



Policy number	HM04
Policy title	Concerns, Compliments and Complaints Policy
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Approved by	Jacque Hackett, Director of People and Operations
CEO approval	Approved by Michelle Kabia
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POLICY

Who must read this policy	<p>All staff and volunteers, including all permanent, contracted, temporary/bank/locum, apprentices, and students.</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy the term “staff” will encompass staff and volunteers, including all permanent, contracted, temporary/bank/locum, apprentices, and students.</p>
Related policies, SOPs and procedures	<p>IG01 Data Protection Policy HR04 Whistle Blowing Policy H&SP008 Incident Reporting Policy H&SP009 Personal Safety Policy HR10 Disciplinary & Suspension Policy PTC67 Duty of Candour Policy PTC68 Consent Policy HM49 Vexatious, Unreasonable and Persistent Complaint Policy HR45 Resolution Policy</p>

Description of Changes:

ellenor’s anti-racism statement added to the Equality Statement section.

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1. **Aims and Objectives of This Policy**

ellenor (The Organisation) recognises that comments, compliments, and complaints are an important part of customer feedback.

ellenor aims to ensure that every patient and family receives the best possible care and quality of service. It also aims to provide a good experience to supporters, stakeholders, and service users. As part of this process, it seeks to listen and to be responsive to feedback received in order to achieve high quality work and continuous improvement as an organisation.

We aim to provide an accessible, effective, and fair concerns and complaints handling and management process in line with statutory requirements and maintaining best practice to stakeholders. This is to ensure a system that achieves an open and just outcome for people wishing to provide feedback for improvement or raise concerns relating to the services of ellenor, in accordance with the Francis Report, February 2013 and the Duty of Candour Policy.

All processes within this policy are in place to ensure compliance with our governance arrangements and in line with the Charity Commission, Department of Health, Care Quality Commission, and National Patient Safety Agency guidelines.

This policy applies to all concerns and complaints received from clients, stakeholders, supporters, or the general public. Complaints from staff and volunteers will be managed through the HR policies.

2. **Definitions and Terms**

Stage 1 – Informal Complaint

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

Stage 3 – Review of the Complaint

Stage 4 - Appeal

Care Quality Commission (CQC): The independent regulator of health and social care in England.

Complainant: is the person raising the concern or complaint

3. **Policy**

3.1 **Principals**

The following principles underpin **ellenor's** approach to handling comments, compliments, and complaints.

- The procedure is fair, easy, and as transparent as possible.
- The procedure is accessible to all regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, belief, or sexual orientation.

- Making a complaint will not harm or prejudice the service that is given to the complainant.
- Concerns and complaints are dealt with efficiently, appropriately and are investigated within the agreed time frame.
- Complainants are treated with respect and courtesy and receive appropriate support throughout the handling of the complaint.
- Complainants receive a timely and appropriate response, identifying the outcome of any investigation.
- Action is taken where necessary in the light of the outcome of the complaint. This might include an explanation or an apology and if relevant and appropriate, information on any action taken.
- Learning from complaints will be used to improve the Organisation's work and drive forward a culture of continuous improvement.
- It is very important that every effort is made to ensure anyone making a complaint understands the outcome of their complaint.
- ellenor will recognise peoples reasoning for making a complaint.

If someone wishes to give positive comments or compliments about our work or how we have helped them they should email: Feedback@ellenor.org. This feedback should be logged on the comments, compliments and complaints system and feedback should be given to the person or team involved.

3.2 Making a complaint about the Organisation

3.2.1 Stage One: Raising a Complaint/Concern (Informal)

An informal complaint may be made verbally or in writing. Often these complaints can be resolved at the time. It is important that the complainant is listened to and informed how their complaint will be resolved. This should be documented on the incident management system. Wherever possible the manager of the service or department or senior staff member must attempt to resolve the complaint informally as soon as possible.

If the complaint is informal but cannot be resolved at the time, this should be escalated to the relevant line manager or person in charge who will endeavour to address the complaint and let you know of any remedial action that is to be taken.

- If not resolved immediately all complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days from the date it is received.
- In order for the issue to be resolved it is important to gather as much information as possible. If appropriate the complainant should be asked to include any relevant communications or documentation.
- Stage 1 complaints should be responded to within 15 working days.

3.2.2 Stage Two: Formally Registering a Complaint

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they receive at Stage 1, or they would prefer for their complaint to be formally investigated, they can request that their complaint is escalated to Stage 2, either through your

contact at Stage 1, or by submitting the details of the complaint verbally by telephone 01474 320007, in person, by emailing **ellenor** at Feedback@ellenor.org via the website www.ellenor.org or in writing to **ellenor** Coldharbour Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7HQ

- The complaint will be acknowledged with 5 working days.
- A Head of Department will be assigned to investigate the complaint and the complainant will receive a full written response within 30 working days from the date of the acknowledgement.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they will be given the opportunity to ask for the outcome and the findings of their complaint to be reviewed.

3.2.3 Stage 3: Review

This will be conducted by a director who will carry out a review of the complaint and the findings as well as explore any further actions that might need to be considered.

We will aim to send a written response with 30 working days.

3.2.4 Stage 4: Appeal

If the complainant remains unhappy with the outcome of their complaint following Stage 3, they can appeal. This will be undertaken by the CEO.

To progress the complaint to Stage 4, the complainant will need to inform the CEO in writing who will ensure that the Chair of the Board is informed. The CEO will aim to send a written response within 30 working days with the outcome of their findings.

This will be the final decision of the complaints process and will ensure the CEO has reviewed the investigation, made any further enquiries, and then delivered the reason for the final decision.

External complaints (not HR related matters): **ellenor** should be notifying the insurers when we are at our stage 4 of escalation to the CEO, unless there is an injury involved in which case refer straight away but also if the complainant is stated they are going to take legal action then again refer immediately.

3.3 Closure of Complaints

Prior to final closure of all formal complaints the following must have taken place:

- The complaint response letter must have been sent to the Complainant.
- On receipt of the final letter no further action is required by the Complainant or no response has been received within 14 days of the letter being sent
- All actions on the action plan have been completed or target dates for completion set.
- The lessons learnt have been cascaded.

- The Executive Leadership Team have reviewed the complaint and recommended sign off.

3.4 Persistent Complaints

There may be occasions when the organisation receives multiple complaints relating to the same issue or multiple communications regarding the outcome of the complaint or receives complaints which appear to be threatening or abusive, without any mitigating circumstances. These complaints will be managed in accordance with the Vexatious, Unreasonable and Persistent Complaint Policy HM49.

If the complainant has completed Stage 4 of our complaints procedure and they remain unhappy with the outcome, they have the right to take their complaint the following Professional Bodies:

Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB)
PALS and Complaints Team
NHS Kent and Medway
2nd floor
Gail House
Lower Stone Street
Maidstone
ME15 6NB

Tel: 01634 335095
Email: kmicb.kentandmedway@nhs.net

Charity Commission

If you are dissatisfied with the Organisation's complaints process, you can contact the Charity Commission, who will be able to advise on whether they may be able to advise on the matter. The Charity Commission can be contacted at:

http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/About_us/Contacting_us/default.aspx

Fundraising Regulator

Eagle House,
167 City Road
London
EC1V 1AW

Tel: 0300 999 3407. Email: complaints@fundraisingregulator.org.uk

Care Quality Commission

Tel 03000 616161, Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

4. References

Frivolous, Vexatious and Abusive Complaints Policy (Health & Care Professional Council 2014)

Francis Report (2013)
MIND

5. **Training**

Training must be provided for all staff in the Organisation at Departmental induction and at regular intervals thereafter. Training for managers and senior staff members must be provided and include:

- What is a complaint?
- How to receive, investigate and administer a complaint.
- How to deal with someone making a complaint.
- The complaints process, both informal and formal.

6. **Equality Statement**

The Organisation acknowledges that certain segments of the population face a higher risk of discrimination or encounter challenges in accessing services, often due to unintentional barriers.

This policy underscores the Organisation's unwavering commitment to guarantee equitable access to its services for all members of its community and to provide an exceptional level of service-to-service users, caregivers, and employees alike.

This policy aligns with the Organisation's dedication to preventing discrimination on any grounds prohibited by current laws, and it acknowledges the importance of addressing individual needs through effective communication and best practices, particularly in the context of digital inclusion and basic IT training for staff.

At **ellenor**, we believe that every individual deserves the right to live free from discrimination and prejudice. We stand firm against racism in all forms and are committed to promoting equity, inclusion and justice within our organisation and the communities we serve. We recognise that systemic racism has deep roots in our society, affecting the opportunities and wellbeing of marginalised populations. As a charity, we pledge to actively confront and dismantle these systems of oppression. We will educate ourselves and our stakeholders, advocate for those whose voices are marginalised and strive to create an environment where everyone feels valued and respected. We understand that taking an anti-racism stance requires ongoing effort and reflection. We are dedicated to fostering a culture of openness, learning and growth, where all individuals are encouraged to share their experiences and perspectives. Together we can work towards a more just and equitable world. We invite everyone to join us in this critical mission.

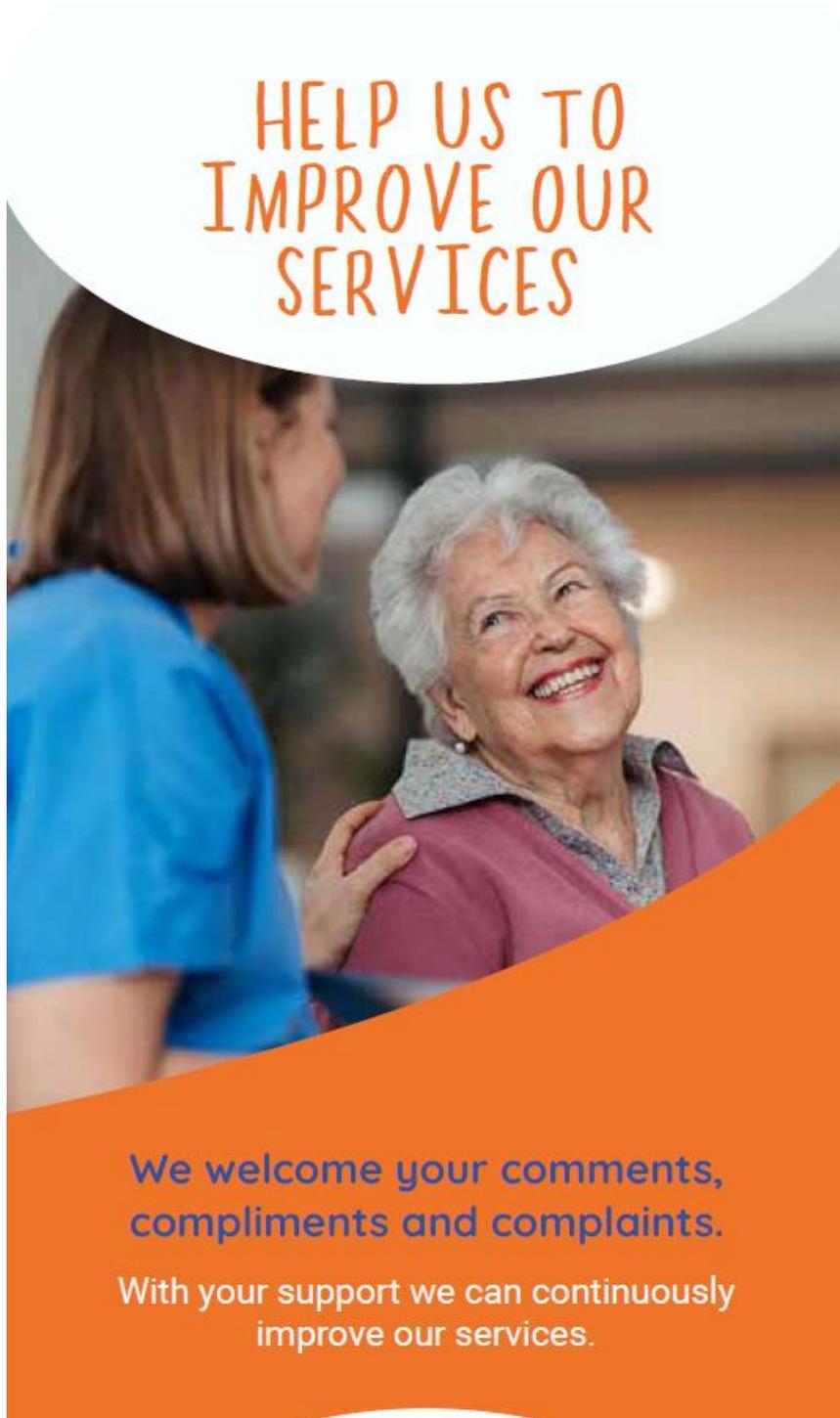
7. **Monitoring and Audit Process**

A report including incidents and complaints must be submitted quarterly to the Care and People Committees for monitoring who will escalate issues to the Board.

An annual audit of complaints will be conducted by the Head of Governance, Compliance and Projects. The results of which will be shared with the Executive and senior management team and the Board of Trustees.

8.	Stakeholder Section		
Date sent to stakeholder:	May 2024	Comments Received	
		YES	NO
Director of Care Linda Coffey	x		
Director of Income Generation Sue Piper		x	
Director of Finance & Resources Tim Hammond		x	
Director of Operations Liam Stone		x	

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Leaflet



OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

ellenor recognises that comments, compliments and complaints are an important part of customer feedback.

We are committed to ensuring that our work is of the highest quality. We believe that through effective management and investigation of comments, compliments and complaints we can identify learning to achieve high quality work and continuous improvement in our services.

We want you to receive the support that you need. **ellenor** aims to provide the very best standard of care and service for you. We hope that you will be happy with the services and support you receive.



We recognise that sometimes things do go wrong. If you are not happy with a particular aspect of a service you have received, we would like to know about it.

At all times, we will try to be open to criticism and feedback, quick to admit our mistakes and apologise when we have done something wrong.

Here are some examples of when to make a complaint:

- **If you are not satisfied with a service(s) we provide**
- **If we do not follow our policies and procedures**
- **If you are unhappy with the service provided by a member of staff or volunteer**

We take every complaint and comment as useful feedback that we can use to continuously improve our services. This means that we really want to know about your experience, so please do not be afraid to let us know if you are unhappy with the services you receive.



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

STAGE

1

Raising your complaint - Informal

Raise your issue or concern with a member of staff as soon as possible. They will listen to your concern and make every effort to address your complaint and to let you know what they will do to remedy the issue.

If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction within 15 working days, you can move to Stage 2.

STAGE

2

Formal Stage

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive at Stage 1, or you would prefer your complaint to be formally investigated you can request your complaint to be escalated to Stage 2, directly using the complaints email: feedback@ellenor.org

Your complaint will be investigated and we will respond to you within 30 working days.

STAGE

3

Review

If you remain unhappy with the outcome of your complaint you can ask for a review of the complaint and the findings. This will be carried out by a director who will carry out a review of the complaint and response, as well as explore any further actions that might need to be considered. We will aim to send you a written response within 30 working days with the outcome of their findings.

STAGE

4

Appeal

If you remain unhappy with the outcome of your complaint following Stage 3, you can appeal the decision.

To progress your complaint to Stage 4, you will need to inform the CEO in writing, that you wish to appeal the outcome of your complaint. The CEO will aim to send you a written response within 30 working days with the outcome of their findings and will ensure that the Chair of the Board has been informed.

If you are still unhappy with the outcome

If you have completed Stage 4 of our complaints procedure and you remain unhappy with the outcome, you have the right to take your complaint to the following professional bodies:

**Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB)
PALS and Complaints Team**

NHS Kent and Medway, 2nd floor, Gail House,
Lower Stone Street Maidstone, ME15 6NB

Tel: 01634 335095

Email: kmicb.complaints@nhs.net

Charity Commission

Visit: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission

Fundraising Regulator

Fundraising Regulator, Eagle House,
167 City Road, London, EC1V 1AW.

Tel: 0300 999 3407.

Email: complaints@fundraisingregulator.org.uk

Care Quality Commission

Tel 03000 616161, Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

HOW TO CONTACT US:

We welcome your comments, compliments and complaints:



01474 320007



feedback@ellenor.org



ellenor.org



Scan the QR code to provide feedback using our online form



Coldharbour Road, Northfleet,
Gravesend, Kent, DA11 7HQ



@ellenorcharity

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