



Effective Date: 6th September 2007

Review Date: 6th September 2009

Patient Complaints Policy

Policy Number: WHP004

Drafted By: Patient Services Department

Authorised By: Brian Conlan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Conlan', written over a light blue background.

Signature: _____
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 6th September 2007



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1.0 Purpose

This policy aims to ensure optimum complaints management in line with a patient-focused culture that is consistent with the hospital's mission and ethos.

2.0 Revision History

Date	Revision No.	Change	Reference Section(s)
01/05/2006	1.0	New policy	Total Document
02/03/2007	2.0	5.5 Title of Appendix A amended	5.5
		Appendix B - Verbal Complaints Register removed	5.6
		Appendix C – Patient Information Feedback Leaflet now becomes Appendix B	5.7
		The word investigation amended to examination	4.2 / 5.3
		Section rewritten	6.1 / 6.2 / 6.3
		7.1 Title amended	7.1.1
23/08/2007	2.1	Appendix A amended	Appendix A

3.0 Persons Affected

3.1 Patients.

3.2 Staff.



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4.0 Policy

The policy of the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital is to ensure that:

- 4.1 Complaint-handling procedures are widely published and are easily understood.
- 4.2 The hospital provides a fair, full and impartial examination without any penalty in respect of quality of service to the patient.
- 4.3 The steps for making a complaint are simple and transparent.
- 4.4 There is assistance for complainants with special needs.
- 4.5 Confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- 4.6 Complaints are resolved within a pre-determined time.
- 4.7 Harassment and / or physical violence towards employees or their families will cause personal contact with the complainant and / or their representatives to be discontinued and the complaint will thereafter only be pursued through written communication.
- 4.8 Staff should make every effort to resolve the complaint at local level.
- 4.9 Written complaints received within the hospital should be forwarded within 48 hours to the Complaints Manager and/or Patient Liaison Officer.
- 4.10 All complaints are appropriately recorded.
- 4.11 Complaints received in writing are acknowledged within three working days.
- 4.12 Staff may request to be freed from other responsibilities for the time taken to respond to the complaint.
- 4.13 The complaints procedure is without prejudice to the patient's statutory right to make a complaint elsewhere.
- 4.14 The Patient Care Committee is provided with trend analysis based on recorded complaints on a regular basis.



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4.15 Letters of complaint, replies or minutes of meetings relating to complaints are retained in the Patient Services Department for a period of 5 years.

4.16 The hospital makes improvements, in areas where patients experience dissatisfaction, when / where appropriate and feasible.

5.0 Definitions

5.1 **Complaint:** An expression or statement of dissatisfaction that requires a response.

5.2 **Complainant:** A person who is entitled to make a complaint on his/her own behalf or on behalf of another.

5.3 **Prolific or Vexatious Complaints:** A patient who consistently displays a pattern of unreasonable requests despite a full examination of their original complaint.

5.4 **Appendix A – Patient Complaints Process.**

5.5 **Appendix B - Patient Information Feedback Leaflet.**

6.0 Responsibilities

6.1 Patient Care Committee

6.1.1 Review complaints where complainants are dissatisfied with initial outcome.

6.2 Complaints Manager

6.2.1 Manages the complaint handling process in the hospital.

6.3 Complaints Management Personnel

6.3.1 Follow Appendix A – Patient Complaints Process.

6.3.2 Manage complaints received.



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6.3.3 Make every effort to resolve complaints at a **local level**.

6.3.4 Advise complainants of options to complain elsewhere (Appendix A).

6.3.5 Provide feedback to staff on outcome of complaints.

6.4 Human Resources

6.4.1 Follow Appendix A – Patient Complaints Process.

6.4.2 Manage serious patient allegations against staff.

6.4.3 Implement local protocols.

6.5 Senior Management and Department Heads

6.5.1 Follow Appendix A – Patient Complaints Process.

6.5.2 Make every effort to resolve complaints at **local level**.

6.6 Staff

6.6.1 Follow Appendix A – Patient Complaints Process.

6.6.2 Make every effort to resolve complaint at **local level**.

7.0 Procedures

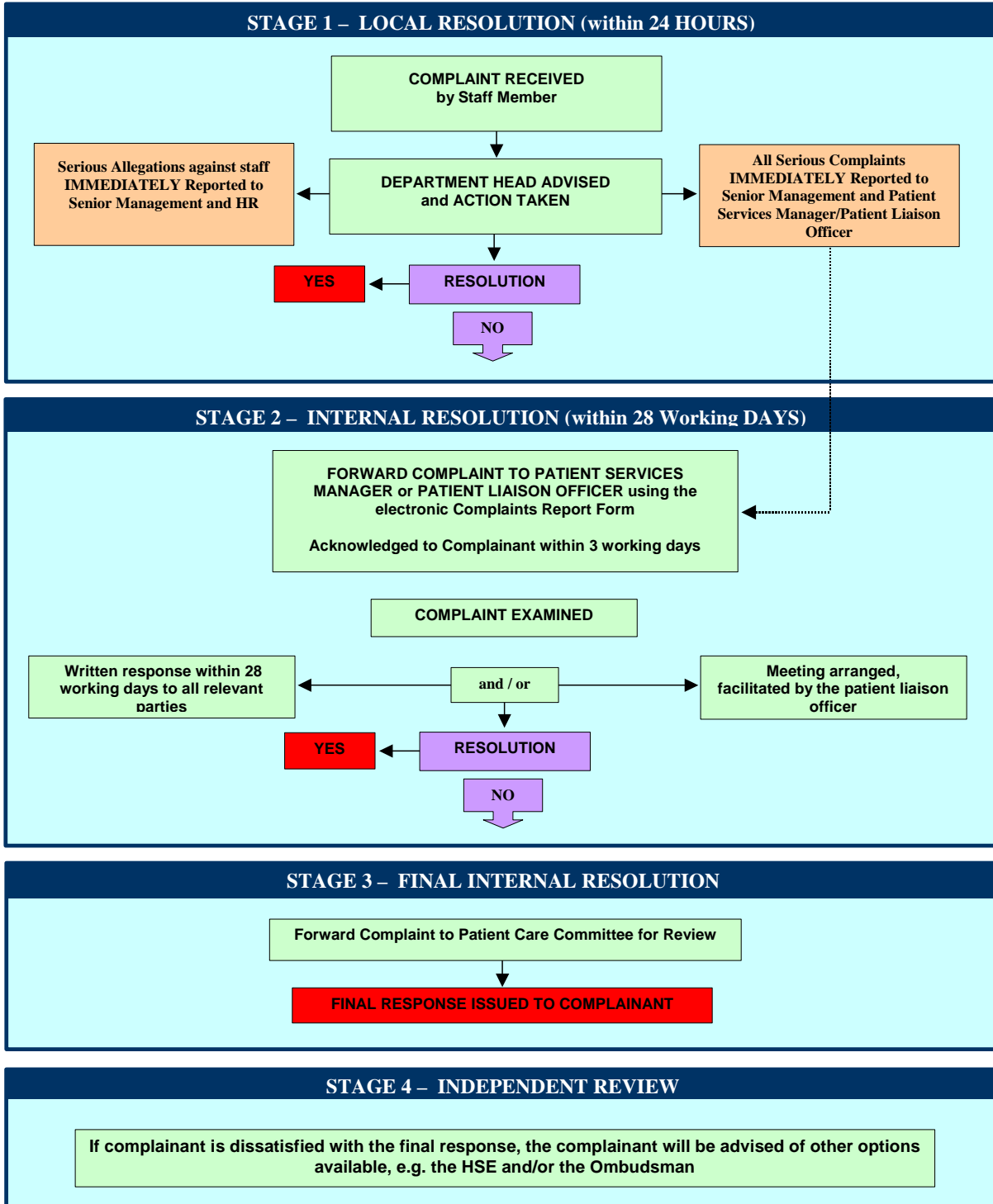
7.1 Patients Complaints Process

7.1.1 See Appendix A.



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Appendix A – Patient Complaints Process







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Appendix B – Patient Information Feedback Leaflet – Page 1 & 2

<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Mater Misericordiae University Hospital</p> <p><small>Eccles Street, Dublin 7, Ireland</small></p>  <p><i>Have you any feedback for us? We welcome your questions and comments</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p><small>MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:</small> Patient Services Department Telephone: 01 803 2206 Fax: 01 803 4777 Email: patientservices@mater.ie Website: www.mater.ie</p> </div> </div>	<hr style="border: 0.5px solid black; margin-bottom: 10px;"/> <p>The Mater Misericordiae University Hospital is committed to improving the quality of patient care. We would value your feedback and suggestions regarding the facilities, staff and services.</p> <p>The information will be received in a constructive and positive way to improve and review services to our patients and visitors.</p> <p>It is through your experience of our services and the feedback you provide to us, that we can address any issues that may have given you cause for dissatisfaction. All feedback will be recorded and staff informed accordingly.</p> <p>Your dissatisfaction about any aspect of the Hospital's services will be investigated and you will be informed of the outcome as soon as possible.</p> <p>You are entitled, where your dissatisfaction is not resolved, to have the matter referred to the Hospital's Complaints Committee.</p> <p>The Hospital's Complaints Procedure is without prejudice to your statutory rights to complain elsewhere.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>We hope your stay in the hospital will be as pleasant and as comfortable as possible.</i></p> <hr style="border: 0.5px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/>
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Appendix B – Patient Information Feedback Leaflet – Page 3 & 4

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mater Misericordiae University Hospital</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Patient Services Department</i></p> <p>The Patient Services Department has overall responsibility for the monitoring of patient satisfaction and this is achieved through our patient advocacy service, provided by our Patient Liaison Officers.</p> <p>The Patient Liaison Officer, operating in a non-medical role, is one of the Hospital's means of enabling patients and families to obtain solutions to problems ensuring that they are provided with a process to seek information and solutions to problems.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>When to call the Patient Liaison Officer</i></p> <p>Contact a Patient Liaison Officer when you would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone to listen to you • Someone to give you support or assistance • Someone to respond to a complaint • Help in a crisis situation • Information about hospital services 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>How to give feedback</i></p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: auto;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VERBAL During your visit to the hospital please feel free to approach staff with your comments, suggestions, compliments or complaints. • WRITTEN If you wish to make your comments in writing please address them to: <i>The Patient Services Manager, Patient Services Department, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Eccles Street, Dublin 7.</i> • TELEPHONE Please feel free to telephone the Patient Liaison Officer on any of the following numbers: 01/8032206 01/8032825 01/8032468 • E-MAIL Please feel free to e-mail the Patient Liaison Officers on patientservices@mater.ie
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Appendix B – Patient Information Feedback Leaflet – Page 5 & 6

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>How we investigate a complaint</i></p> <p>Verbal complaints, where possible will be dealt with immediately at Ward/Department level. Complaints not resolved at this stage should be forwarded to the hospital's Patient Liaison Officer(s). All complaints are logged on the hospital's complaints register and fully investigated.</p> <p>All written complaints received by the Patient Liaison Officer(s) will be acknowledged within three (3) working days. When fully investigated a written reply will be issued to the complainant within (28) working days.</p> <p>In cases where it is not possible to reply within this time an interim response will be sent informing you of the reason for the delay and advising when a reply can be expected.</p> <p>Information from your health records may need to be disclosed to relevant hospital staff for the purpose of investigating your complaint.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Remember, your opinion matters to us and it is through feedback from our patients that we as care providers can improve our services and more importantly greatly improve the quality of patient care”.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PATIENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT TELEPHONE: 01 803 2206 Email: patientservices@mater.ie Website: www.mater.ie</p>
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