

## *ROC COMPLAINTS POLICY and PROCEDURE Patient Leaflet*

### **Statement**

ROC strives to provide a high standard of service. If a problem or complaint does arise then this needs to be identified to allow investigation and a suitable response. This includes reflection on the problem and if required putting improved systems in place to prevent recurrence.

ROC values the views of the users of our services. Complaints concerning the service provided are made in line with this complaints procedure and will be handled in accordance with this.

### **Aim**

The aim of this document is to make all ROC patients and clients aware of the process for handling complaints.

The aims of complaint management are to ensure that any concerns raised are acknowledged and acted upon, with improvements made to service delivery where appropriate. Formal complaints, expressions of dissatisfaction, comments and concerns can all potentially help raise the quality of the service.

It is important that:

- All complaints are taken seriously and responded to appropriately;
- ROC learns from any issues highlighted and services are improved (through action plans and systems of governance) as a result;
- Responses to complaints are undertaken as quickly as possible - where possible and appropriate through informal resolution;
- Formal complaints are investigated and the response to complainants undertaken in a timely fashion.

General principles:

- Anyone who expresses dissatisfaction with ROC services should have easy access to a simple, efficient complaints management process;
- Investigations into complaints should be seen to be fair to all concerned, with an emphasis on early communication and effective resolution where possible. This often involves meeting the complainant at the earliest possible stage;
- The outcome of investigations should be appropriate and any response or redress proportionate;
- Complaints should be viewed as positive opportunities to listen and learn from service users' views;
- Up-to-date information on how to complain must be displayed and readily available to service users;
- Information leaflets must be available that explain the process of making a complaint and how it will be managed;
- Fairness and support need to be offered to both complainants and staff.

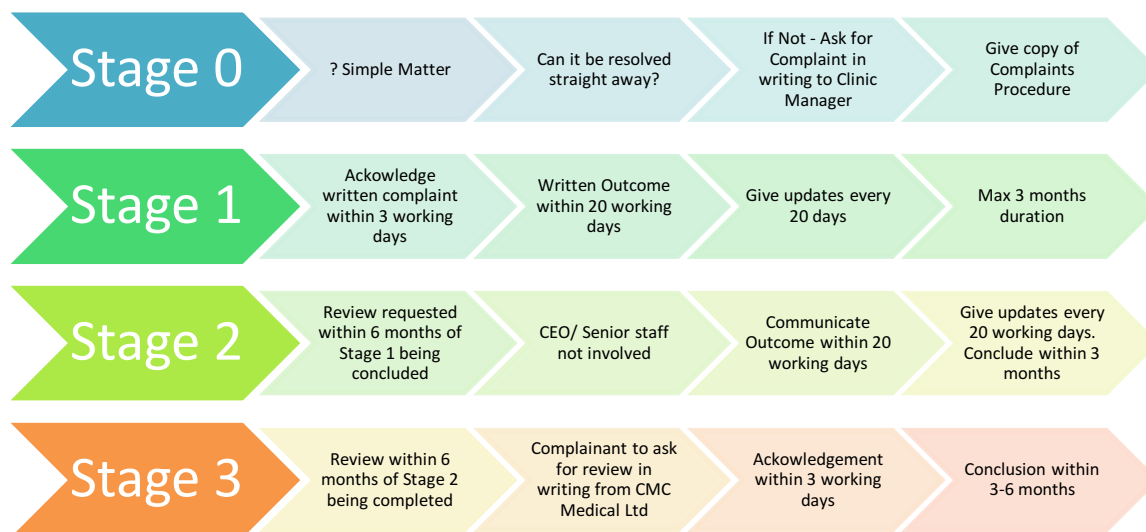
### **Time scale**

The complainants may bring their complaint to the attention of ROC within six months of the date of occurrence, or within 6 months of the coming to the attention of the complainant.

- Acknowledgement of the complaint should be within 3 working days
- Aim to complete Stage 1 within 3 months

- Aim to complete Stage 2 within 3 months
- Stage 3 with CMC Medical LTD may take 3-6 months to complete

## Complaint procedure



If the complaint is made in person, the member of staff who handles the initial contact will try to establish whether it is a simple matter that can be resolved straight away. If it cannot be resolved the individual should be put in contact with Clinic Manager.

If the complaint is still not resolved, then the individual shall be advised to put the complaint in writing to the Clinic Manager and be given or sent a copy of the ROC Complaint Procedure Leaflet. A complaint in writing includes email format.

An acknowledgment of the written complaint to the individual will be sent within 3 working days. The acknowledgement will contain a summary of the complaint and an outline regarding the purpose of the procedure.

An investigation of the facts surrounding the complaint will be undertaken by the Clinic Manager. If the complaint is regarding a medical matter, the Clinic Manager will discuss the case with the Medical Director.

The Medical Director may consult ROC Clinic's Responsible Officer at any stage for advice on dealing with the matter.

If appropriate, the complainant may require a meeting with the Clinic Manager. This will be arranged by appointment as soon as possible.

Following the investigation, a written outcome will be sent to the individual. This will normally be within twenty working days of the acknowledgement of the complaint, but occasionally this may take longer. If ROC cannot respond within twenty working days, an explanation will be given as to why this has taken longer. In any event the complainant should receive an update letter, as a minimum, every 20 days pending a conclusion



being reached. It is expected that this first stage is completed within 3 months of the complaint being received, unless there is a good reason to explain a longer time frame.

If the individual is dissatisfied with the response they can ask for a review of the complaint. In this case the individual will need to write to the Clinic Manager stating why they feel that their complaint or concerns were not addressed.

A review of the complaint should be asked as soon as possible after the individual has received the first response, but within 6 months from the first response being issued. If a review does not alter the outcome the individual will be informed with the reasons why this is so.

**The 2nd stage review** will be carried out usually by the CEO of ROC or a senior member of staff who has not been involved in handling the complaint up to that point, and is not involved in the daily operations of the clinic.

They are expected to review the documentation relevant to the original complaint and may include interviews with relevant staff. They may invite the staff that responded at stage 1 to make a further response, by taking a further look at a specific matter. They may decide to invite the complainant to a meeting with the staff member who responded to your complaint at stage 1.

The person conducting the complaint review is expected to send a full, written response on the outcome of the review within 20 working days. Where the investigation is still in progress, the complainant should receive a letter explaining the reasons for the delay. The aim is to complete the review at stage 2, in most cases within 3 months.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2 they may escalate and ask for a review from an external adjudicator – CMC Medical Ltd. They will acknowledge the request for a review from a complainant within 3 working days and will aim to provide an outcome within 3-6 months.

A complainant may choose at any stage to write directly to CMC Medical Ltd, CQC, HIS or GMC.

### Third party complaints

Any service user can complain. Complaints can be made on behalf of a service user by any individual that they have authorised to complain on their behalf. This might be a relative, friend, work colleague, manager or union representative.

ROC will ask the representative to obtain the permission in writing. By doing this, the service user is waiving his/her right to confidentiality of own clinical information, by sharing this with the person acting on their behalf. When responding to a complaint delivered via a third party, principles of medical confidentiality still apply. No information can be released about an individual to a third party without their written consent.

### Confidentiality

All complaints are dealt with confidentially, only people directly associated with the incident will be involved. All interview records and correspondence will be kept separate from any medical records. ROC reserves the right to use anonymised records of complaints for training and audit purposes.



### **Further Information/ Resources/ Contact Details**

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### **Review**

This policy was last reviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020, part of ROC HSES Policies and Procedures vs 09