, or by email. There is no requirement for a complaint, concern or enquiry to be lodged in writing.

Complaints, concerns or enquiries may be managed formally or informally, depending on the nature and seriousness of the matter and the wishes of the complainant. Details of complaints shall be recorded by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the complainant. All complaints, concerns or enquiries will be responded to promptly.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for determining and implementing any action in relation to complaints, concerns or enquiries including advising the complainant of the outcome.

Copies of any correspondence relating to complaints, concerns or enquiries about the North East Valley Division of General Practice shall be retained for Board review as a report or correspondence where this is deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer.

### **Complaints (Detail):**

<b>Officer</b>	The Chairman of the Board and the Chief Executive Officer are responsible for implementation.
<b>Register</b>	<p>A complaints register shall be maintained. The register should record all complaints and the action taken to resolve the complaint. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for maintaining the complaints register.</p> <p>Where a complaint is verbal, the staff member who received that complaint will provide a verbal or written summary of the complaint to the Chief Executive Officer who will determine any action.</p> <p>Complainants may wish to provide details of the complaint in writing.</p> <p>Copies of all responses to complaints are to be filed in the register.</p>
<b>Complaints Management</b>	<p>The complaint shall be investigated by the Chief Executive Officer as soon as possible following its receipt.</p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer will determine the substance of the complaint and any action.</p> <p>Complaints may be resolved with an explanation, action or apology.</p> <p>Where the Chief Executive Officer determines it necessary, a complaint may be discussed with the Chairman of the Board before any action is taken.</p>

<b>Complaints Management</b>	<p>In the case of possible legal action, the Chief Executive Officer will immediately notify the Chairman of the Board and the Division's insurers.</p> <p>No action is to be taken without the advice and direction of the insurers.</p>
<b>Person</b>	<p>The Chief Executive Officer is authorised to respond to all complaints except for any that relate to the Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>Any complaint about the Chief Executive Officer will be referred to the Chairman of the Board.</p>

### **Related Policies and Procedures**

Governance Manual  
Operations Manual  
Breach of Policy

### **Accountability for Implementation**

Chair  
Chief Executive

### **Review Date**

November 2007