

## Appendix 2

### Subject of Complaint Issues

#### 1. Access to Premises

This heading includes all issues concerning ease of movement inside and outside the buildings, e.g. signage, car parking, etc. Problems of wheelchair access / disabled parking etc. should also be included under this heading, if not covered under '*Patients' Status / Discrimination*' (20).

#### 2. Admission into Hospital, Delay / Cancellation (Inpatients)

This refers to delay or cancellation coming into hospital for inpatient and day case admissions, e.g. waiting list for surgery. Delayed admissions from A&E should not be included in this category but under '*Delayed Admission from A&E*' (13).

#### 3. Aids / Adaptations / Appliances

This heading refers to the suitability / availability of any aids / adaptations, once they have been recommended. Complaint issues about waiting for assessment should be included under '*Waiting Lists, Community Services*' (32).

#### 4. Appointments, Delay / Cancellation (Outpatient)

This heading refers to delay or cancellation in securing an appointment at an outpatient clinic, i.e. outpatient waiting lists. It is to be distinguished from '*Waiting Lists, Community Services*' (32) and '*Waiting Times, Outpatient Departments*' (35).

#### 5. Children Order Complaint Issues

This heading refers to all formal complaint issues received under the Children Order Representations and Complaint Issues Procedure, irrespective of their subject or content.

#### 6. Clinical Diagnosis

This heading covers clinical diagnosis only and is to be distinguished from '*Professional Assessment of Need*' (22).

#### 7. Communication / Information to Patients

This heading includes all issues of communication and information provided to patients / clients / families / carers regarding any aspect of their contact with staff. However, this should be distinguished from complaint issues about the attitude of staff when communicating with patients / clients, which would be logged under '*Staff Attitude / Behaviour*' (24).

#### 8. Complaint Issue Handling

This refers to handling of a complaint issue at any point up to and including the conclusion of local resolution stage, e.g. a complainant complains that he/she did not receive a response within the timescale. However, a complaint issue would not be included under this heading if it obviously falls under another heading, e.g. if the complaint issue is about attitude of staff handling the complaint issue, it would be logged under '*Staff Attitude / Behaviour*' (24).

#### 9. Confidentiality

This heading includes any issues of confidentiality regarding patients / clients, e.g. (i) complaint by a patient regarding a breach of confidentiality or (ii) complaint by the parents of a young adolescent who are denied information by staff on the grounds of that adolescent's right to confidentiality.

#### 10. Consent to Treatment

This refers to complaint issues made regarding consent to treatment/care.

#### **11. Contracted Regulated Establishments and Agencies**

This heading refers to complaint issues about services that are provided by Trusts via contractual / commissioned arrangements. Establishments may be children's homes, independent hospitals and nursing or residential homes, while Agencies may be a domiciliary care agency, fostering agency or nursing agency. For a full list of Regulated Establishments and Agencies please refer to 'Quality & Improvement Regulation NI Order 2003, Article 8'.

In the first instance, the service provider is expected to deal with complaint issues, however, where the complainant, Trust or RQIA wishes, the matter may be investigated by the Trust under the HPSS Complaint Procedure.

Examples: (i) the Trust (as the commissioner) is asked by either RQIA or a relative, to investigate a complaint issue about the care or treatment provided to a resident in an Independent Nursing or Residential Home; (ii) a patient / client asks the Trust (as the commissioner) to investigate a complaint issue about the attitude of a member of staff of a Voluntary Agency with whom the Trust has contracted a home care service (e.g. personal care).

#### **12. Contracted Services – Other**

This heading refers to complaint issues about services that are provided by Trusts via contractual / commissioned arrangements that are not captured in '*Contracted Regulated Establishments and Agencies*' (10). In the first instance, the service provider is expected to deal with complaint issues, however, where the complainant or Trust wishes, the matter may be investigated by the Trust under the HPSS Complaint Procedure.

Example: Attitude of a member of staff of facilities services operating under contract on Trust premises, (e.g. car clamping company or catering).

#### **13. Delayed Admission from A&E**

This refers to patients waiting in Accident & Emergency, following decision to 'admit', before being allocated a bed in a ward. This should be distinguished from '*Waiting Times, A&E Departments*' (34) and '*Admission into Hospital, Delay / Cancellation (Inpatients)*' (2).

#### **14. Discharge / Transfer Arrangements**

This heading refers to the adequacy of arrangements and includes early discharges or delayed discharges. It does not include failure to communicate discharge arrangements, which would be included under '*Communication / Information to Patients*' (6).

#### **15. Environmental**

Complaint issues referring to the general condition or repair of the premises should be included under this heading. It also covers wider environmental issues, e.g. smoking.

#### **16. Hotel / Support / Security Services**

This heading includes any complaint issue referring to ancillary or support services, e.g. portering, facilities, catering. It also refers to security issues, e.g. stolen vehicles parked on Trust property.

#### **17. Infection Control**

This heading refers to compliance with infection control standards, e.g. hand hygiene; aseptic procedures; inappropriate use of personal protective equipment; incorrect disposal of waste or soiled linen; equipment / furniture not decontaminated. It covers issues around all infections but especially resistant micro-organism infections, e.g. MRSA, VRE. However,

complaint issues about lack of information or not being informed would not be included in this heading, but would be logged under '*Communication / Information to Patients*' (6).

**18. Mortuary & Post-Mortem**

This category refers to complaint issues in relation to the mortuary and/or post-mortem.

**19. Patients' Privacy / Dignity**

This heading includes complaint issues specifically relating to the privacy or personal dignity of patients/clients.

**20. Patients' Property / Expenses / Finance**

This heading refers to issues of the personal property, expenses or finance of patients/clients, e.g. due money for fostering; issues around direct payments; concerns about Trust charging / invoicing for clients in Nursing/Residential Home (either Private or Trust Home); broken hearing aid; lost spectacles / dentures.

Property damaged by staff arising in the course of care / treatment would fall into this category; however, property stolen from a patient's locker (as not being entrusted to or in the custodianship of staff and not known to be attributable to staff) would come under the heading of '*Hotel/Support/Security Services*' (15). Complaint issues about stolen vehicles (visitor or patient) and property lost or stolen from visitors should similarly be logged as a '*Hotel/Support/Security Services*' (15).

**21. Patients' Status / Discrimination**

This heading refers to complaint issues regarding disadvantageous treatment. It includes discrimination under the 9 Equality categories (i.e. age, gender, marital status, political opinions, religious belief, racial group, sexual orientation, persons with or without a disability, persons with or without dependents) and under the Human Rights Act (e.g. Article 1, Right to Life; Article 3, Right to Freedom from Torture, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment; Article 8, Right to Respect for Private or Family Life). Complaint issues about patient choice should also be included under this heading.

**22. Policy / Commercial Decisions**

This category refers to complaint issues related to policy and/or commercial decisions.

**23. Professional Assessment of Need**

This heading refers to the assessment of need in either clinical or non-clinical contexts, however, should be distinguished from '*Clinical Diagnosis*' (5).

**24. Records / Record Keeping**

This refers to cases where records (such as medical notes, case files, X-rays) are unavailable, e.g. records have been mislaid or misfiled. Complaint issues about access rights to deceased patients' health records (governed by Access to Health Records (1993) NI Order) should be included under this heading. Complaint issues about any aspect of content of records or right of access should only be included under this heading, if they are not more appropriately dealt with under other procedures, such as Data Protection Act or Freedom of Information Act: appeals processes.

**25. Prison Healthcare Related Complaint Issues**

This relates to the South Eastern HSC Trust only, which has responsibility for securing the provision of health and social care services for prisoners.

**26. Staff Attitude / Behaviour**

This category refers to complaint issues related to staff attitude and/or staff behaviour.

**27. Theatre / Operation / Procedure, Delay / Cancellation**

This heading includes all aspects of delay or cancellation of operation or procedure once the patient is in hospital, e.g. Radiology investigation cancelled, or theatre cancelled due to lack of ICU beds, theatre overrun, no anaesthetist, etc. This should be distinguished from the cancellation or delay of admission for the procedure captured under '*Admission into Hospital, Delay/Cancellation*' (Inpatients) (2).

**28. Transport, Late or Non-arrival / Journey Time**

This heading refers to complaint issues about the late arrival or non-arrival of transport or about the length of journey.

**29. Transport, Suitability of Vehicle / Equipment**

This heading refers to the appropriateness of the vehicle assigned and will include issues such as comfort, ease of access for the client group served. Complaint issues about the appropriateness of equipment would also be logged under this heading.

**30. Treatment & Care, Quality**

This refers to the quality or standard of treatment and care provided. It also covers complaint issues relating to patient safety. However, it is to be distinguished from '*Treatment & Care, Quantity*' (29) which refers to the quantity or amount of treatment and care.

**31. Treatment & Care, Quantity**

This refers to the amount of treatment and care provided or available, e.g. someone receiving good quality home help but feel they are receiving inadequate number of hours.

**32. Waiting Lists, Community Services**

This heading refers to the time spent waiting for either assessment or for the delivery of services following assessment, e.g. waiting list for an OT assessment, waiting list for a care package. 'Unmet need' should also be logged under this heading. This heading should be distinguished from '*Waiting Times, Community Services*' (31).

**33. Waiting Times, Community Services**

This heading refers to waiting time during delivery of community services. It would include such issues as erratic timing, failure of professional staff to turn up at the specified time for an appointment. It should be distinguished from '*Waiting Lists, Community Services*' (30).

**34. Waiting Times, A&E Departments**

Complaint issues regarding waiting time for initial assessment or waiting time to be treated should all be logged under this heading. Complaint issues about delayed admission from A&E are not included here but should be listed under '*Delayed Admission from A&E*' (12).

**35. Waiting Times, Outpatient Departments**

This heading refers to the time waiting at an outpatient appointment, other than at A&E. It should be distinguished from '*Appointments, Delay / Cancellation (Outpatient)*' (4).

**36. Other**

This is a residual heading for any complaint issues, which do not fall into any categories listed above.