

Feedback Policy - Complaints, Concerns and Compliments

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>
2.0	February 2026	Zoe Weeks	<i>Addition of concerns and compliments</i>
Approved Date:		12/02/2026	
Approved By:		Quality and Governance Committee	
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Synopsis:		<p><i>Nimbuscare Feedback Policy, Complaints Concerns and Compliments outlines a fair and transparent approach for handling feedback from patients, families, and carers. The policy focuses on learning to improve service delivery and patient safety, following NHS regulations and the PSIRF framework. It includes clear procedures for making, acknowledging, and investigating complaints, concerns and compliments, 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 age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation and human rights to ensure fair application. 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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Nimbuscare is committed to delivering high-quality, safe, and compassionate care. We value feedback as a vital way to understand the experiences of patients, service users, carers, families, and stakeholders. This policy sets out how Nimbuscare receives, manages, responds to, and learns from complaints, concerns, and compliments in a fair, open, and consistent manner.

The policy supports a culture of listening, learning, and continuous improvement, while ensuring that individuals feel safe and confident to share feedback without fear of discrimination or disadvantage. We aim to foster a Just Culture, where people 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 feedback.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all:

- Nimbuscare services, sites, and activities.
- Patients, service users, carers, family members, and representatives.
- Nimbuscare employees, contractors, temporary staff, volunteers, and board members.

The policy covers feedback relating to:

- Quality, safety, and effectiveness of care or services.
- Communication, attitude, or behaviour of staff.
- Access to services, delays, or administrative processes.
- Facilities, equipment, or environment.
- Positive experiences and examples of good practice

This policy does not replace safeguarding, disciplinary, whistleblowing, or legal processes. Issues may be escalated or referred to those processes where appropriate.

In line with **PSIRF**, Nimbuscare promotes a non-punitive approach that focuses on understanding the broader context of patient safety events rather than individual fault. This ensures we prioritise learning and improvement across the system.

DEFINITIONS

Feedback: Any comments, compliments, concerns, or complaints about Nimbuscare services.

Concern: An issue or worry raised that can often be resolved quickly without a formal investigation.

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction that requires a formal response or investigation.

Compliment: Positive feedback recognising good care, service, or staff performance.

Complainant: A person providing feedback, including patients, service users, carers, or authorised representatives.

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 PROVIDE FEEDBACK

You have the right to provide feedback 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, concern or compliment then please contact Nimbuscare using the following details or direct your comments through your GP practice:

Feedback may be provided:

Verbally (in person)

Complaint form via VATIX Link: [Patient Feedback Reporting Form](#)

In writing **Address:**

Nimbuscare Head Office Gateway 1,

Holgate Park Drive,

Holgate,

York,

YO26 4GG

Via a representative or advocate, with appropriate consent.

Via a Nimbuscare generated feedback link following an episode of care.

All Nimbuscare staff have a responsibility to listen to feedback and ensure it is shared with the appropriate manager or feedback lead. Support is available for individuals who require assistance, including interpretation services, advocacy, or alternative formats.

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.

MANAGING COMPLIMENTS

Nimbuscare welcomes compliments and positive feedback. The following processes will be followed:

- Recorded appropriately on VATIX (electronic event reporting system).
- Shared with the individual(s) or team concerned, included in performance review and organisational communications.

- Used to recognise good practice and support staff morale.
- Inform learning, training, and service development where relevant.

MANAGING CONCERNS (INFORMAL FEEDBACK)

Where possible, concerns will be addressed quickly and informally by staff or managers. Many concerns can be resolved through explanation, apology, or immediate action.

If the individual is satisfied with the outcome, the matter may be closed without progressing further. Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, or where the individual requests it, the issue will be escalated and managed as a formal complaint.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCESS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

All complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt. The acknowledgement will confirm receipt, outline the next steps, and provide a point of contact. A clear timeframe will be agreed based on the complexity of the complaint and involvement with other stakeholders. Complaint responses are typically responded to within 20 working days, unless an extension is agreed.

RESPONSE TIMEFRAMES:

Single centred complaint – 20 working days
Complex complaint - 20-35 working days
Complex multicentred complaint - 35-50 working days

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:

Complaints will be investigated thoroughly, proportionately, and impartially. 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:

- **Systems review:** 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.

Relevant staff may be asked to provide their recollection of events and healthcare records may need to be accessed to review any relevant information. Additionally, individuals raising complaints may be contacted for clarification or additional information.

Response:

A response will be provided within the agreed timeframe, unless an extension is agreed.

Complainants can indicate a preference for how they wish to receive a response, options include a telephone conversation, a meeting (in person or online), email or letter.

The response will include:

- **A summary of the complaint:** Key concerns raised.
- **Findings of the investigation:** A detailed explanation of what occurred, based on the investigation.
- **Actions taken or planned:** Information about any immediate actions or corrective measures put in place to address the issue.
- **An 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.
- **Information on escalation:** options if the complainant remains dissatisfied

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. 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.

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 FEEDBACK

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 AND ADVOCACY

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution of their complaint, they can escalate the matter to external bodies. You can find your local NHS complaints advocacy service by searching online for "NHS complaints advocacy" and your local authority area, or by contacting your local Healthwatch.

Independent Advocacy Services

NHS Complaints Advocacy: Independent NHS complaints advocacy is commissioned at local authority level. The best way to find the service is to search for Local authority and NHS complaints advocacy on your preferred search engine or alternatively contact your local Healthwatch. These local services are independent of the NHS and provide specialized, free support to help patients file formal complaints about NHS-funded care.

Website: [Independent NHS advocacy and other specialist advice FINAL.pdf](#)

VoiceAbility: Provides NHS complaints advocacy and Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHAs) to help patients understand their rights.

POhWER: A charity offering advocacy support for health and social care, including help with complaints letters and meeting attendance.

The Advocacy People: Offers advocacy support (call 0330 440 9000).

Local Healthwatch: An independent statutory body that can direct you to local independent health complaints advocacy services and help ensure your feedback is heard.

Advice and support organisations

- **Action against Medical Accidents (AvMA):** AvMA is an independent charity that can provide specialist advice on clinical complaints involving harm, patient safety investigations, fitness to practise referrals, inquests, private healthcare complaints and legal action, including referral to specialist solicitors where appropriate. Website: www.avma.org.uk Helpline: 0845 123 2352 (Mon-Fri 10am-3.30pm)
- **The Patients Association:** The Patient's Association is a charity for all patients, regardless of health condition. Its helpline offers free and confidential information and signposting about the complaints process, and its website provides information leaflets, including on how to complain.
Helpline: 0800 3457115 email: helpline@patientsassociation.org.uk.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau:** Provides information and advice about making a complaint, particularly if seeking compensation.
- **Mind:** A mental health charity that offers advice on complaints regarding mental health services.

Regulatory and Escalation Bodies

- **Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO):** Makes final decisions on unresolved complaints about the NHS in England. Their service is free and independent. **Website:** <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/>
Telephone: 0345 015 4033
- **Care Quality Commission (CQC):** The independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. They do not investigate individual complaints but use feedback to monitor service quality.

REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINTS POLICY

This Feedback Policy will be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains up to date with legal requirements, best practices, and **PSIRF** guidance. Feedback on processes are welcomed from staff, patients, and other stakeholders, which will be used to further improve the policy and practice.

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. 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.