

# PL-OPS-002 Compliments, Comments & Complaints

Nua Healthcare Services is committed to delivering high-quality, person-centred services and to fostering a culture where compliments, comments, and complaints are viewed as valuable opportunities for learning and improvement. This policy applies to all aspects of Nua Healthcare Services and to all team members, Individuals, representatives, and visitors, and sets out the purpose, scope, and processes for the receipt, management, investigation, and response to feedback in a manner that is accessible, transparent, confidential, and compliant with relevant legislation and national standards.

## Policy

- Nua Healthcare Services has written operational policies and procedures relating to:
  - Making complaints
  - Handling complaints
  - Investigating complaints from any person about any aspect of service, care, or treatment provided in, or on behalf of the service
- There are nominated persons (Complaints Officers) responsible for managing all complaints within the service.
- Nua Healthcare Services ensures that complaints processes are well-publicized and accessible to Individuals and their representatives, including:
  - Providing information about the complaints procedure to Individuals and their representatives at admission or soon thereafter
  - Publicly displaying the complaints procedure, including contact details for the complaints department, in designated centres
  - Informing Individuals, their representatives, family, and next-of-kin of all methods available to make a complaint
- All complaints, whether oral or written, are:
  - Investigated promptly
  - Handled appropriately and sensitively
- Nua Healthcare Services ensures that making a complaint does not adversely affect the quality of service, care, or treatment provided to the Individual.
- All complaints are:
  - Managed by the complaints department
  - Recorded in Nua Healthcare ID Services' complaints register
- Details of complaints, subsequent investigations, and outcomes are:
  - Fully recorded
  - Kept separate from the Individual's Personal Plan in the designated centre's complaints register
- The complainant is:
  - Promptly informed of the outcome of the investigation
  - Provided with details of the appeals process as required under the Health Act, 2007

## Guidance:

The following outlines Nua Healthcare Services' guidance for managing comments, compliments, and complaints, ensuring feedback is captured, addressed, and used to improve service quality while protecting the rights and dignity of all involved:

- Enable feedback, both positive and negative, from all stakeholders regarding service provision.
- Support Individuals, families, and team members in contributing to service development.
- Acknowledge that a formal system for receiving compliments and complaints is crucial for accountability, learning, and service improvement.
- Address the needs of Individuals, team members, and others.
- Ensure complainants are satisfied with how their complaint is handled.
- Uphold the rights and protect the dignity of Individuals, team members, and others.
- Ensure that any Individual who has made a complaint is not adversely affected because of the complaint.

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- Improve public confidence in the service.
- Prevent, where possible, the escalation of complaints.
- Use information from complaints and compliments to contribute to quality improvement and organisational learning.
- A complaints department and Complaints Officers are in place to manage all complaints within the service.
- Information about the complaints procedure is displayed in communal areas within each Designated Centre.
- Provide information about the complaints procedure to the Individual and their representative at admission or soon thereafter.
- Complaints must be made within twelve months of the event or within twelve months of becoming aware of the event, with exceptions allowed in extenuating circumstances.
- Complaints can be submitted verbally, in writing, or via email.
- Complaint forms are available in all Designated Centres.
- Emails can be sent to: [complaints@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:complaints@nuahealthcare.ie)

Contact Details for Nua Healthcare Services Comments, Compliments & Complaints Officers:

### **Hannah Daly**

Director of Advocacy & Safeguarding  
Email: [h.daly@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:h.daly@nuahealthcare.ie)  
Mobile: 086 7900 258

### **Alexandra Butnariu**

Advocacy & Safeguarding Officer  
Email: [Alexandra.Butnariu@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:Alexandra.Butnariu@nuahealthcare.ie)  
Mobile: 086 1927 642

### **Shannon Deery**

Advocacy & Safeguarding Officer  
Email: [shannon.deery@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:shannon.deery@nuahealthcare.ie)  
Mobile: 086 204 4068

### **Aiesha Donagher**

Advocacy & Safeguarding Officer  
Email: [aiesha.donagher@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:aiesha.donagher@nuahealthcare.ie)  
Mobile: 086 175 0842

### **Wendy Watts**

Advocacy & Safeguarding Officer  
Email: [wendy.watts@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:wendy.watts@nuahealthcare.ie)  
Mobile: 086 144 9808

### **Nicole Stocker**

Advocacy & Safeguarding Officer  
Email: [nicole.stocker@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:nicole.stocker@nuahealthcare.ie)  
Mobile: 086 068 9263

If an Individual prefers to make a complaint externally rather than directly to Nua Healthcare Services, they may do so through the following official channels:

Through the Ombudsman Complaints Website: [www.healthcomplaints.ie](http://www.healthcomplaints.ie)

HSE Your Service, Your Say:

Oak House, Limetree Avenue,

Millennium Park, Naas, Co. Kildare,

W91 KDC2

• Phone: 1800 424 555 / +353 1 642 4555

• Email: [yoursay@hse.ie](mailto:yoursay@hse.ie)



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## Comments and Compliments

- Nua Healthcare Services actively encourages Individuals, stakeholders, and team members to provide feedback, including compliments and comments.
- Team members are encouraged to share any praise or positive feedback they receive with their managers.
- Compliments can be submitted via email to the Nua Compliments and Complaints Officer: [compliments@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:compliments@nuahealthcare.ie), they can also be submitted via [www.nuahealthcare.ie/have-your-say](http://www.nuahealthcare.ie/have-your-say)
- All comments, compliments, and complaints are recorded in the Centre-Specific Comments, Compliments, and Complaints Register.
- Nua Healthcare Services has a process to gather feedback from families and Individuals, including surveys completed by parents and carers.

## Complaints Management Process

- The complaints management process consists of four stages:
  - Stage 1: Local resolution of verbal complaints at the point of contact
  - Stage 2a: Informal resolution of written complaints
  - Stage 2b: Formal investigation of written complaints
  - Stage 3: Complaint resolution
  - Stage 4: Appeals process

### Stage 1: Local Resolution at the Point of Contact (Minor Complaints)

- Complaints or concerns about day-to-day service matters may be addressed by the Person in Charge (PIC) of the Designated Centre.
- The PIC will make every effort to resolve verbal complaints at the first point of contact.
- All complaints or concerns are documented in the Centre's Comments, Compliments, and Complaints Register.
- If unresolved locally, the complaint is escalated to the Complaints Department.
- Complaints Officer(s) acknowledge receipt in writing within five working days.

### Stage 2a: Written Complaints – Informal Resolution

- Complaints Officer(s) assess if informal resolution is feasible and seek consent from the Individual.
- Mediation may be used to facilitate resolution among all parties.

### Stage 2b: Written Complaints – Formal Investigation

- Complaints are acknowledged promptly, no later than five working days after receipt.
- Efforts are made to resolve complaints locally; some require formal, thorough investigation.
- Concerns not raised as formal complaints are noted in the Centre Specific Register as a "comment or concern."
- A nominated support person may assist the Individual during the investigation if requested.

### Stage 3: Complaint Resolution

- Complaints Officer(s) aim to complete investigations within 30 working days of acknowledgment.
- Investigations may include interviews with team members, witnesses, or experts as required.
- Staff must cooperate fully with the investigation.
- Complaints Officer provides a report to the PIC and feedback to the complainant.
- On request, the final report with recommendations is shared with the complainant.
- If investigation exceeds 30 working days, complainants are notified and updated every 20 working days, with an aim to conclude within six months.
- Safeguarding-related complaints are addressed in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons from Abuse Policy.

### Stage 4: Appeals Process

- Individuals, families, or advocates may appeal the outcome by:
  - Contacting [compliments@nuahealthcare.ie](mailto:compliments@nuahealthcare.ie) to express dissatisfaction
  - Seeking independent advocacy
  - Requesting HSE or funder intervention

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## Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

- In a minority of cases, a complainant may not accept all reasonable attempts to resolve a complaint through the Complaints Procedure.
- If a complainant's behavior is considered abusive, unreasonable, or vexatious, Nua Healthcare Services may invoke its equivalent of the HSE Policy for Dealing with Vexatious Complaints.

## Additional Supports

If Individuals remain dissatisfied with the outcome of a review, they may contact:

- The Office of the Ombudsman, 6 Earlsfort Terrace, Saint Kevin's, Dublin 2, D02 W773
- Telephone: +353-1-639 5600

## Advocacy

- An Advocacy Service provides independent support to Individuals who need assistance, helping them make complaints or express concerns.
- Advocates support Individuals, family members, agencies, or organizations by:
  - Assisting in expressing their views
  - Asserting their entitlements
  - Representing and negotiating on their behalf, if required

## Resources for Advocacy Services

- **HSE – Director of Advocacy, National Advocacy Unit, Quality and Patient Safety Directorate**
  - Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Co. Kildare
  - Email: [yoursay@hse.ie](mailto:yoursay@hse.ie) | Tel: 045 880400
- **The Citizens Information**
  - Tel: 0818 07 4000
- **National Advocacy Service**
  - Email: [info@advocacy.ie](mailto:info@advocacy.ie) | Tel: 0818 07 3000