

## Title: USAIS Complaints Procedure

<b>From</b>	Auditory Implant Service
<b>Date [Approval Date]</b>	May 2025
<b>Related Policies</b>	USAIS Complaints Policy
<b>Related Procedures</b>	n/a
<b>Approving Authority</b>	USAIS Quality Service Improvement Board USAIS Governance Board
<b>Contact Point</b>	Emily Arbuthnot- Director Roberta Buhagiar – Clinical Co-ordinator
<b>Review</b>	2 years
<b>Version</b>	5.2

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### PURPOSE

The USAIS Complaints Procedure recognises the value of suggestions, constructive criticism and complaints. Feedback, both negative and positive, improves patient care. 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. If you are unhappy with the service you have received, it is worthwhile discussing your concerns early on. You may feel more comfortable speaking to someone not directly involved in your care.

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### DEFINITION

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.

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### 1. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all employees of USAIS in relation to complaints from users of our patient services.

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### 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

All USAIS employees are responsible for handling complaints in accordance with the USAIS Complaints Policy and USAIS Complaints Procedure.

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### 3. PROCEDURE

#### a. Verbal Complaint

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.

#### **b. Formal Complaint**

Anyone wishing to make a formal complaint should be advised to write to the manager of the service as below; this can be by letter or email. Complaints should be made within 12 months of the incident taking place (see 4. Contacts section below).

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 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 the management team to investigate

#### **I. The complaint will be recorded, acknowledged and dealt with by the relevant member of the team**

The complaint will be recorded in the complaints register (J:\AIS\Team Leaders\Incident Reporting Forms\Complaints) and acknowledged within five working days. The matter will be dealt with by the relevant manager or Director 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 30 days. You will be informed if the investigation will take longer. A meeting can be arranged to discuss the issues raised if needed.

#### **II. You can expect the following:**

- To be kept informed of progress and told the outcome
- To be treated fairly, politely and with respect
- To be sure that your care and treatment will not be affected as a result of making a complaint
- To be offered the opportunity to discuss the complaint with a complaints manager
- To expect appropriate action to be taken following your complaint

#### **III. Reviews and Appeals**

- If dissatisfied with the response, the complaint will be offered a review by the Dean for Faculty of Engineering and Physical Science. 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.
- If you are still not happy with the response provided, you can ask an independent Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman to look at your complaint

#### **IV. Contacts**

**General comments and minor issues can be sent to our monitored mailbox and will be passed to the appropriate person: [patais@soton.ac.uk](mailto:patais@soton.ac.uk)**

Formal complaints/complaints regarding a clinical issue/serious untoward event will be passed to:

Dr Roberta Buhagiar  
Clinical Co-ordinator  
University of Southampton, Auditory Implant Service  
Highfield  
Southampton SO17 1BJ  
[patais@soton.ac.uk](mailto:patais@soton.ac.uk)

To escalate a complaint, you can write to:

Emily Arbuthnot  
Director  
USAIS  
University of Southampton  
Highfield  
Southampton SO17 1BJ  
[e.j.arbuthnot@soton.ac.uk](mailto:e.j.arbuthnot@soton.ac.uk)

Alternatively, you can direct a complaint directly to NHS England, who commission services from the Auditory Implant Service. Contact information can be found at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/feedback-and-complaints/complaint/complaining-to-nhse/>

#### 4. TRAINING PLAN AND COMPETENCY MEASURES

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- Procedure to be posted on SharePoint Procedures page available to all USAIS employees.
- Procedure to be emailed to all USAIS employees.
- Procedure to be posted on USAIS Website

#### VERSION CONTROL

Revision Date	What has been changed: new directive, wording	Initial check	Reviewer
April 2013	Procedure created		CAV
June 2017	Contact details updated		CAV
November 2022	Format and contact details updated		MJA
January 2023	Changes to wording and timelines to match University and stronger compliance with NHS complaint guidance		MJA/CAV
May 2025	New Template and contacts updated	ABR	EJA
July 2025	Template change and minor adjustments		MJA