



## Complaints Policy

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Baby Scan Studio believes that complaints can be a valuable tool to improve the service provided. We are therefore committed to act on and learning from any verbal or written complaints received.

The Complaints Lead for Baby Scan Studio is Mrs Sabiha Mitic-Parali, Managing Director. In the absence of Mrs Sabiha Mitic-Parali, complaints will be dealt with by Penny Smith

In addition, it is a requirement of the Care Quality Commission registration that we have a clear process for clients to complain about any aspect of our service they were dissatisfied with, which is displayed on our website.

## **PURPOSE**

To provide a structure for the management and investigation of written and verbal complaints within a timely manner

## **AIM**

To provide clients with a simple process for expressing concerns/complaints and receiving clear correspondents regarding our findings.

## **OBJECTIVES**

That our service provides clear process for clients to complain which includes

- Management of written and verbal complaints
- Times frames in which Baby Scan Studio will acknowledge and commence investigation
- A clear communication strategy
- The opportunity to speak directly to the Managing Director of Baby Scan Studio regarding their concerns
- Provision of a transparent service
- That the process is easily accessible to our clients

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all our clients and to organisations with which we liaise.

## PROCESS

### Verbal Complaints

If a complaint is made verbally to **any** member of staff, the person to whom the complaint is first made should attempt to deal with it.

Where a member of staff is unable to resolve a complaint, unable to investigate the complaint adequately or feels unable to give the assurance that the complainant requires, the member of staff must refer the Managing Director.

Where the complaint is directly about the Managing Director then this will be referred to Baby Scan Studios external support consultant to investigate.

If the complaint is sufficiently serious, difficult to resolve, needs more independent investigation or if the Managing Director is unable to **immediately** resolve the issues to the complainant's satisfaction then the Managing Director must decide on the most appropriate cause of action which may include: -

- a. Commencing an immediate investigation and responding within a specified time as discussed and agreed with the complainant in writing, by telephone or at a subsequent meeting
- b. Invite the complainant to put their complaint in writing to the Manager Director (the complaint will then be dealt with as Written Complaints – Section 3)

Verbal complaints received by Facebook or any other social media will be in the first instance be referred to the Managing Director..

If a member of staff receives a complaint by telephone, they should in the first instance take the complainants name, telephone number, brief details of the complaint (give the caller reassurance that their call will be returned) prior to following the other steps in this procedure.

If any complainant wishes to make their initial complaint to someone who has not been involved in their care they should be referred in the first instance to the Managing Director

Upon receipt of a verbal complaint the staff member must make a written record including:

- a. The nature of the complaint
- b. dates or times given
- c. The information provided by the staff member including any conclusion
- d. A contact name and number for the complainant

### Written Complaints

All written complaints will receive a response in writing from the Manager Director. All written complaints must therefore be referred for registration under the clinics written complaints

procedure. (The same procedure may also be followed for Verbal Complaints as described in Section 2).

When a complaint is received it should be acknowledged on the day of receipt (all complaints **must** be acknowledged within two days of receipt).

Upon receipt the letter of complaint must be taken immediately to the Managing Director in order that the complaint be logged.

Once logged a complaint log and tracking sheet will be attached to the complaint.

If the complainant is lodging a complaint about the clinical care or treatment of somebody other than him/herself, permission **must** be sought from that other person for the release of confidential information.

Permission should be obtained in writing by the Managing Director using the standard proforma shown on Appendix 1.

It is the responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure that each complaint is thoroughly investigated. Where the Managing Director delegates aspects of the investigation to other staff, it remains the responsibility of the former to see that appropriate action is taken promptly and for ensuring that timescales are met.

Ideally, the complainant should be invited to meet with an appropriate member of staff i.e. Managing Director to allow them the opportunity to discuss their concerns and the outcome of any investigation.

Where a complaint relates in any way to the exercise of clinical judgement, diagnosis or treatment, these elements of the complaint must be referred **immediately** to the Sonographer who undertook the scan.

### Written Response

A response must be sent within 28 working days from the date of receipt of the complaint. In cases where it is not possible to respond within this time an appropriate letter of explanation will be sent to the complainant by the Managing Director.

Every response, which deals with clinical issues, must be approved for clinical accuracy by the Sonographer concerned before referral for signature. The approval is to be registered as part of the written record of the investigation.

Where appropriate all response letters should contain an invitation for the complainant to discuss the matter further if they wish.

The response will be aimed at reassuring the complainant that the complaint has been fully and fairly investigated. It must include an apology where appropriate and an explanation of any action which will be taken to prevent a recurrence. It will include an invitation for the complainant to contact a named individual if they have any remaining concerns or if they wish to meet with appropriate members of staff to discuss the matter further.

### Appeal

If the complainant has any remaining concerns after receiving the response, these will be immediately investigated and a second response letter sent from the Managing Director including an invitation to meet to discuss remaining concerns.

The preferred outcome is the local resolution of complaints. However, if a complainant remains dissatisfied after the clinics' response and a meeting, he/she may be directed to the Care Quality Commission at:

CQC National Customer Service Centre  
Citygate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4PA

'Speak up and tell us' on 03000 61 61 61, [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

The majorities of complainants are seeking an understanding, an apology and prompt resolution of their complaint together with action to avoid recurrence.

In some cases, those involving inconvenience, personal annoyance, disappointment or hurt feelings an appropriate response may be compensation. This may extend from a modest reduction in a bill (50-100%) or with client's agreement to re-scan without charge or a refund of the total amount. This can only be authorized by the Managing Director.

Discount or free re-scan should only be made if the complainant accepts this in full and final settlement of any claims arising. The complainant's agreement to such arrangements must be received in writing.

If the complainant indicates their intent to engage in litigation, then a compensation payment is not appropriate and the Managing Director should be informed immediately.

#### Exception to normal complaints procedure

The normal complaints" procedure will be conducted unless the complainant explicitly indicates an intention to take legal action in respect of the complaint and such notification is received via a solicitor's letter. In such cases, no admission of liability must be made to the complainant or their representatives.

If a complainant's initial communication is received via a solicitor's letter, advice will be sought from the named individual indemnity advisor and legal representations before any information or response is provided.

#### Requests for Information

All requests for information will be provided in adherence to our data protection and confidentiality policies.

## **Duty of Candour**

Baby Scan Studio operates its complaints Policy in line with Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014: Regulation 20 – Duty of Candour by –

- Making sure it acts in an open and transparent way with relevant persons in relation to the care and service provided to people who use services in carrying on a regulated activity.
- Offer an apology.
- Follow this up by giving the same information in writing and providing an update on the enquiries.
- Keep a written record of all communication with the relevant person.

## **MONITORING**

The policy will be monitored by the Managing Director and changes made as per legislation, CQC registration and any identified deficits in its effectiveness.

## **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is all staff's responsibility to ensure that they are aware and adhere to the complaints policy.

## **References**

Care Quality Commission standards of Safety & Quality

## Appendix

### Appendix 1:

Copy and paste below content onto appropriate letter template

Dear.....

Concern has been expressed by ..... about the care/treatment you have received whilst attending your appointment at Baby Scan Studio. However, in order to respond to your concern, it may be necessary to disclose personal information relating to your healthcare.

The clinic has a duty to honor our client's right to confidentiality where issues involving the release of personal information are concerned. It is therefore necessary for me to seek your authority to disclose to the above-name person such confidential information about your appointment as may be appropriate to answer the concerns which have been raised. Would you please indicate your agreement to disclosure by completing and signing the declaration at the foot of this page and returning it in the envelope provided.

Yours sincerely

Managing Director

.....  
**DECLARATION**

I authorise the release of such personal information relating to my healthcare as may be necessary to enable Baby Scan Studio Ashford to respond to concerns which have been expressed by ..... about my care/treatment whilst a patient.

Signed.....

Name (block capitals).....