

# Making Comments and Complaints A Patient's Guide

## Introduction

HCA International hospitals are 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 which can be relayed to us as detailed below.

## 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. A tool we use for this is our Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire.

We hand out a Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire to all inpatients and day-patients treated in our facilities. The feedback received from the surveys remains anonymous and is reviewed monthly as well as quarterly. This information is shared throughout the organisation.

We will respond to any concerns considerably, quickly and as effectively as possible. All comments and complaints are taken seriously, regardless of their nature: medical, nursing, 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 tell us as soon as possible. Please highlight any concerns as soon as they arise, rather than waiting, so that we may resolve these in a timely fashion. You can provide feedback as follows:



### *During your stay in hospital*

- Each area has a manager, please ask to speak to them directly as they are always happy to help, or ask to see the senior person on duty.

### *On your discharge from hospital*

- As previously mentioned, you have the opportunity to complete our Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire. Each questionnaire is reviewed and action is taken as required by the hospital.

### *After your discharge from hospital*

- Please write to the hospital's Chief Executive Officer of the relevant facility. Address details can be found on the HCA website.

## The complaints process

Our complaints policy ensures your concerns are investigated and that you are given a full and prompt reply. This guide outlines our patient complaints procedure and gives you advice about how to get a satisfactory response to your concerns.

Any complaint that we receive is treated in confidence. We undertake to investigate all complaints courteously and sympathetically and to provide a rapid response within nationally recognised timelines.

### What are the first steps?

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

Under the 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.

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

1. *Local Resolution*  
At this level, your complaint will be handled by the hospital's senior management team and Chief Executive Officer.
2. *Internal Appeal*  
Your complaint will be the responsibility of the Group Chief Executive
3. *Independent External Adjudication*  
At this level, the external organisation 'Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service' (ISCAS) will handle your complaint.

## What happens if I make a verbal 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 will attempt to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the complaint will be further investigated.

The investigation will be completed within one/two working days if you are still in hospital. If you have been discharged, you will receive a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within two working days of receipt and then a full response within 20 working days from the hospital Chief Executive Officer or Chief Nursing Officer.

## How do I make a written complaint?

It is helpful to put all formal complaints in writing. If your complaint is about a Clinician you should address it to the Clinician and the hospital Chief Executive Officer.

Your 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 results you want from your complaint.

The hospital Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge your complaint letter within two working days, unless a full reply can be sent within five working days of receiving it. All documentation will be forwarded to the hospital's person handling the complaint.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for investigating the complaint and the hospital will write to you the outcome within 20 working days. If a full response cannot be given at this point, you will receive a letter explaining the reason for the delay.

In any event, you will receive a holding letter every 20 working days until the matter is resolved.

When investigating the complaint, the Chief Executive Officer or a senior manager may offer to call you to talk about your concerns or offer to meet you. 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 at hospital level. If you are not happy with our response, please inform the hospital Chief Executive Officer and explain why.

If you are dissatisfied with the hospital's response, you can ask for an internal appeal as stage 2.

## What does an internal appeal involve?

The internal appeal stage is the responsibility of the Group Chief Executive Officer of HCA Healthcare UK who is based at 242 Marylebone Road, London NW1 6JL.

If you are dissatisfied with the hospital's response, you can write to the Group Chief Executive Officer at the address above. You will need to do this within 6 months of the date of the final written response from the hospital Chief Executive Officer.

You will receive an acknowledgment of the appeal within two working days of receipt (unless a full reply can be sent within 5 working days). The Group Chief Executive Officer will consider the complaint and may undertake a review of the correspondence and handling of the issues at hospital level.

The Group Chief Executive Officer will either confirm the decisions and actions taken by the hospital Chief Executive Officer or offer an alternative solution.

You will receive a full response within 20 working days from receipt of the appeal or if the Group Chief Executive Officer's investigations are still in process a holding letter should be sent every 20 working days until the matter is resolved.

## What happens if I'm still unhappy?

If you are dissatisfied with the internal appeal and the decision of the Group Chief Executive Officer, you have the right to refer the matter to the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS). You must write to the ISCAS Secretariat within 6 months of the final decision of the hospital's internal review. The Secretariat will then raise the complaint with the hospital within ten working days of receipt. Once received, the hospital will then send all the relevant information to the Secretariat.

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

Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service,  
1 King Street, London, EC2V 8AU.  
[www.iscas.org.uk](http://www.iscas.org.uk)

# HCA Healthcare UK

You do not have to pay a fee for this service as the costs are met by HCA Healthcare UK's ISCAS membership. The ISCAS will appoint a Principal Adjudicator, who is independent of the ISCAS and its membership and who has the right to reject cases without a hearing.

ISCAS will confirm that the complaint has completed stages 1 and 2 and then will request clarification from the complainant that they are willing to agree to the terms of ISCAS.

They will provide a written acknowledgement to complainants within 2 working days of receiving from ISCAS, documentation relating to their complaint.

Provide a full adjudication decision within 20 working days or send a letter explaining the reason for the delay to the complainant, at a minimum, every 20 working days.

They will consider a wide range of remedies, including asking the ISCAS 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 the complaint handling, inconvenience, distress, or any combination of these, up to a limit of £5,000. 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). Acceptance of the goodwill payment by the complainant will bring all matters that are subject to the complaint to a close.

## Questions

If you have any questions about the HCA International Complaints Policy, please contact the Chief Executive Office at the relevant hospital. Address details can be found on the HCA website [www.hcahealthcareuk.co.uk](http://www.hcahealthcareuk.co.uk)

V1.08.2016

BLOSSOMS HEALTHCARE  
HARLEY STREET AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL  
HCA HEALTHCARE UK AT QUEEN'S HOSPITAL  
HCA HEALTHCARE UK THE WILMSLOW HOSPITAL  
HCA LABORATORIES  
INSTITUTE OF SPORT, EXERCISE & HEALTH  
LEADERS IN ONCOLOGY CARE (LOC)  
LONDON BRIDGE HOSPITAL  
MANCHESTER INSTITUTE OF HEALTH & PERFORMANCE  
ROODLANE MEDICAL  
SARAH CANNON RESEARCH INSTITUTE UK  
THE CHRISTIE CLINIC  
THE HARLEY STREET CLINIC  
THE LISTER HOSPITAL  
THE LONDON RADIOTHERAPY CENTRE  
THE PORTLAND HOSPITAL  
THE PRINCESS GRACE HOSPITAL  
THE WELLINGTON HOSPITAL

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