The Ear Health Clinic Policy (incorporating the Weight Health Clinic) for Complaints and Duty of Candour

Version 2

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Relevant Legislation:

Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014: Regulation 16 receiving and acting on complaints.

Background

The EHC is fully committed to ensuring patients receive the best possible treatment, in fact the majority of new patient referrals come from word of mouth and GP recommendations based on a history of top-quality care.

The EHC, at the date of writing this policy, has not received a complaint either verbally or written, however the policy outlines the procedures put in place should this occur.

Patients are actively encouraged to contact the EHC if they have an issue with their care. An example of this is if patients are not experiencing an improvement in their hearing after the procedure. If this is the case, the patient is always offered a free follow up appointment. In the majority of cases, the ear is found to be clear of obstruction and the problem is related to either middle ear fluid or hearing loss. Consequently, advice is given as the EHC does not deal with either of these conditions. The EHC is fully receptive to all comments received as the clinician's objective is that all patients are happy with their treatment and care.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint can be an expression of dissatisfaction by the care received at the EHC. The complaint may be made by the person using the service or someone acting on their behalf e.g a parent/guardian or someone with power of attorney.

Duty of Candour and Being Open

The Francis Enquiry, 2013 instigated many changes to health care and the way things are carried out; the EHC fully adopts its principles.

Candour

Candour is the quality of being open and honest. The patient, or someone lawfully acting on their behalf, should (as a matter of course) be properly informed about all elements of their treatment and care, including any incidents that result in harm. The clinician will inform the patients on the success of their treatment and if any follow up is required. In the unlikely event of an adverse event during the procedure the patient will be informed, this will be documented and a copy sent (with permission) to the patients GP. Follow up advice will be offered.

Being Open

Being open is a set of principles that the clinician will use when communicating with patients, their families and carers following an incident in which the patient was harmed. The specific delivery of “Being open” communications will vary according to the severity grading, clinical outcome and family arrangements of each specific event.

Should an adverse incident occur at the time of the consultation or come to light following the consultation the patient will be fully informed of this and potential solutions discussed.

This can relate to any aspect of care including, but not limited to :

- Microsuction
- Medication
- Infection/cross contamination
- Data breaches
- Aftercare advice
- Follow up
- Adverse affects

In accordance with our registration with the Care Quality Commission, we will ensure that there are systems in place to ensure patients, relatives and carers:

• Have suitable, accessible information about and clear access to procedures to register formal complaints and feedback on the quality of services

• Are not discriminated against when complaints are made

• Are assured that we act appropriately on any concerns, and where appropriate, make changes to ensure improvements in service delivery.

The above requirements form our obligations on which to ensure good complaint handling, promoted by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

This policy has two aims:
• to resolve complaints effectively by responding personally and positively to individuals who are unhappy;
• to ensure that opportunities to learn and improve are not lost

Timeframe-

A complaint should normally made within 4 weeks of the event(s) concerned or within 4 weeks of becoming aware that you have something to complain about, providing that it is within 12 months of the event.

Who should I complain to?

In the first instance, you can raise your concerns by speaking to the clinician at the time or after the consultation. The clinician may be able to resolve your concerns without the need to make a more formal complaint.

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and as close to the source of the complaint as possible using the most appropriate means; for example, use of conciliation.

If you do wish to continue with a formal complaint you can do this by writing a letter or email addressed to the practitioner concerned or to:

Mrs Kate Heath
The Ear Health Clinic and The Weight Health Clinic
KR Health Suites
45 Sunderland Street
Macclesfield
SK11 6JL

Your correspondence will be acknowledged within 7 working days of receipt and then investigated further. You should receive a full response or offer of a meeting with the people involved within 21 working days. You should also be informed if the investigations are going to take longer.

When looking into your complaint, we will aim to:

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

If you remain unsatisfied by our response and attempts to address your complaint or issues raised, you can contact and seek further advice form the following:

https://iscas.cedr.com/ Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service

Health Watch Cheshire East
Sension House
Denton Drive
Northwich

0300 3230 006

Raise concerns regarding the clinician with the Nursing and Midwifery Council

You can also provide feedback to the Care Quality Commission (https://www.cqc.org.uk).

The EHC will be sensitive to individual complainants needs and in line with the spirit of the Health Service Ombudsman principles of Good Administration, Good Complaints Handling and Remedy:

- Getting it right
- Being customer focused
- Being open and accountable
- Acting fairly and appropriately
- Putting things right
- Seeking continuous improvement