

TONIC WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY LTD

CORE STANDARDS – COMPLAINTS PROCESS POLICY NO C14.1 – C14.7

AIM

All complaints received at Tonic Weight Loss Surgery Ltd will receive a written acknowledgement within two working days of their complaint.

A full response to the complaint will be made within 20 days. Where the investigation is still ongoing a letter explaining the reason for the delay will be sent to the complainant and then a full response will be sent within 5 days of the conclusion being reached.

RATIONALE

The effective and timely management of any complaint must be considered a vital component of Customer Care throughout the organisation.

PROCEDURE

The complaints procedure, which we carry out, ensures that the complainant receives written confirmation of each stage of investigation and action being taken. The Centre undertakes to investigate all complaints courteously, sympathetically, objectively, expeditiously and thoroughly, with a view to obtaining information that results in an honest and balanced resolution to the problem and provides a rapid response and appropriate reassurance for the complainant.

All staff will receive training on what constitutes a complaint, and the procedures for receiving and managing a complaint in the first instance.

Each patient is sent a copy of 'Additional Patient Information', which includes how he or she can make a formal complaint.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The names of the patient or complainant shall remain confidential except to facilitate the investigation of a complaint.

The names of all staff members or clinicians shall remain confidential except to facilitate the investigation of a complaint.

Complaints by a patient representative shall be addressed ensuring that the complainant is a legitimate representative and in doing so with the patient's knowledge and consent, but also recognising patient confidentiality. If the patient is not able to consent, then the patient's lawful representative shall be informed.

The procedure we carry out is as follows:

- in the first instance we recommend that a patient contact their patient information office to register their complaint, whether it is their surgery, in-house treatment, hospital care or post operative care.
- if a patient has a complaint it must be put in writing immediately to the person in charge. The person in charge receives the complaint and responds by acknowledging the complaint within two working days.

- A complaints folder is on site, which includes information on whether or not the complaint was upheld, the results of the investigation, the action taken and the resolution of the complaint.
- At all times good practice shall be adopted by staff
- Putting the patient at ease, being supportive and empathetic.
- Listening carefully and understanding the nature of the complaint
- Ensuring privacy and a relaxed atmosphere
- Remaining calm and respectful
- Taking responsibility for further action and communication

The staff member receiving the complaint should notify the Registered Manager immediately.

The Registered Manager should then:

- summarise the complaint to the patients and resolve immediately if possible.
- Explain that the complaint is being investigated, who is carrying out the investigation, and whom they should contact in the event of a query. The patient should be informed than an acknowledgement and if possible a response will be provided within 48 hours.

The investigation should be completed within 20 working days. The Registered Manager or investigator should report back immediately any problems in completing the investigation, which should be communicated to the patient in writing. Where there is no reason for delay the complaint should be dealt with within 20 working days. Responses to serious verbal complaints must be in writing.

On completing the investigation, the Registered Manager should evaluate the investigation and decide the action to be taken.

The Registered Manager will then discuss with the complainant the result of the investigation and send a written response.

The Registered Manager will then:

- update and complete the patient verbal complaint form
- file all investigation papers and patient complaint form in the complaints folder.
- Give the complaint a reference number
- Date received
- Type of complaint (verbal/written/patient survey response)
- Name of person dealing with/last dealt with complaint
- Date investigation was completed
- Date of final response

Written Complaints

The member of staff who receives the written complaint should immediately, or at least within 24 hours:

- date stamp the letter
- forward the letter to the Registered Manager
- notify the Registered Manager

The Registered Manager should immediately, or at least within 48 hours:

- ensure acknowledgement to the complainant is made in writing
- log the details on the patient complaint register
- complete a complaints investigation diary form
- complete a complaint investigation response form

The Registered Manager will then:

- acknowledge the complaint letter within 48 hours of receipt of the letter. If the complaint letter is received from someone other than the patient and it relates to

clinical treatment, the patient's written consent to disclose information about his/her case must be requested courteously.

- Pass a copy of the letter to the hospital legal representative immediately if it is a complaint being made against the hospital where treatment was carried out from a Solicitor (the letter may be in the form of a request for health records) and instruct an investigation.

Any complaints, which cannot be dealt with directly by Tonic Weight Loss Surgery Ltd, should be forwarded to:

Care Quality Commission
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle
NE1 4WH

The Financial Ombudsman Service is a free service available to consumers for the impartial resolution of complaints. You may contact them at any stage of your complaint, however there are a few instances where they will not be able to assist, and they will confirm if your complaint is eligible when you contact them.

Write to;

Financial Ombudsman Service
Exchange Tower, London, E14 9SR

Website;

www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk

Phone;

0800 0234567