

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

The Health Directorate will deal with your complaint in a professional manner and in the strictest of confidence, involving only those staff who need to be contacted in order to carry out the investigation into the complaint.

Complainants will not be discriminated against in any way as a result of lodging a complaint.

We need to know when things go wrong, so that we can improve our services to you!

HEALTH DIRECTORATE

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Health Directorate



Hospital & Outpatients Complaints Procedures

**Do you want to make a
complaint about our
outpatient or hospital
services?**

**If so, please read on and
find out how you can**



We, in the Health Directorate aim to provide the best possible service for our patients. To make sure of that, we need to know when our provision falls below your expectations. That is why we need a complaints procedure. So if you have a complaint about the outpatient or hospital services, then we want to hear about it.

We hope that most complaints will be dealt with 'on the spot'. For example, if you are in hospital and you are unhappy about some aspects of your stay, then you can speak to the Hospital Nursing Officer and she will do her best to resolve the problem during your admission. However if the issue is not resolved in that way, this leaflet shows you how you can complain in a formal way and be certain of a reply.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WANT TO COMPLAIN?

If you want to make a formal complaint, you should submit a signed complaints form or letter to the Director of Health at the Health Directorate Administration offices in Jamestown.

WHEN SHOULD I COMPLAIN?

Complaints should be submitted within 1 month of the subject of the complaint occurring. It is best to complain while the event is still relatively fresh in your memory, so that you can give as much detail as possible and we can also investigate it with staff before too much time passes by.

HOW MUCH INFORMATION DO I NEED TO INCLUDE WHEN I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Of course, we need you to let us know your name and address so that we can send you a response. You will also need to let us have the following information:

- The nature of the complaint
- The date of the event you are complaining about
- Where it occurred
- If relevant, names of staff involved at the time
- If possible, include the resolution you are seeking, for example, you might wish to have a written apology

Depending on the nature of your complaint, we may need to refer to your health records, as our response may require us to refer to medical information about you. If you do not want the Director of Health to access your medical record, you should make this clear on the form or in your letter.

WHEN WILL I GET A REPLY?

When your complaint is received, we will acknowledge its receipt, in writing, within 3 working days. We will aim to send you a full written response within 2 weeks of receiving your complaint. If your complaint requires extensive investigation and we are unable to meet our aim of sending you a full response within 2 weeks, we will write to you and let you know why we are unable to do so and give an indication of when you are likely to receive a substantive reply.

CAN ANYBODY HELP ME TO SUBMIT A COMPLAINT?

Yes. If you want to seek assistance in submitting your complaint from a friend, colleague, Councillor or a Lay Advocate, then that will be OK, as long as you provide written authorisation giving your consent to them seeking information on your behalf,

which could include details of your medical record.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM NOT SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME OF MY COMPLAINT?

If you think that your complaint has not been dealt with properly, or you are unhappy with the outcome of it for any reason, if the complaint concerned a member of staff, you may write to the Chief Secretary.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY COMPLAINT INVOLVES POSSIBLE MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE?

If you have a complaint that may involve alleged medical negligence, you can still write to the Director of Health giving as much detail as possible. However, such complaints will immediately be forwarded to the Attorney General's Chambers to deal with.

