

POLICY ON COMPLAINTS

Policy

The Board welcomes feedback from the public and from practitioners about the service it provides. Concerns/complaints received provide an opportunity for the Board to improve systems and processes. This policy also covers the Board's process for dealing with complaints about potential breaches on the Board's part of an individual's privacy.

Informal complaints

Informal concerns, for example, via a telephone call, should be managed and if possible resolved by the staff member responding to the call. The caller may be referred to the Registrar if the issue cannot be resolved by the staff member.

In the absence of the Registrar, the person taking the call will take the caller's telephone number and refer the matter to the Registrar, and will advise the caller of the Registrar's name and contact details.

The caller will also be advised of their right to make a formal complaint. If the caller elects to make a formal complaint he/she will be offered one of the following options:

- Writing a letter to the Registrar (with contact details provided)
- Writing a letter to the Chair of the Board (where the Registrar is the subject of the complaint)
- Having the concern/complaint recorded in writing by the staff member to whom they are speaking.

Formal complaints recorded by Board staff should include the following:

- Date the complaint was received;
- Full name of the complainant;
- Contact details including telephone number;
- An outline of the issues causing concern;
- Advice already given to the person making the complaint; and
- The name/signature of the staff member taking the complaint.

Formal complaints

For the purposes of this policy a formal complaint is one that is received in written form, (i.e by letter or email), or has been recorded as a formal complaint as above.

Formal complaints received must be referred to the Registrar who will decide, in consultation with the Board Chair or the convenor of the relevant committee, how to respond, and whether to further investigate issues surrounding the complaint.

All formal complaints will be entered into a complaints register held by the Registrar which records details of the complainant, the nature of the complaint, and dates of receipt and of resolution.

All formal responses to complaints will be signed by the Registrar (or the Board Chair where the Registrar is the subject of the complaint). If a complaint is resolved by telephone this will be recorded in a file note giving details of the resolution.

Formal complaints will be resolved within 20 working days of being received. Where a complaint is not able to be resolved within this timeframe due to the absence of staff or due to the complexity of issues to be resolved, receipt of the complaint will be formally acknowledged within 2 weeks of being received and the complainant advised of the expected timeframe in which the complaint will be addressed.

Unresolved complaints

If a complainant is not satisfied that a complaint has been resolved, the complaint will be referred to the full Board for consideration. The decision of the Board will be final, and the complainant will be advised of their right to complain to the Minister of Health if unsatisfied with the outcome.

If a complainant is not satisfied that a complaint relating to a potential breach of the Privacy Act 1993 has been resolved, the Board will advise the complainant of their right to complain to the Privacy Commissioner.

*Approved by the Board: January 2011
Reviewed by the Board: August 2017
Date of next review: August 2020*