Complaints Procedure

A patient's guide to telling us what you think about our service, and to raising a concern or making a formal complaint.

The Skin Cancer Institute is committed to providing a high-quality service and care to our patients. We value the feedback we receive and welcome the opportunity to enhance and improve the quality of the service we provide.

If you wish to raise a concern, make a complaint, or provide any other feedback please contact us at enquiries@skincancerinstitute.co.uk, speak to a member of staff, or telephone 020 3514 2995.

Compliments

If you would like to make a compliment about any aspect of the care, treatment and service you received, please let us know and we will share this with the relevant team or individual. You can tell us:

- in person or by telephone, to any member of our team;
- by email to enquiries@skincancerinstitute.co.uk;
- through the contact form on our website.

Concerns

Please raise a concern if there is an occasion where The Skin Cancer Institute may not have met your expectations and you want to highlight this to us, but do not need to raise a formal complaint. To express a concern please speak to an appropriate member of staff. This could be the nurse or clinician providing your care, or you can contact our team using the details above, who will take your concerns forward. You can also raise a concern once you have left the clinic.

Complaints

- All information you provide to us will be handled confidentially, involving only those who need to know and following all relevant data protection requirements.
- Making a complaint will never affect the care and treatment you receive from us, and you will not be treated any differently for having complained.
- If something has gone wrong with your care, we will tell you, apologise, explain what happened and set out what we are doing to put it right.
- We record every complaint we receive, along with its outcome and any action taken, and we review these regularly so that we learn from them and improve our service.

Our complaints procedure has three stages.

Making a Complaint (Stage 1)

A complaint can be made in writing or by email. Your complaint should be made as soon as possible after the event and must be made to us within 12 months of the event, or of discovering that you have cause to complain. We may still consider a complaint made outside this period where there is a good reason for the delay and it is still possible to investigate the issues fairly. The contact details for you to make your complaint are:

> **WHERE TO SEND YOUR COMPLAINT**
>
> The Clinic and Business Manager
>
> The Skin Cancer Institute, Unit 7, Old Park Farm, Essex, CM3 1LN
>
> Email: enquiries@skincancerinstitute.co.uk
>
> Telephone: 020 3514 2995

When we receive your complaint, the following steps will be taken:

- The Clinic and Business Manager, or an appropriate member of the team, will telephone you to talk through the issues you have raised, so that we are clear about what you want us to look into and what outcome you are hoping for.
- A written acknowledgement of your complaint will be sent to you within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint, providing a date when you can expect a written response.
- The Skin Cancer Institute will provide the written response to your complaint within 10 working days from the date we receive it. We will notify you of any unexpected delays and agree a revised timescale with you.

If you would prefer to speak to someone other than the Clinic and Business Manager, or if your complaint concerns them, please address your complaint to the Managing Director instead, using the same contact details.

If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, we will require a consent form to be completed so that we have permission to share confidential details with the complainant rather than the patient.

If you need help to make your complaint, please tell us. We can take your complaint verbally and put it in writing for you, provide our correspondence in a different format, and arrange for someone to support you through the process.

Escalation of your Complaint (Stage 2)

If you are dissatisfied with our investigation findings and/or how we handled your complaint at stage 1, you can escalate your complaint to stage 2. The stage 2 process is an internal review of the original complaint and will be investigated by someone not previously involved.

You will need to escalate to stage 2 within six months of the stage 1 complaint response, providing details of the issues that remain unresolved. As with stage 1, the acknowledgement will be within 3 working days and the response within 20 working days. A meeting, in person or by phone or other media, can be arranged if that is something you would like to happen.

Independent External Review (Stage 3)

After receiving the stage 2 response, if you remain dissatisfied, you can ask for your complaint to be considered by an independent reviewer from outside The Skin Cancer Institute. You should request this within six months of the date of our stage 2 response, setting out the issues that remain unresolved.

This stage is genuinely independent of us:

- The review is carried out by a suitably qualified person who is not employed by, contracted to, or financially connected with The Skin Cancer Institute, and who has had no previous involvement in your care or in your complaint.
- We will tell you who we propose to appoint and give you the opportunity to raise any objection before the review begins.
- The reviewer will be given full access to our complaint file and, with your consent, to your clinical records, and can ask our staff for any further information they need.
- We meet the full cost of the review. There is no charge to you.

We will acknowledge your request within 3 working days and confirm the reviewer's appointment. The reviewer will aim to provide a written outcome within 20 working days of being appointed, and you will be kept informed if more time is needed.

We undertake to accept the independent reviewer's findings and to carry out any recommendations they make. This is the final stage of our complaints procedure.

Using our complaints procedure does not affect your right to raise your concerns elsewhere, or to take independent legal advice, at any point.