



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Document Detail	
Effective from	1/5/18
Latest Revision	September 2024
Date of next review	September 2026
Document Version	V2.1
Owner	LEAD Manager

Table of Contents

1	Scope	3
2	Rationale	3
3	Policy Objectives	3
4	Roles and Responsibilities	3
5	Openness, Transparency and Duty of Candour.....	4
6	Who may raise a complaint.....	4
7	Procedure for Handling Complaints	4
8	How to Raise a Complaint.....	4
9	Process of Learning from Complaints	5

1 Scope

This document sets out the policy for handling complaints at London Early Autism Diagnosis (LEAD) and applies to all staff.

2 Rationale

LEAD is committed to listening and learning from complaints. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff at LEAD understand the importance of handling complaints appropriately.

3 Policy Objectives

This policy will:

- Ensure appropriate complaints management in line with the Regulations
- Ensure that the process is set out clearly to support staff and the complainant
- Act as a reference guide
- Ensure that complaints are acknowledged within 3 working days (unless a full response can be made within 5 days)
- Ensure that actions are being implemented and monitored arising from complaints
- Ensure that any themes from complaints are recognised and learning is implemented.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

Manager

The Manager

has overall responsibility for complaints. It is the responsibility of the Manager to investigate a complaint and formulate a response. This includes co-ordinating and collating comments from staff and drafting a timely response. The Manager also has the responsibility of monitoring the complaints process and learning outcomes.

All Staff

This policy should be followed by all staff. By following this policy, staff will ensure that their management of complaints is in line with best practice.

5 Openness, Transparency and Duty of Candour

Being open involves acknowledging, apologising and explaining when things have gone wrong. Following the Francis report (2013) it is a requirement for clinicians to be honest with patients about avoidable harm and for safety concerns to be reported openly and truthfully. LEAD is committed to promoting an honest, open and transparent culture.

6 Who may raise a complaint.

Anyone who has received or is receiving services provided by LEAD has the right to raise a concern or complaint.

7 How to raise a complaint

A complaint can be raised informally and formally.

Informal Complaint: An informal complaint is a complaint that is received verbally and is managed by the member of staff on the spot. An immediate apology or explanation is provided. If the complainant is satisfied with the resolution, then the Manager should be informed of the complaint and a record kept of the complaint and outcome. If the complainant is not satisfied with the apology at that present moment, then they can be referred to the Manager to discuss their concerns further. If the complaint is still not resolved after discussing with the Manager, then the individual raising the complaint must be given the option of going through the formal complaints process and must be provided with the relevant information so that they understand the process for making a formal complaint. All Informal complaints must be resolved within 10 working days.

Formal Complaint: A formal complaint is a complaint that has been received in writing. LEAD must acknowledge all formal complaints within 3 working days, and the response to the complaint must be provided within 25 working days. Should the organisation find that they are unable to provide the response within this timeframe, then they must inform the complainant at the earliest opportunity with a reason as to why the response timeframe is being extended.

8 Procedure for handling complaints

Once the complaint has been received by LEAD, an acknowledgement letter must be provided to the complainant comprising of options they can take to resolve their complaint

Where staff have recognised and have become aware that services have not met the high standards expected by LEAD, then this must be acknowledged to the parent/family and an apology must be given and action must be taken to resolve the issues of dissatisfaction with the service.

If a complainant is not happy with the response provided by the Manager, then the complainant should write back within 6 months of receiving the response from LEAD that a

review of the response can be made and a further assessment of where the failings have occurred.

The next stage of the complaints process where the complainant is not satisfied would be referring their complaint to an external agency.

9 Process of Learning from Complaints

Learning from complaints must be shared across the organisation. All complaints will be reviewed in local working groups. Action plans will be created from responses sent to complainants so that continuous quality improvements are made and evidenced.

