

Procedure

Title: AIS Complaints Procedure

Introduction

This procedure applies to the Auditory Implant Service, at the University of Southampton. It applies to complaints from users of its patient services.

Philosophy

We recognise the value of suggestions, constructive criticism and complaints. We will respond quickly and sensitively to all such complaints. We will endeavour to resolve any issues first at a local level and if this does not reach satisfactory outcome, there will be independent review.

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with any part of the service offered. It may be verbal (face to face or on the telephone), written or complex involving others, such as external medical personnel, MPs, solicitors or advocates representing service users.

Verbal complaints

Complaints received by front line staff about minor matters should ideally be resolved as they arise. Good manners and polite responses should be expected at all times. Staff should attempt to resolve these issues to prevent them from escalating into formal complaints. It might be necessary to ask for the intervention of a line manager or team lead at times.

Formal complaints

Anyone wishing to make a formal complaint should be advised to write to the manager of the relevant service; this can be by letter, telephone, email or in person. Complaints should be made within 12 months of the incident taking place.

When making a complaint, please include if possible:

- The service user's name and date of birth
- Details of what happened, when and where
- The names and designation of any staff involved
- Your specific concerns
- Any questions you would like answered
- What you hope to see as a result of your complaint
- Written consent to confirm that you are happy for us to investigate your or your child's health records in order to investigate the complaint

The complaint will be recorded in the complaints register and acknowledged within two working days. The matter will be dealt with by the manager in consultation with any members of staff who have been involved with the issues referred to in the complaint. A full written response will be sent out answering the complaint within 21 days. A meeting can be arranged to deal with the matter if needed.

The manager will write to you within 25 working days of receipt of your complaint with the results of our investigation, or let you know that the investigation will take longer.

If dissatisfied with the response, the complaint will be offered a review by the Associate Dean for Enterprise, Faculty of Engineering and the Environment. If this does not resolve the issue another independent review will be carried out by the Deputy or Pro Vice Chancellor with responsibility for Ethics at the University of Southampton.

Monitoring

A record of all formal complaints will be maintained. A summary will be sent to the AIS Governance Board twice a year

Staff responsibility

All staff should seek to understand the complaint, respond sympathetically and quickly but not agree to any course of action that is outside their remit. Staff should seek to communicate with the complainant, although this will cease if staff are threatened or abused. The matter should be referred on to the appropriate manager as required.

Useful contacts:

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