

Complaints Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to acknowledge that Rotorua Medical Group (RMG)¹ continually aims to provide a high quality, professional service for all patients at all times.

We acknowledge that patients have a right to complain, as part of the Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights, if they have concerns about the service or treatment they have received.

All complaints will be dealt with in a professional and timely manner in accordance with Right 10 (Right to Complain) of the Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights.

RMG staff are committed to Quality Improvement and as such will view patient complaints as valuable feedback.

Responsibility:

Dealing with complaints is the responsibility of the Complaints Officer (CO), who is the Practice Manager or Appointed Deputy for Rotorua Medical Group.

Process:

1. **Emailled or postal complaint** – Letter, Email, Text, Complaints form.
 - All emailed or posted complaints are passed on to the practice's Complaints Officer.
 - The CO will then take over the management of the complaint.

2. **In person complaint** – Verbally in person – Phone call
 - If any patient wishes to make a complaint about any of the services or treatment they have received from RMG, wherever practical, please take the patient to a private area.
 - In the first instance, acknowledge their concern(s) by listening attentively and taking some notes.
 - Wherever possible use a copy of RMG's Complaint Form² to prompt/guide questioning. Encourage patients to complete this form or offer to complete it on their behalf. These forms (along with a copy of this Policy/Process) will be held at reception in the complaints box.
 - Offer the patient a copy of the HDC "Having a problem with a health or disability service" pamphlet.

- If the receiving staff member feels the need to escalate the complaint immediately, they should request RMG's Complaint Officer take over the discussion.

3. Dealing with the complaint:

- The CO/Deputy will contact the person in writing within **five** working days of receipt of the complaint (unless it has been resolved to their satisfaction within that period), acknowledging the receipt of their complaint.
 - Included in this communication should be an outline of RMG's complaints procedure, and
 - The complainant should also be informed of their right to complain directly to the Health and Disability Commission should they choose to.
 - An Out Box Document can be created in Indici Document (Complaint Acknowledgement – Email or Letter) and sent to the complainant – include a copy of RMG's Complaint Procedure, HDC Leaflet and Privacy Leaflet
- Complaint documentation is stamped with the date it was received and then scanned to the patient's file
- Set up an alert to follow up within 10 working days
- Start entry in the Complaints Register³. Include details of the complaint
- Investigate the complaint
- Within **ten** working days RMG will advise the patient whether or not we feel their complaint is justified. If more time is needed to investigate the complaint, we will advise them of this and why more time is needed.
 - Advance alert if more time is needed to investigate the complaint

4. Complaint resolution:

- Once a decision is made regarding the acceptance or otherwise of the complaint, our CO will
 - Provide the patient with reasons for the decision
 - Advise the patient of any action/s RMG propose to take
 - Advise the patient of their right to complain to the Health & Disability Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner
- Review and complete the Complaints Register. Ensure details of any corrective action/s have been annotated and consequently undertaken.
- Scan all documentation to X:\Rotorua Medical Group - Business Management\Complaints
- For complaints that take some time to fully resolve RMG will advise the patient about the progress of their complaint on a **monthly** basis.
- All completed complaint forms are to be filed in the complaints register held by the CO.
- If appropriate and/or relevant, the outcome of a complaint to be reported to the RMG staff via email. Should any changes in RMG's policy and practice, or

further staff action be required (eg. staff training), this will also be communicated to staff via email by the CO.

5. Learning opportunity:

- All complaints should be considered an opportunity for quality improvement. Complaints that involve handling of a clinical matter, or behaviour of clinical staff, can be discussed, in general terms, when considered relevant at the Clinical Team Meeting.
- If appropriate and/or relevant, the outcome of a complaint to be reported to the RMG staff via email.
- Should any changes in RMG's policy and practice, or further staff action be required (eg. staff training), this will also be communicated to staff via email by the CO.
- Staff training that occurs as a result of the complaint will be recording in the staff training records.
- Complaints of sufficiently severity, will be discussed at the Directors meeting and its impact on RMG's Strategic vision and plan will be reviewed.

Notes:

At any time the patient requires, RMG will provide all the information that we hold that is or may be relevant to your complaint.

RMG staff receive training on the HDC Consumer Rights (dependent on course availability) at least 5 yearly.

Reference:

Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights.

Review Date: August 2023

Signed: *CRGoldsmith (PM) (140823)*