



# AACSH Health

Here for you

## Complaints Policy

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## 1. OVERVIEW

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AACS Ltd will ensure that its complaints procedure is well publicised and fairly applied and that complaints are dealt with promptly, efficiently, and properly in all cases.

AACS Ltd.'s aim is to provide a high-quality service and we aim to maintain our standards as consistently as we can and to rarely have complaints. However, we accept it is the fundamental right of Clients, their families or friends, or representatives, to complain about the services they are receiving if they feel unhappy with them. We accept that complaints do happen from time to time and that it is an important part in the running of any service to listen to feedback from Clients, to investigate and admit when things do go wrong and to learn from mistakes so that they are not made again.

We understand that having an effective system in place for identifying, receiving, handling, and responding appropriately to complaints and comments made by Clients, or persons acting on their behalf, is a key element in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 – Regulation 16, and the essential standards of quality and safety with which the organisation must comply to satisfy the registration requirements of the Care Quality Commission.

## POLICY

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The Company ensures that:

- Every complaint will be welcomed and taken seriously.
- We encourage and support a culture of openness that ensures any comment or complaint is listened to and acted on.
- A full record of each complaint is logged and recorded in line with our internal procedures.
- All complaints are treated entirely confidentially.
- A complaint can be made by telephone, in person, in writing, or by email to [complaints@christiescare.com](mailto:complaints@christiescare.com)
- A complaint must be made no later than 12 months after the date the event occurred, or if later, the date the event came to the notice of the complainant, but it must be within 18 months of the event.
- The time limit will not apply if AACS Ltd is satisfied that the complainant can give a good reason for not making the complaint within that limit, and despite the delay, it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly.
- All employees will be trained to accept complaints and to deal with them according to this policy.

- All Clients will be made aware of the Company's complaints policy and the information will be available:
  - On our website – [www.aacs.health](http://www.aacs.health)
  - Displayed in our offices at The Stone Barn, Warrington.
  - Sent out with our contract letters.
  - Summarised in our brochure.
  - Included in each Care Plan folder.
- Making a complaint will not cause a Client to be discriminated against or have any negative effect on their care, treatment, or support.

## IN THE CASE OF VERBAL COMPLAINTS

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- A verbal complaint can be made to any employee.
- Front-line employees who receive a verbal complaint should always welcome the complaint and seek to resolve the problem immediately.
- If the employee cannot resolve the problem immediately, they should pass the complaint to the Quality and Safeguarding team, who will then decide if they can resolve it. If not or if it constitutes as a Safeguarding alert, then the Quality and Safeguarding team will investigate matters further.

## IN THE CASE OF WRITTEN COMPLAINTS

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- A written complaint will be acknowledged in writing within two working days.
- Written complaints will be dealt with initially by the Quality and Safeguarding team, or if the complaint relates to a Head of Department - by HR and the Manager of Quality and Safeguarding or the Registered Manager. If the complaint relates to the Registered Manager, then by the Chairman or M.D.
- Every written complaint will be thoroughly investigated, and a written response given within 28 days (Where a complaint is likely to take more than 28 days, in a particularly serious matter where legal advice is taken or we are waiting to be advised if there will be police involvement, for instance, the complainant will be notified of the delay and the reason for it).
- All written complaints will be treated entirely confidentially and with tact and sensitivity. Details of a complaint's investigation will however be recorded by the Quality and Safeguarding team and given a unique number for inspection purposes.
- Any decision made by the organisation will be fully explained. If a complaint is upheld, then Christies will apologise and suggest a plan by which the complaint can be resolved. Where appropriate compensation for out-of-pocket expenses will be paid.

See Policy – Duty of Candour

## IN CASES WHERE THE COMPLAINT REMAINS UNRESOLVED

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If the complaint remains unresolved or the Client is not satisfied with the outcome, it can be referred to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). The LGO provides a free, independent service. The LGO can be contacted for information and advice. To register a complaint, go to the website and complete the online complaint form.

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Website: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/contact-us>

The LGO will not usually investigate a complaint until the provider has had an opportunity to respond and resolve matters.

Our service is registered with and regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC is unable to get involved in individual complaints about providers but is happy to receive information about our services at any time. You can contact the CQC at:

Care Quality Commission National Correspondence City  
Gate

Gallowgate Newcastle  
upon Tyne NE1 4PA

Tel: 03000 616161

Website: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us>

## MONITORING

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A complaints log will be kept to record the following: -

- Each complaint received.
- The subject matter and outcome of each complaint.
- Details of the reasons for delay, where an investigation took longer than the agreed response period, and the date the report of the outcome of the investigation was sent to the complainant.