

# Complaints Policy

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change	
1.0	January 2025	Jennifer Butcher / Ellie Holmes / Meg Mellor / Lissy Dickinson	<i>Re write of policy, the prior can be found in archive.</i>	
Approved Date:		February 2025		
Approved By:		Quality and Governance committee		
Review Date:		February 2026		
Synopsis:		<p><i>Nimbuscare Ltd's Complaints Policy outlines a fair and transparent approach for handling complaints from patients, families, and carers. The policy focuses on learning from complaints to improve service delivery and patient safety, following NHS regulations and the PSIRF framework. It includes clear procedures for making, acknowledging, and investigating complaints, prioritising a non-punitive, systemic approach. It touches on the appeal process for unresolved issues. The policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains up to date with legal and best practice standards.</i></p>		
<p>The implementation of this document aligns with the Equality Act 2010, with consideration of gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and human rights to ensure fair application.</p> <p>Nimbuscare operate within a Just Culture Framework, and our policies, procedures and SOPs are developed in line with the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF), ensuring we are Safe, Caring, Effective, Responsive and Well-Led.</p>				

## SCOPE

Nimbuscare Ltd is a not-for-profit 'at scale' provider of integrated care services in York and North Yorkshire.

This document is formally established and authorised for implementation across the entire organisation and is accessible to all staff to support them within their roles.

It applies to all individuals associated with our operations, including those in permanent, fixed-term, or zero-hours employment, as well as contractors, temporary staff, secondees, and volunteers. This scope also encompasses executive and non-executive directors. For the purpose of this policy, the term "Staff" is used inclusively to refer to all such roles and designations.

## VERSION CONTROL

This document is controlled. To suggest amendments, please contact the document author. The most recent versions can be accessed via Nimbuscare's homepage on SharePoint. If you are reading a printed copy, please note that it is considered an uncontrolled document. Verify that the version number and date are the most current before following any processes outlined here.

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## PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

Nimbuscare is committed to ensuring a fair, transparent, and supportive approach to handling complaints. Our policy focuses on **learning from complaints** and using them as opportunities to improve patient safety and service delivery. We aim to foster a **Just Culture**, where staff feel safe to raise concerns, and where complaints are seen as valuable insights to inform systemic change. This policy is aligned with **PSIRF** (Patient Safety Incident Response Framework) principles to ensure a collaborative, open, and learning-focused response to all complaints.

## SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all complaints raised by patients, their families, carers, or those acting on their behalf. It covers complaints about any aspect of care or services provided by Nimbuscare. In line with **PSIRF**, Nimbuscare promotes a non-punitive approach that focuses on understanding the broader context of patient safety incidents rather than individual fault. This ensures we prioritise learning and improvement across the system.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND NHS REQUIREMENTS

This Complaints Policy complies with:

- **NHS Complaints Regulations (2009).**
- **Health and Social Care Act 2008.**
- **Freedom to Speak Up** guidelines.

Nimbuscare is committed to upholding the principles of **PSIRF** and **Just Culture**:

- **Fairness and accountability:** Recognising the human and systemic factors that contribute to incidents.
- **Transparency:** Ensuring that complaints are dealt with openly and constructively.
- **Continuous learning:** Using complaints as opportunities for quality improvement, with an emphasis on systemic issues rather than individual blame.

## HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

You have the right to make a complaint about any aspect of NHS care, treatment or service, and this is written into the <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england>

If you wish to make a complaint, provide feedback, or pass on a compliment, please contact Nimbuscare using the following details or direct your comments through your GP practice:

### Feedback

Nimbuscare Limited

Acomb Garth Community Care Centre

2 Oak Rise, York, North Yorkshire, YO24 4LJ

**Email:** [Nimbuscare.Feedback@nhs.net](mailto:Nimbuscare.Feedback@nhs.net)

**Phone Number:** 01904 943 690

Or Via the use of our event reporting system Link to be included here when phase 2 of the Vatix is rolled out.

Nimbuscare aims to resolve most issues as quickly and informally as possible. However, if you wish to make a formal complaint, please do so as soon as possible, ideally within **a few days** of the event. If you cannot do so immediately, complaints should be submitted within **12 months** of the event or within 12 months of becoming aware of an issue.

In line with **PSIRF**, Nimbuscare encourages early conversations to address concerns before they escalate into formal complaints. Our approach focuses on solving problems at the earliest stage to support a **culture of safety and openness**.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPLAINTS

Once a complaint is received, it will be acknowledged within **3 working days** (excluding weekends and bank holidays). This acknowledgment will include:

- A summary of the complaint.
- The name and contact details of the person handling the complaint.
- A clear timeframe for resolution, typically within **20 working days** unless further investigation is required.

In cases where there is a delay in resolution, Nimbuscare will regularly update the complainant on progress, in line with **PSIRF** principles, ensuring transparency and maintaining open lines of communication throughout the process.

## INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION

In line with the **Just Culture** approach, complaints will be investigated thoroughly with a focus on **understanding the systems and processes** that may have contributed to the issue. The investigation will include:

- **Root cause analysis:** Identifying any systemic or process-related issues that led to the complaint, rather than focusing on individual performance.
- **Supportive, not punitive:** Staff members involved in the complaint investigation will be supported to reflect on and learn from the incident, with no blame attached unless there is clear evidence of misconduct.
- **Collaboration:** Nimbuscare will engage with all relevant stakeholders to gather a holistic view of the situation, including patients, staff, and other healthcare providers where appropriate.

Our goal is to work with you to identify **actionable insights** and **implement systemic improvements** to prevent similar issues from recurring, contributing to **better safety and care** for all patients.

## RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS

After investigating the complaint, Nimbuscare will provide a clear written response that includes:

- **Findings:** A detailed explanation of what occurred, based on the investigation.
- **Action taken:** Information about any immediate actions or corrective measures put in place to address the issue.
- **Apology:** Acknowledging any harm or distress caused and offering an apology where appropriate.
- **Learning outcomes:** Any systemic changes made or lessons learned from the incident.
- **Preventative measures:** Details of any changes made to prevent a recurrence, including updates to policies, procedures, and staff training.

Nimbuscare prioritises **continuous learning** and will take action to make any necessary improvements to patient safety and service quality based on the findings from complaints.

## APPEAL PROCESS

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome or resolution of their complaint, they can appeal. An independent senior staff member will review the investigation to ensure it was fair and thorough. The appeal process will also involve:

- A reassessment of the complaint and any findings.
- An opportunity for the complainant to provide additional information or feedback.
- A final written response that explains the outcome of the review.

The goal of the appeal process is to ensure that all complaints are handled in a **just and transparent manner**, with opportunities for further improvement identified as needed.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Nimbuscare takes the confidentiality of all complainants and patients seriously. Personal information shared during the complaint process will be protected in line with **GDPR** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**. All complaints will be handled in strict confidence, and information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis with those involved in resolving the complaint.

## LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

Aligned with **PSIRF**, Nimbuscare views complaints as **opportunities for learning and continuous improvement**. Every complaint will be used to inform improvements in practice, including:

- **System Engineering Initiative for Patient Safety (SEIPS) analysis** to identify underlying systemic issues.
- **Feedback loops:** Ensuring staff and teams are aware of the learnings and any changes made as a result of complaints.
- **Quality improvement initiatives:** Using insights from complaints to drive improvements in service delivery, patient safety, and clinical practice.

Nimbuscare encourages a **culture of openness and reflection**, where complaints are seen as opportunities to enhance patient care and prevent future incidents.

## EXTERNAL SUPPORT

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution of their complaint, they can escalate the matter to external bodies, such as:

- **NHS England**  
Telephone: 0300 311 22 33  
Email: [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net)  
Post: NHS England, PO Box 16738, REDDITCH B97 9PT

All your details will be treated with the strictest confidence. If you require support with your complaint you can get advice from various advocacy services at any stage of the process:

Government [Voiceability](#) website

Complaints Advocacy Service [Cloverleaf](#) website

- **The Health Service Ombudsman**  
Address: Millbank Tower, London, SW1P 4QP  
Telephone: 0345 015 4033

Email: OHSC.Enquiries@ombudsman.gsi.gov.uk

Website: [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

- **Integrated Care Board (ICB):** Contact details for your local ICB.  
<https://humberandnorthyorkshire.icb.nhs.uk/>
- **Local Council:** Contact your local council for complaints relating to public health.  
<https://www.york.gov.uk/>

## REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINTS POLICY

This Complaints Policy will be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains up to date with legal requirements, best practices, and **PSIRF** guidance. Feedback on the complaints process is welcomed from staff, patients, and other stakeholders, which will be used to further improve the policy and practice. Confidentiality is strictly maintained at all times.

Nimbuscare declares the number of complaints in its annual report. A copy of the latest annual report can be requested from the organisation and can be found on the website [www.nimbuscare.co.uk](http://www.nimbuscare.co.uk) Monthly reporting is made at the Quality & Governance Committee; the following is reported:

- The number of complaints received.
- The subject of the complaints.
- Whether complaints have been upheld and details of any actions taken.