

Purpose

North Coast Radiology Group (**NCRG**) is committed to the delivery of excellent customer service to patients, carers, third parties and referring practitioners.

The purpose of this policy is ensure that feedback and complaints are managed appropriately and that complaints are resolved in an timely and efficient manner.

Principles

This policy is underpinned by the principles of open disclosure, fairness, accessibility, responsiveness, efficiency and integration.

Scope

This policy applies to all clerical, medical imaging technologists, nursing and radiologists, and staff of NCRG.

Actions and Methods

1. Complaints

Complaints can be made by patients, carers, third parties or referring practitioners. All complaints will be treated in a serious manner.

2. Complaint Process

Complaints may be made in the following ways:

- In person at our clinic practices / branches;
- By telephone;
- By mail;
- By email; and
- By the feedback form available on the website.

For complaints made in person / by telephone:

Where a complaint is lodged in person to a NCRG staff member, if possible, the NCRG staff member will commence actioning of the complaint and advise the complainant of NCRG's Complaint and Feedback Policy. The NCRG staff member will be required to record all relevant details, seek assistance from Cluster Manager, Clerical Co-ordinator, other Manager or General Counsel and refer the complaint on to the General Counsel, if required.

If applicable, the NCRG staff member may take action to rectify the issue (such as offering an explanation, if known).

For complaints lodged or made in writing, these complaints must be referred to the General Counsel. The complainant will receive acknowledgement in writing of receipt of the complaint. This acknowledgement will also notify the complainant the following:

- If further information is required;
- The person investigating the complaint / contact person to discuss the complaint;

Complaints and Feedback

- The timeframe for the outcome / finalisation of the complaint.

3. Responsiveness

Complaints made to NCRG will be responded to in a prompt and fair manner. The complainant will be advised of the estimated time frame for the resolution of the complaint and will advise the complainant if further time is required for investigation and / or the reason for the delay.

4. Outcomes

If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, a number of actions may be taken, depending on the nature of the complaint.

This may include: an explanation, written apology, correction of records, monitoring of the issues, training and education, or disciplinary action commenced against whom the complaint is made.

If the investigation is inconclusive because the complaint cannot be proven due to lack of evidence NCRG may take a number of actions, including additional training.

The complainant will be notified of the outcome of the complaint, any recommendations and / or actions to be undertaken by NCRG as a result of the complaint.

5. Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be respected and maintained at all times within the constraints to fully investigate the complaint. Personal and health information collected as part of the complaint investigation process will only be used for that purpose and will be protected in accordance with relevant privacy laws.

6. Feedback

NCRG encourages feedback as a way for the continual improvement of its service delivery. Feedback about a service can be provided informally and directly to a member of staff or formally through the completion of the NCRG Feedback form available on the website.

All feedback will be referred to the relevant Manager for response.

Responsibilities

- All staff are to be trained on this policy.
- The General Counsel is responsible for the investigation and implementation of corrective action in consultation with Managing Partner and/or relevant Manager.
- The details of the complaint and corrective actions taken must be recorded in the NCRG Quality Improvement Register and the Complaints Handling Register.
- The Office of General Counsel is responsible for the annual review of complaints and feedback as part of NCRG's quality improvement processes.

Mandatory Notifications

Complaints which require mandatory notification will be referred to the relevant agency or body, such as the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC).

Referral to External Agencies

If the response provided by NCRG is considered not to be satisfactory, a complaint can be made to the following agency for investigation:

- The Department of Health
- HCCC

Contact details of these agencies are provided at the end of this document.

References and Associated Documents

Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

DoHA Practice Accreditation Standards: 1.1(i) and 4.3

Health Records and Information Protection Act 2002 (NSW)

NCRG Policy for Quality Improvement

NCRG Quality Improvement Register

NSQHS (National Safety and Quality in Health Service Standards)

NCRG Complaints Handling Register

[Link to National Safety and Quality in Health Service Standards](#)

Complaints and Feedback

External Agencies

Department of Health	Telephone	02 6289 155
	Freecall	1800 020 103
	TTY service	02 9219 7555
	National Relay Service	1300 555 727
	Address	Department of Health GPO Box 9848, CANBERRA ACT 2601
Health Care Complaints Commission	Telephone	02 9219 744
	Toll Free (in NSW)	1800 043 159
	TTY service	02 9219 7555
	Fax	02 9281 4585
	Email	hccc@hccc.nsw.gov.au
	Address	Level 13, 323 Castlereagh Street SYDNEY NSW 2000

Glossary

DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing
HCCC	Health Care Complaints Commission
NCRG	North Coast Radiology Group