

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction about any matter reasonably connected with the services provided by our clinic.

A complaint, which is made orally and is resolved with 24 hours, will be recorded as locally resolved in the Complaints Register.

Where the complaint relates to a breach of statutory regulations and the organisation is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) patients can contact the CQC on: 03000 616161 or via <https://www.cqc.org.uk/>

Information and guidance are available on how to complain and accessible to everyone who uses our clinic.

Our complaints procedure is designed to make sure that we settle any complaints as quickly as possible.

This policy is in compliance with: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/regulation-16-receiving-acting-complaints>

Aims of The Policy

The aims of this policy and procedure is that complaints made by the patient/parent/guardian or their representatives are listened to and acted upon effectively by:

- (a) Having systems in place to deal with comments and complaints, including providing patients/parents/guardians who use services with information about that system.
- (b) Supporting patients/parents/guardians who use the services and their nominated representatives to make comments or complaints.
- (c) Considering fully, responding appropriately and resolving, where possible, any comments or complaints.

Our aim is to give our patients/parents/guardians the highest possible standard of service and we try to deal with all the complaints as quickly as possible.

If required, we will ensure it is also available in appropriate languages and formats to meet the needs of the patients/parents/guardians using the service. We will also use services of qualified interpreters if required.

Patients/parents/guardians are asked that in the event of any complaint, to speak, write or email (info@autismcliniclondon.com) to the Registered Manager/Responsible individual.

Patients/parents/guardians who require further advice regarding the complaints process will be supported.

A copy of this complaints process is held in the clinic.

Timescales for Handling and Investigating Complaints

We shall acknowledge complaints within 2 working days and aim to have this fully investigated and resolved within 20 working days of the date when it was raised, subject to no barriers in completing the investigations.

A full response will be made within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint (if this is not possible a letter, explaining the reason for the delay will be sent to the complainant and a full response will be made within 5 working days of the conclusion of the process).

We shall offer an explanation, or a meeting as appropriate. If there are any delays in the process, we will keep the complainant informed.

Complaints should normally be made within 12 months of an incident or of the matter coming to their attention. This time limit can be extended provided they have good reasons for not making the complaint sooner and it's possible to complete a fair investigation.

Our Investigation Processes

Any complaint received will be investigated as necessary and proportionate action be taken in response to any failure identified by the complaint or investigation.

We operate an effective and accessible system for identifying, receiving, recording, handling and responding to complaints by our patients/parents/guardians and other persons in relation to the carrying out the regulated activity.

We ensure our patients/parents/guardians are able to make a complaint to any member of staff, either verbally or in writing. All complaints will be passed on to the Register Manager/Responsible Individual.

If the staff member/s involved in the complaint cannot resolve the concern raised, this will be escalated to the Registered Manager/Responsible Individual.

Unless they are anonymous, all complaints should be acknowledged whether they are written or verbal.

Complainants will not be discriminated against or victimised. In particular, people's care and treatment will not be affected if they make a complaint, or if somebody complains on their behalf.

When we consider a complaint, we shall aim to:

- Find out what happened and what went wrong.
- Make it possible for the complainant to discuss the problem with those concerned.
- Make sure the complainant receives an apology where appropriate.
- Identify what we can do to make sure the problem doesn't happen again.

At the end of the investigation, the complaint will be discussed with the complainant in detail, either in person or in writing.

Complaining on behalf of someone else

If the complaint is received on behalf of someone else, the rules of patient confidentiality will be kept. Consent signed by the parent/guardian will be needed to allow the complaint to be investigated.

All complaints whether written or verbal will be documented.

Payments and refunds

In some cases, it may be appropriate to waive fees or offer a refund.

Accessibility of Comments and Complaints Policy

We will make the Complaints Policy accessible to patients/parents/guardians:

- (a) A copy of the Procedure for Handling and Investigating Complaints will be displayed in the reception area and on our website advertising the service.
- (c) Staff will provide help to any patient or relative of any patient who wishes to make a complaint.

Notification of Outcome of Complaint

Complainants will be notified of the outcome of their complaint and any actions taken as a result of the complaint immediately upon conclusion of the process.

Depending on the type of complaint received and if escalated to CQC, we will provide when requested to do so and by no later than 28 days:

- a. A summary of complaints made under such complaints system,

- b. Responses made to such complaints and any further correspondence with the complainants

Complaints Register

A register will be kept of complaints containing the following information:

- (a) Date of complaint
- (b) Name of complainant
- (c) Nature of complaint and details of staff involved (if applicable)
- (d) Action taken to investigate the complaint
- (e) Outcome and action taken as a result of the complaint
- (f) Date of when full response to complainant was sent

Records of Complaints

All correspondence relating to a complaint will be kept for 5 years.

A register will be kept of all complaints including appropriate details, including outcome.

A quarterly audit of complaints will be produced detailing the nature and outcomes of complaints and a quarterly summary of complaints will be discussed at staff meeting and shall include:

- (a) Number of complaints received
- (b) Nature of complaints and details of staff involved
- (c) Resolutions of complaints
- (d) Actions taken in response to complaints

Lessons Learnt

We will monitor all complaints over time, looking for trends and areas of risk that may be addressed and share lessons learnt with all staff.

Additional Support

If the complaint is regarding the director of the clinic, then this will be referred to the external adviser, Dr Alex Zarneh alex@chelbournelpa.com who will decide on how to progress the complaint to as satisfactory resolution.

Options of contacting Care Quality Commission, citizen adviser bureau or The Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS) <https://iscas.cedr.com/> will also be given to the complainant.

If patient/parent/guardian has a complaint against Autism Clinic London regarding the use of personal data, they can contact the Registered manager/Responsible Officer. In the event they cannot resolve the complaint, the parent/guardian has the right to complain to the information commissioner's office, the UK data protection regulation (www.ico.org.uk)



AUTISM CLINIC
LONDON

Version: ACL 1.0

Dated: November 2021

Review Date: November 2022

Complaints Register and Record Form

Name of the clinic:	Date of complaint:
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Complaint/Problem Received From:
Others Involved:

Complaint/Problem details received via
Letter: Telephone: Verbally: Email: Audit:
Complaint received by:
*Please tick as appropriate. Attach any relevant documents

Details of The Complaint/Problem
Initial Action Taken:

Action Taken	Date	Actioned by:
1)		
2)		

Progress Checks: 2 Day Status:

Signed: Date:

5 Day Status:

Signed Date:

20 Day Status:

Signed:Date:

Patient informed: Yes/No Patient feedback received: Yes / No

Please attach copies of all correspondence

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