

Complaints Policy

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1. Policy Statement

Cogniscience Clinics Ltd is committed to providing a high-quality, safe, and person-centred service. This policy sets out how service users, families, carers, or representatives can raise concerns or complaints, and how these will be handled fairly, transparently, and in line with Regulation 16 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints relating to assessment, diagnostic formulation, psychoeducation, and associated administrative or governance processes. This policy applies to all service users, families, carers, and representatives who wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the service provided by Cogniscience Clinics Ltd. Complaints may be made verbally or in writing and will not affect the care or support provided.

3. Principles

- Cogniscience Clinics Ltd ensures that complaints are:
 - Taken seriously and handled sensitively
 - Investigated fairly and proportionately
 - Used as an opportunity for learning and improvement
 - Managed without discrimination or disadvantage to the complainant

4. Support and reasonable adjustments

Cogniscience Clinics Ltd recognises that individuals may require additional support to raise or pursue a complaint. Reasonable adjustments will be offered in line with individual needs, including alternative communication formats, extended timeframes, support with digital access, or adjustments related to remote delivery, support from advocates or carers, and flexibility in how complaints are submitted or discussed. This ensures accessibility, dignity, and fairness throughout the complaints process.

5. How to make a complaint

Complaints may be raised by email or telephone and can be made by the service user or on their behalf by a parent, carer, advocate, or representative. Complaints may be made at any stage of care.

An accessible summary of the complaints process is provided in Appendix 1 to support service users.

6. Acknowledgement and investigation

All complaints will be acknowledged within three working days. The complaint will be investigated promptly, fairly, and confidentially. Where appropriate, the complainant may be contacted to clarify concerns or agree how the complaint should be resolved. Where additional time is required, the complainant will be kept informed.

7. Response

A written response will normally be provided within 20 working days. The response will outline the findings, any actions taken, an apology where appropriate, and learning identified.

8. Duty of Candour

Where a complaint identifies a notifiable safety incident, Cogniscience Clinics Ltd will follow its Duty of Candour Policy in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. This includes timely notification, an apology, written follow-up, and ongoing engagement with the service user or their representative.

9. Escalation of complaints

If a complainant remains dissatisfied following completion of the internal complaints process, they may escalate their complaint as follows:

- Private service users: Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS)
- NHS Right to Choose service users: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)

Complainants may also raise concerns with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC does not investigate individual complaints but uses information received to inform regulatory oversight.

10. Governance, learning, and oversight

The Registered Manager has overall responsibility for ensuring that complaints are managed effectively, fairly, and in line with regulatory requirements. Complaints are recorded securely, monitored for themes and trends, and reviewed as part of the organisation's governance and quality assurance processes. Learning from complaints informs service improvement, staff training, and policy review.

Where a complaint raises concerns about safety, quality, or risk, it will also be managed in line with the Incident Management & Learning Policy to ensure appropriate escalation, learning, and quality improvement.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in response to learning from complaints, incidents, audits, or regulatory updates.

12. References

- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 — **Regulation 16: Receiving and acting on complaints**
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) guidance — **Regulation 16: Receiving and acting on complaints**
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) — **How to complain about a service or provider**
- Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS) — **Code of Practice for Complaints Management**
- ISCAS — **Patient Guide**

- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) — **Private healthcare**
- CQC — **Digital healthcare regulatory guidance (PDF)**

13. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required for this policy, as it is designed to promote access, inclusion, and fairness in raising concerns and complaints. Equality considerations are embedded through reasonable adjustments, accessible formats, and flexible processes to support individuals with diverse needs.

Version Control

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Approved by
v1.1	14/01/2026	Policy rewritten to strengthen governance oversight, reasonable adjustments, Duty of Candour linkage, clear escalation routes, and accessibility, including complaints flowchart reference.	Angela Rossi Registered Manager

[Appendix A – Complaints Process Flowchart](#)