



Complaints Policy

Complaints Policy and Procedure for Members of the Public/Service Users

Date Approved: December 2020

Review Date: December 2023

Version	Date	History
1.0	October 2004	JCC Approved
1.0	October 2004	Equality Screened
1.0	September 2006	Policy Revised
2.0	November 2006	JCC Approved September 2006 revisions – version 2 approved
2.0	November 2006	Equality Screened
2.1	March 2009	Draft amendments made in line with revised HSC guidance
2.2	May 2009	Policy Statement added
2.3	May 2009	Policy Statement removed from this document and established as separate document.
3.0	December 2013	Policy and Procedure redrafted to deal with Case Related Complaints Only.
4.0	March 2014	SMT approved for consultation
4.1	June 2014	Consultation end period
4.2	July 2014	Board Approved
4.3	October 2014	Review and acceptance by JCC with no changes
4.4	January 2015	Update to Procedure page 21 following review by Internal Audit.
4.5	August 2016	Update to procedure following NIGALA review of CCC process.
5.0	February 2017	Policy reviewed. Change to decision maker stage 2 and disciplinary section amended.
5.1	June 2017	Review and acceptance by JCC.

Version	Date	History
6.0	January 2019	Amendments to Policy and Procedure.
6.1	July/October 2019	Consultation with staff (17 July 2019 to 3 October 2019)
6.2	October 2019	Meeting with NIPSA
6.3	March/April 2020	Second consultation with staff (13 March to 10 April 2020)
6.4	September 2020	Approved by SMT
6.5	November 2020	Approved by Audit Committee
6.6	December 2020	Approved by Board

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Accessibility

The NIGALA is committed to ensuring that its Complaints Policy and procedures are accessible to all. We are particularly conscious that some groups may not have the same access to information as others.

These include:

- Children and young people who may have difficulties in accessing or understanding information;
- People with sensory and learning disabilities;
- Members of minority ethnic groups whose first language is not English.

NIGALA will make this policy available in alternative formats on request. Typically these will include:

- Large print;
- Braille;
- Minority languages.

Copies of this policy can be provided on request to the Complaints Officer who can be contacted at the address below, or downloaded from the NIGALA website.

Complaints Officer
Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency
Centre House
79 Chichester Street
Belfast
BT1 4JE

Tel: 0300 555 0102
Email: complaints@nigala.hscni.net
Website: www.nigala.hscni.net

NIGALA Complaints Policy

SECTION 1: POLICY

Introduction

- 1.1 The Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA) was established in November 1996 in order to provide representation for children in specified public law proceedings and adoption proceedings throughout Northern Ireland.
- 1.2 NIGALA is committed to providing a high quality service and all staff are required to demonstrate NIGALA's values.
- 1.3 This policy sets out how NIGALA will deal with complaints made about the service the Agency provides. It is guided by the Department of Health document, Guidance in relation to the Health and Social Care complaints procedure¹.

Policy Aims

- 1.4 This policy seeks to achieve an accessible and effective means of making complaints. It aims to foster an organisational culture that promotes openness and transparency, which results in a prompt, fair and where possible, local resolution.
- 1.5 This policy aims to:
 - Provide access to those wishing to make a complaint;
 - Ensure the process for dealing with complaints is simple and straightforward;

¹ <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/Guidance%20in%20Relation%20to%20the%20HSC%20Complaints%20Procedure%20-%20April%202019.pdf>

- Ensure responses to complaints are timely whilst being comprehensive, accurate and open with an emphasis on early resolution of the complaint;
- Ensure staff and complainants are treated with the same open and fair approach;
- Ensure that complaints are used positively to support learning, continuously improve the services we provide and where possible prevent recurrence.

1.6 Complainants can expect the following from the process:

- An explanation;
- An apology, if appropriate;
- Service improvement which will avoid a recurrence of the experience.

This list is not exhaustive and the complainant is encouraged to explain the potential outcome they seek when making the complaint.

Complaints Management

1.7 NIGALA recognises common principles in effective complaints management across the Health and Social Care services within Northern Ireland.

- **Accessibility:** Flexible options for pursuing a complaint and effective support for those wishing to do so;
- **A duty of candour:** Everyone who works in our organisation or works for our organisation will be open, honest and transparent in all that they do. This includes:
 - **Openness:** Enabling concerns and complaints to be raised freely and fearlessly, and questions to be answered fully and truthfully.

- **Transparency:** Making accurate and useful information about performance and outcomes available to staff, patients, the public and regulators.
- **Candour:** Informing any patient/client who has or may have been avoidably harmed by a healthcare service of that fact and a remedy offered where appropriate, regardless of whether a complaint has been made or a question asked about it.
- **Responsiveness:** Providing an appropriate and proportionate response.
- **Fairness:** Emphasising early resolution in order to minimise strain and distress for all; and
- **Learning and development:** Ensuring complaints are viewed as a positive opportunity to learn and improve services.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.8 The NIGALA wishes to ensure that complaints about any aspects of our service are dealt with as quickly and comprehensively as possible. We want to learn from feedback so that improvements can be incorporated into our future work whenever possible.
- 1.9 All staff within NIGALA have a responsibility for the effective and efficient resolution of complaints in support of this complaints policy and to respond to complaints in a positive way.
- 1.10 In addition there are designated roles and responsibilities to support complaints management within NIGALA:

Officer	Description of Role
Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the complaints policy and ensuring its effect application. ▪ Communicating the outcome of the complaint to the complainant.
Head of Corporate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Head of Corporate Services has been designated by the Chief Executive to be responsible for the review of complaints and ensuring the implementation and operation of the complaints policy. In the absence of the Head of Corporate Services the Chief Executive will decide who will fulfil this role. ▪ Resolve complaints at point of contact. ▪ Conduct formal complaints investigation and preparing response by 20 working days. ▪ Gather information pertaining to the complaint as necessary.
Line Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advise member of staff a complaint has been received. ▪ Provide support to member of staff throughout complaints process. ▪ In the absence of line manager, another senior manager will advise member of staff of the complaint.
Complaints Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First point of contact for complainants. ▪ Acknowledging receipt of your complaint within 2 working days of receipt.

- Ensuring that the process and timescales are followed and advising of any reason for delay which may impact on timescales.
- Assisting you with any procedural enquiries you have in relation to this policy.
- Ensuring records relating to complaints are maintained.
- Referring training needs resulting from the operation of this policy to the Agency's Quality Assurance & Training Manager.
- Provide reports to Senior Management Team, the Social Care Governance Committee, and the NIGALA Board as required.

Complainants

1.11 It is appropriate to note that complainants also have responsibilities under this policy. Complainants are expected to:

- State as clearly and fully as possible the nature of their complaint including what outcome they would like to achieve.
- Respond promptly to communications from NIGALA in relation to the complaint, to help ensure complaints are progressed in a timely manner.
- Treat NIGALA staff in a courteous manner.

Diversity

- 1.12 NIGALA's policies and procedures are designed to be fair to both service users, staff and stakeholders of NIGALA. Where a specific need in relation to our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act or the Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act has been identified, the NIGALA will attempt to ensure that all necessary adjustments are made in the operation of this policy and procedure; for example, the provision of interpreters, signers or specialist advisors on cultural issues including advocates, for example, on behalf of young people with a learning disability.
- 1.13 NIGALA aims to work with children and adults in a way which respects and values the diversity of individuals and which promotes anti-discriminatory practice and equality of access to services. NIGALA will therefore not accept feedback expressed in racist or offensive language.

Equality Screening

- 1.14 This policy has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The equality screening has been published and can be accessed here <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2166.htm>

Monitoring, Reporting and Review

Monitoring

- 1.15 NIGALA is required to monitor the operation and the effectiveness of its complaints policy. The Senior Management Team will be provided with annual reports detailing the number of complaints including any lessons that can be learned and shared from complaints and the result in terms of service improvement.
- 1.16 The outcome of any complaint will be reported to the Senior Management Team.

Reporting

1.17 The number complaints received will be published in the NIGALA Annual Report.

Review

1.18 A formal review of this policy will be occur at least every three years or as required.

NIGALA Complaints Procedure

SECTION 2: MAKING A COMPLAINT

What is a Complaint?

2.1 A complaint is ‘**an expression of dissatisfaction that requires a response**’. Complainants may not necessarily use the word ‘complaint’ and so it may be necessary for NIGALA to classify correspondence expressing dissatisfaction as a complaint. People may have complaints about a variety of issues to do with the NIGALA and its work.

Who can complain?

2.2 Any person can complain about the services they receive from NIGALA.

Case-Related Complaints

2.3 Where the complaint is about an individual case, the following may complain:

- Any child/young person represented by a Guardian Ad Litem;
- Any third party as defined at paragraph 2.8.

2.4 The following exceptions apply:

- Where the matter has already been fully investigated or the complainant acts in an unreasonable, aggressive or abusive manner at any stage of the process.

How can complaints be made?

2.5 Complaints may be made verbally or in writing and will be accepted via any other method, for example by phone or electronically. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing, or assisted to do so, to ensure a clear record of the issues for review. It is helpful to establish at the outset what the complainant wants to achieve to avoid confusion or dissatisfaction.

2.6 Contact details for making complaints are as follows:

Address: Complaints Officer
 NIGALA
 Centre House
 79 Chichester Street
 Belfast
 BT1 4JE

Email: complaints@nigala.hscni.net

Website: <https://nigala.hscni.net>

Phone: 0300 555 0102

What information should be included in your complaint?

2.7 A complaint need not be long or detailed, but it should include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relevant contact details: 	<p>Complainant’s name, address and telephone number.</p> <p>If you are making this complaint on behalf of another person, the following details should be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Their name and address ▪ Relationship to this person
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is being complained about? 	Details of issue(s) relevant to the complaint including dates.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where possible, what remedy is being sought? 	Such as an apology, an explanation or service improvement.

Complaints by a third party

2.8 Third party complaints may be made by a service user’s relatives, friends, carers or other representatives such as a solicitor or elected representatives. Complaints raised by solicitors acting as a third party must follow the NIGALA complaints process, which is not a legal process. Third party complaints are acceptable provided the service user has given their written consent. However, in such circumstances we will judge each complaint on its own merit and NIGALA will reserve the right to seek written consent where appropriate.

Complaints made by Children and Young People

2.9 Children and young people may wish to make a complaint about the service they have received. No time limit will apply to a complaint made by a child or young person who has previously had a Guardian Ad Litem (up to 18 years of age). The Patient Client Council provide advocacy services for anyone going through the HSC complaints process.

Issues this guidance does not cover:

2.10 The following issues will be dealt with under other provisions. Typically these include:

- Staff grievances will be managed through the NIGALA Grievance Policy;
- Disciplinary matters will be investigated under the NIGALA Disciplinary Policy;
- Other investigations may be conducted by a professional regulatory body such as the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC);

- A request for information will be managed under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act (2001) and NIGALA's FOI procedures;
- A subject access request will be managed under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018;
- A criminal investigation;
- Concerns about vulnerable adults and child protection;
- Legal action;
- The administration and procedures of the Guardian Ad Litem panel and the monitoring of work in relative proceedings (reference Guardian Ad Litem (Panel) Regulation (Northern Ireland) 1996).

2.11 NIGALA will not usually investigate complaints whilst court proceedings are ongoing. However, NIGALA will notify the court of the complaint and should NIGALA and/or the court feel there is merit in investigating the complaint, the complaint will be reviewed in line with the Guardian Ad Litem (Panel) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996.

2.12 When a Guardian Ad Litem has been ordered by the court to write a report or provide a professional opinion, and you do not agree with the content of the report, the professional opinion or the recommendations of the Guardian ad Litem, this must be raised in court where it can be explored. Matters related to court proceedings raised with NIGALA after the court proceedings have ended cannot be investigated by NIGALA. Any such matters must be raised in court. NIGALA is unable to change the outcome of court hearings.

Confidentiality

2.13 All complaints will be dealt with in confidence. When using information for the purpose of investigating a complaint, it is not necessary to obtain express consent. It is noted that only relevant information pertaining to the complaint will be reviewed. Care will be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained (particularly when a complaint is made on behalf of another) and any information disclosed is confined to that which is relevant to the investigation and only disclosed to those who have a demonstrable need to know for the purpose of the investigation.

SECTION 3: HANDLING COMPLAINTS

Actions on Receipt of a Complaint

- 3.1 All complaints received by NIGALA are treated with equal importance regardless of how they are submitted. Complainants are encouraged to speak openly and freely about their concerns and are reassured that whatever they have to say will be treated with appropriate confidence and sensitivity.
- 3.2 Each complaint received by NIGALA is taken on its own merit and responded to appropriately. Overall, arrangements should ensure that complaints are dealt with quickly and effectively in an open and non-defensive manner.
- 3.3 Complaints should be referred to the Complaints Officer/Head of Corporate Services.

Informal Complaint/Resolution at Point of Contact

- 3.4 All complaints received should be treated with equal importance and every effort should be made to resolve such complaints. It is important that NIGALA works closely with its service users to find an early resolution to complaints when they arise. Every opportunity should be taken to resolve complaints as close to the source as possible through discussion and negotiation.
- 3.5 If someone wishes to make a complaint, this should be referred to the Complaints Officer/Head of Corporate Services who will endeavour resolve complaint at the point of contact.
- 3.6 Any action to be taken will be agreed verbally with the person making the complaint the need for further contact clarified, if appropriate. Once the necessary action has been taken a written response can be issued if felt appropriate/necessary.

- 3.7 If the person making the complaint remains dissatisfied with the outcome, the procedure for making a more formal complaint via the Complaints Manager should be explained.

Formal Complaint

- 3.8 There may be occasions when an individual has not been satisfied with how their concerns were managed at the point of contact. Following this a formal complaints process will be undertaken. This will be undertaken by the Head of Corporate Services and the Complaints Officer. It is important to note that any investigation will not re-evaluate decisions made by or considered by the court.

Acknowledgement of Complaint

- 3.9 A complaint will be acknowledged in writing within **2 working days** of receipt. The subject of the complaint will be informed of the complaint and the process that will be followed. A copy of this policy will be forwarded to the complainant and subject of complaint.

Response

- 3.10 The complainant will be provided with a substantive response to their complaint no later than **20 working days** from the date the complaint was received.
- 3.11 An early provision of information and explanation of what to expect is provided by NIGALA to the complainant at the outset, to ensure they are informed about the process and of the support that is available.
- 3.12 Complainants should be aware that in order to investigate and fully answer a complaint, it may be necessary for information, relevant to the complaint to be examined. If a complainant does not agree to their records being examined then they should be made aware that it might not be possible to fully answer their complaint.

What are the timescales for making a complaint?

- 3.13 A complaint should be made as soon as possible after the action giving rise to it, normally within six months of the event.
- 3.14 If a complainant was not aware there was cause for complaint, the complaint should normally be made within **six months** of becoming aware of the cause for complaint, or within **twelve months** of the date of the event, which is the earlier.

Potential outcomes of a complaint

- 3.15 Complainants can expect the following from the process:

- An explanation;
- An apology, if appropriate;
- Service improvement which will avoid a recurrence of the experience.

- 3.16 This list is not exhaustive and the complainant is encouraged to explain the potential outcome they seek when making the complaint.

Circumstances that might cause delay

- 3.17 Some complaints will take longer than others to resolve because of differences in complexity, seriousness and the scale of the investigative work required. Others may be delayed as a result of circumstance, for example, the unavailability of a member of staff or a complainant as a result of holidays, personal or domestic arrangements or bereavements. Delays may also be as a result of the complainant's personal circumstances at a particular time e.g. a period of mental illness.
- 3.18 As soon as it becomes clear that it will not be possible to respond within the target timescales, the complaints officer will advise the complainant, the subject the complaint and any other relevant parties, providing an explanation and anticipated timescales.

Support and Advice

- 3.19 Advice and assistance regarding how to make a complaint and the complaints process is available to complainants and staff from the complaints officer.
- 3.20 Where necessary, NIGALA will help complainants articulate their concerns and navigate the complaints process.
- 3.21 Independent advice and support for complainants in Health & Social Care is available from the Patient Client Council. Possible additional support is listed at Appendix 4.

Documentation/Recording of Complaints

- 3.22 All records made specifically in relation to the complaint will be held by the complaints officer.
- 3.23 Records may be destroyed as directed under the Department of Health (DoH) Good Management Good Records Disposal Schedule, which is available on the DoH website at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/good-management-good-records>

NI Public Services Ombudsman

- 3.24 If, after investigation of a complaint the complainant does not feel the complaint has been satisfactorily resolved, they may refer their complaint to the NI Public Services Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about public service providers in Northern Ireland. Complainants can refer their complaint to the Ombudsman up to six months after the date of final outcome letter.

SECTION 4: UNREASONABLE, AGGRESSIVE OR ABUSIVE COMPLAINANTS

- 4.1 NIGALA understands that many complainants are upset about the issues they have raised in their complaint. If that upset escalates into aggression towards NIGALA staff, this will be considered unacceptable. Any violence or abuse towards staff will not be accepted.
- 4.2 Violence is not restricted to acts of aggression that may result in physical harm. It also includes behaviour or language (whether verbal or written) that may cause staff to feel afraid, threatened or abused. This includes threats, physical violence, personal verbal abuse, derogatory remarks and rudeness.
- 4.3 NIGALA expects its staff to be treated courteously and with respect. Violence or abuse towards staff is unacceptable and a Zero Tolerance approach must be adopted.
- 4.4 The threat or use of physical violence, verbal abuse or harassment towards NIGALA staff is likely to result in a termination of all contact with the complainant.
- 4.5 There may be times when there is nothing further that can reasonably be done to assist a complainant. Where this is the case consideration may need to be given to classifying the person making a complaint as an unreasonable, demanding or persistent complainant.
- 4.6 In determining arrangements for handling such complainants, staff need to:
- Ensure that the complaints procedure has been correctly implemented as far as possible and that no material element of a complaint is overlooked or inadequately addressed;
 - Appreciate that even habitual complainants may have grievances which contain some substance;
 - Ensure a fair approach;

- Be able to identify the stage at which a complainant has become habitual.

4.7 Annex 14 of the Complaints in Health and Social Care: Standards and Guidelines for Resolution and Learning provides further details on the management of unreasonable vexatious or abusive complaints².

² <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/HSC-complaints-standard-and-guidelines-for-resolution-and-learning-updated-february-2015.pdf>

SECTION 5: LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

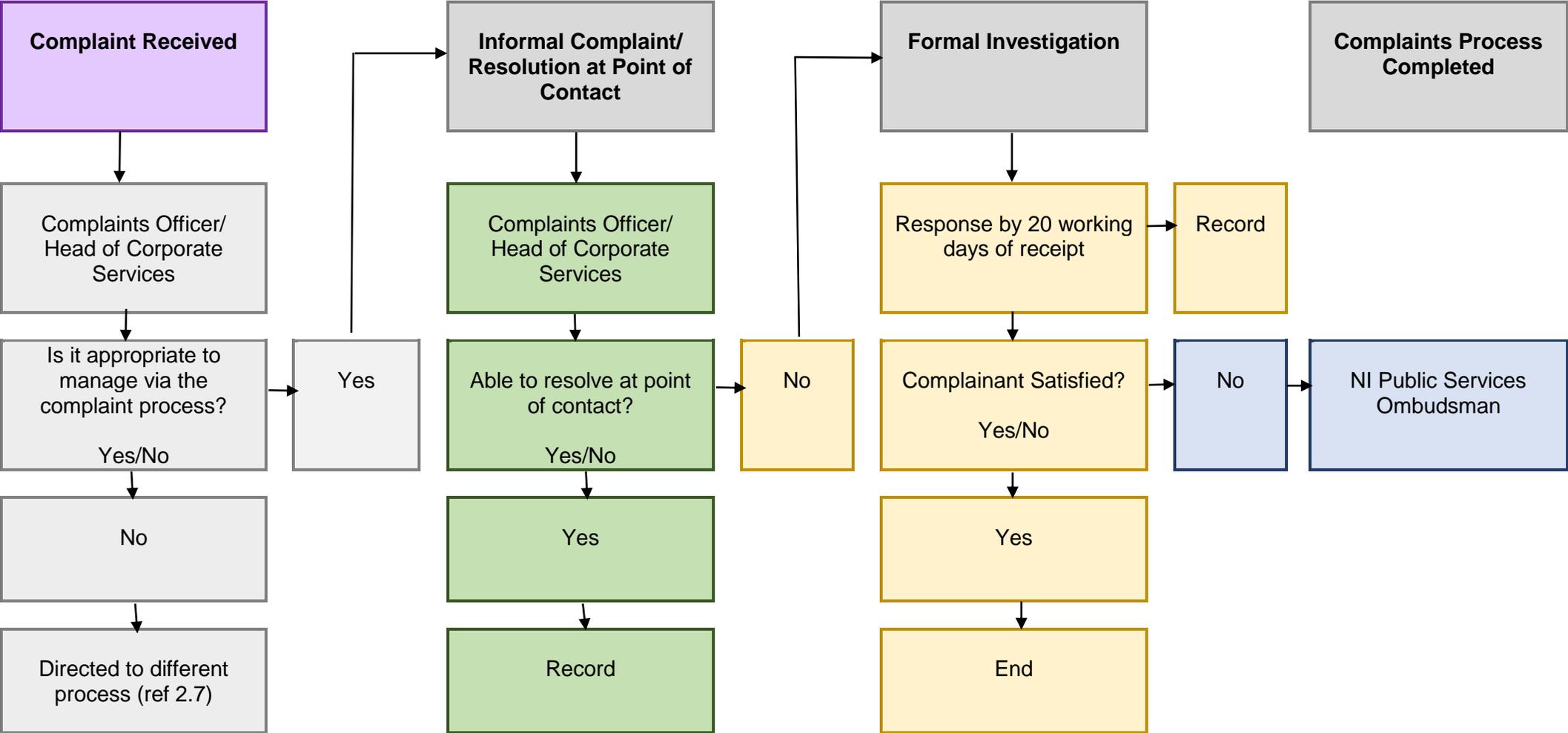
Learning

- 5.1 NIGALA in accordance with the principles of this policy and procedure will record, report and manage all complaints effectively ensuring that appropriate action is taken to address the issues highlighted by complaints.
- 5.2 Outcomes of complaints are reported to the Senior Management Team and where learning has been identified the managers will be responsible for ensuring that actions/learning are implemented. Any identified training will be reported to the Quality Assurance & Training Manager.
- 5.3 Learning is a critical aspect of all complaints and provides an opportunity to improve services and contribute to and learn from regional, national and international quality improvement and safety initiatives. Lessons learned through complaints will be shared and changes are made where these are relevant.

NIGALA Process	Action	By Whom	Timescale for Completion
Formal Complaint Process	Acknowledge receipt of complaint If consent is required, this must be obtained prior to complaints process commencing.	Complaints Officer	Within 2 working days of receipt.
	Complaint forwarded to Head of Corporate Services.	Complaints Officer	Upon receipt of complaint
	Complaint to be forwarded to staff member's line manager.	Complaints Officer	Upon receipt of complaint
	Complaint recorded.	Complaints Officer	Upon receipt of complaint
	Staff member notified of complaint	Line Manager (or other senior manager in line manager's absence)	Within 1 working day of complaint being received, where possible.

	Complaint reviewed and response prepared.	Head of Corporate Services	20 working days from receipt of complaint
	Outcome communicated to complainant	Chief Executive	20 working days from receipt of complaint
	If complainant dissatisfied with response, signpost to the NI Public Services Ombudsman	Complaints Officer	Upon notification from complainant.

Complaint Flowchart



Summary of Target Timescales

Informal Process/Resolution at Point of Contact

Complaint	Resolved at point of contact without requirement for formal investigation.
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Formal Complaint

Making a complaint	The complaint should be made within six months of becoming aware of the cause for complaint, or within twelve months of the date of the event, whichever is the earlier.
Acknowledgement	2 working days from receipt of complaint.
Response	20 working days from receipt of complaint.

NI Public Services Ombudsman

Referral by the Complainant to the NI Public Services Ombudsman	Within 6 months from the date of NIGALA’s final outcome letter to the complainant.
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NB: A working day is any weekday (Monday to Friday) which is not a local or public holiday.

Support for Complainants

Voice of Young People in Care

Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) offers advocacy for children and young people with care experience aged 25 and under. This is a confidential and independent service where children and young people can get advice, information and support outside of Social Services. The service can:

- Provide you with information and advice on your rights;
- Go to meetings with a child or young person;
- Help children/young people ask for a service;
- Help children/young people speak out about decisions that affect you; and
- Help children/young people make a complaint.

Website: www.voypic.org

1st Floor, 6 Garfield Place
Ballymena
BT43 6EH
Tel: 028 2563 2641
Fax: 028 2565 5934

9 Queen Street
Derry/Londonderry
BT48 7EG
Tel: 028 7137 8980
Fax: 028 7137 7938

9-11 Botanic Avenue
Belfast
BT7 1JG
Tel: 028 9024 4888
Fax: 028 9024 0679

Flat 12, Mount Zion House
Edward Street
Lurgan BT66 6DB
Tel: 028 3831 3380
Fax: 028 3832 4689

Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People

3.26 The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People's (NICCY) Legal and Investigations team deal with queries and complaints from children, young people, their carers and relevant professionals about the services they receive from public bodies. This team can:

- Investigate complaints against public bodies (schools, hospitals, etc) on behalf of children and young people;
- Help a child or young person bring their complaint to a public body; and
- Help children and young people in legal proceedings against public bodies.

Legal and Investigations Team
Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
(NICCY)
Equality House, 7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast BT2 7DP
Telephone: (028) 9031 1616 (Monday – Friday: 9:00am to 5:00pm)
Email: listening2u@niccy.org
Website: www.niccy.org

Patient Client Council

3.27 The Patient Client Council (PCC) is an independent non-departmental public body and its functions include:

- Representing the interests of the public;
- Promoting involvement of the public; and
- Providing assistance to individuals making or intending to make a complaint.

3.28 If a person feels unable to deal with a complaint alone the staff of the PCC can offer a wide range of assistance and support. This assistance may take the form of:

- Information on the complaints procedure and advice on how to take a complaint forward;
- Discussing a complaint with the complainant and drafting letters;
- Making telephone calls on the complainants behalf;
- Helping the complainant prepare for meetings and going with them to meetings;

- Preparing a complaint to the Ombudsman;
- Referral to other agencies, for example, specialist advocacy services; and
- Helping in accessing medical/social services records.

All advice, information and assistance with complaints is provided free of charge and is confidential. Please see below for contact details.

Patient and Client Council
9th floor, BT Riverside Tower, 5 Lanyon PI, Belfast BT1 3BT
Telephone: 0800 917 0222
Email: info.pcc@hscni.net
Website: www.patientclientcouncil@hscni.net

Disability Action

- 3.29 Disability Action's Centre on Human Rights provides an advocacy service specifically for people with learning disabilities. This service is confidential, provided free of charge and independent. The advocate supports people with learning disabilities to understand their rights and encourages them to speak up if they are unhappy about how they have been treated. The advocate will listen to the person's issue and identify the options available to them and will support the patient/client to take action.
- 3.30 The advocate also provides non-instructed advocacy, when a patient/client cannot give a clear indication of their views or wishes in a specific situation, e.g. when a person has a profound learning disability. In these cases, the advocate works to uphold the person's rights, ensure fair and equal treatment and access to services and make certain that decisions are taken with due consideration for the patient/client's individual preferences and perspectives. Please see below for contact details.

Human Rights Advocate
Disability Action's Centre on Human Rights
Disability Action, Portside Business Park
189 Airport Road West, Belfast BT3 9ED
Telephone: (028) 9029 7880 / Textphone: (028) 9029 7882
Email: humanrights@disabilityaction.org

Support for Staff

- 3.31 Supports for staff includes line manager support, support from colleagues, attendance of a colleague at meetings, Occupational Health, use of Inspire and/or assistance from a Trade Union representative.
- 3.32 NIGALA has selected Inspire Workplaces as an independent source of support for staff. Inspire Workplaces staff are trained to listen and can offer support, guidance and a fresh outlook on not only issues at work but also personal problems. This service is free to NIGALA staff and Inspire Workplaces are committed to protecting your confidentiality and anonymity. Inspire is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year, please refer to the contact details below.

Inspire
Central Office, Lombard House,
10-20 Lombard Street, Belfast BT1 1RD
Email: hello@inspirewellbeing.org / Telephone: 028 9032 8474