



BCOM Complaints Procedure

Version Number	Date Approved	Author	Next Review Date	Action
V1	Nov 2012	J Sager		
V2	Feb 2014	J Sager		
V3	Jan 2016	J Sager	As required	

SERVICE USER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

The British College of Osteopathic Medicine's is committed to the provision of a high standard of care to service users attending the out-patient teaching clinic/s. BCOM clinic therefore welcomes feedback, comments and/or suggestions from service users. We accept that on certain occasions the service users may not be entirely satisfied with the care provided and as such would wish to make a complaint.

Complaints may be made verbally, in person or by telephone, email or in writing.

This complaints procedure is based on the following principles:

1. Service User complaints will be dealt with seriously
2. Service User complaints will be dealt with fairly. All complainants will be dealt treated equally and service provision will not be affected by the instigation of a complaint. Staff/students will be informed when a complaint about them has been received and, where appropriate, have the opportunity to respond.
3. Service User complaints will be investigated promptly, within the timeframes outlined below.
4. Complaints will be dealt with in confidence, although all formal (and some informal) complaints will be notified to the Head of Clinic or a nominated Deputy.
5. Complaints will be audited annually in order to improve service provision.

Who can complain?

Any BCOM Service User may make a formal or informal complaint. If you wish to raise a complaint on behalf of a relative/friend or as a carer, please provide written consent. For children under 16, a parent or legal guardian may raise a complaint on the service user's behalf.

When can a complaint be made?

Complaints should normally be made within 6 months of the event or six months of the date of discovering the problem, provided that is within 12 months of the initial event. BCOM may choose to extend this time limit if mitigating circumstances are presented.

The following outlines the processes that BCOM has in place for service users to make a complaint.

Stage 1: Informal Complaints

Service Users may be dissatisfied with certain aspects of their visit to BCOM clinic and in the first instance we would suggest that you share these concerns informally with your student-practitioner, a supervising tutor, or any member of the BCOM Clinic administration. It is expected that majority of cases will be resolved amicably with this informal approach.

Informal complaints procedure:

- Service User expresses dissatisfaction verbally to the BCOM student-practitioner, a supervising tutor or any member of the BCOM Clinic administration.
- The individual to whom the complaint is made will fill in an incident report.
- The individual to whom the complaint is made will discuss the matter with the Service User and attempt to resolve the matter OR refer the matter to a senior member of the clinic administration.
- Senior member of clinic administration will discuss the matter with the Service User and attempt to resolve the matter.
- If the matter is not resolved, the Service User may choose to make a formal complaint.

Stage 2: Formal Complaints

If the matter cannot be resolved through informal discussions or the level of dissatisfaction is high, Service Users may choose to submit a formal complaint, which must be made in writing, to the BCOM Clinic administration.

Formal complaints procedure:

- Service User submits a written complaint either by letter, email or by completing a 'Complaints Form'. Complaints forms are available from Frazer clinic reception or BCOM Clinic website (<http://www.bcom.ac.uk/bcom-clinic>)
- The Head of Clinic or a nominated deputy will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint normally within 5 working days.
- If the Service User is a Camden CCG patient, BCOM will inform their referring GP that BCOM has received a complaint.

3. INVESTIGATION

- The Head of Clinic or nominated deputy will request the 'Investigation Panel' (IP) to commence an investigation.
- The IP will request verbal and/or written evidence from all concerned with the complaint and carefully consider all the evidence.
- The IP would normally complete their investigation within 6 weeks of receiving a request from the Head of Clinic or nominated deputy to commence investigation. If they are unable to complete the investigation in this time, the Service User will be kept up to date with the reasons for the delay and progress made to date.
- The IP will submit a report to the Head of Clinic or nominated deputy with the following possible outcomes:

a) The complaint is not upheld:

The IP will inform the Head of Clinic or nominated deputy, in writing, that the complaint is 'Not Upheld' and that no further action is required. The Head of Clinic or the nominated deputy will inform the Service User, in writing, of the

outcome of the investigation process normally within 5 working days of receipt of the Investigation Panel's conclusion.

b) The complaint is upheld: the IP will make recommendations as to what further action is required. Where the complaint relates to student or staff behaviour, the IP may refer the case to the Disciplinary Panel (DP) for a hearing.

4. HEARING

- The DP will arrange a panel hearing, normally within 4 weeks of receiving notification from the Head of Clinic or nominated deputy.
- The DP may conclude the following:

a) Complaint upheld and decide on appropriate sanction/s

OR

b) Complaint rejected

- The Head of Clinic or the nominated deputy will inform the Service User of the outcome of the investigation, normally within 5 working days of the DP concluding the case.

5. APPEAL

If the Service User, for any reason, is not satisfied with the outcome of the procedures employed to consider the complaint, they have the right to appeal.

- Service User submits a statement in writing to BCOM Senior Management Group, within 10 working days from the receipt of the IP's conclusion, indicating the reasons why he/she is not satisfied.
- The Head of Clinic or nominated deputy will submit the IP reports, together with all the evidence, to the Principal or nominated deputy.
- The Principal or the nominated deputy will review the case and either conclude that :
 - a) The complaint is upheld.

OR
 - b) The complaint is rejected.
 - The appeal decision is final.

6. SERVICE USER NOT SATISFIED WITH APPEAL OUTCOME:

If the service User is not satisfied with the outcome of the Appeal, she/he may contact:

- 1) The General Osteopathic Council, 176, Tower Bridge Road, London, SE1 3LU www.osteopathy.org.uk
- 2) Camden CCG patients may also contact:

NHS North Central London
5th Floor Stephenson House,
67-87 Hampstead Road,
London, NW1 2P

- 3) The Patient Association;

The Patients Association
PO Box 935
Harrow
Middlesex HA1 3YJ
Telephone: 020 8423 9111
Fax: 020 8423 9119
Website: www.patients-association.com
Helpline Telephone: **0845 608 4455**
Helpline Email: helpline@patients-association.com