

## **DR KIM WHITAKER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

At Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd, we are dedicated to providing high-quality healthcare and enhancing the lives of our patients. We recognize that, on occasion, patients may be dissatisfied with the service received and may wish to raise a complaint. Our complaints procedure is in place to resolve complaints effectively, efficiently, and fairly. We take complaints seriously, treat each with confidentiality, and aim to continuously improve our service based on your feedback.

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction regarding the care, service, or goods provided, which requires investigation and response.

Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd adheres to the four principles of effective complaints handling: learning and improvement culture, feedback, fairness, and accountability.

We adhere to the good practice standards provided by ISCAS in the [ISCAS Code of Practice for Complaints Management](#).

### **How to Make a Complaint?**

- Complaints can be made verbally or in writing. You may submit complaints by:
- Emailing us at [admin@drkimwhitaker.com](mailto:admin@drkimwhitaker.com)
- Sending a letter to our postal address:
- Address: Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd, 61 Bridge Street, Kington, HR5 3DJ
- Contact Number: 0161 5490866

While we accept verbal complaints, we encourage written submissions where possible to ensure clarity.

**Please note: All Stage 1 complaints should be submitted within 6 months of the event.**

## **Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd Complaints Process**

### **Stage 1 – Initial Complaint Review and Response**

#### **1. Acknowledgement**

- We will acknowledge your complaint in writing within **2 working days** of receipt.

#### **2. Investigation and Response**

- We will undertake a comprehensive review of the complaint and aim to provide a full written response within **14 working days**. This response will include the findings and any decisions made.
- For more complex complaints requiring extended investigation, we will notify you of any delay and keep you updated on progress.

#### **3. Governance**

- All Stage 1 complaints are reviewed by the Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd Clinical Governance Committee for oversight.

#### **4. Professional Standards and Safety**

- Complaints revealing serious clinician-related concerns will be escalated to the appropriate professional body, if necessary.

- All Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd staff are required to assist with complaint investigations in line with professional obligations, including contracted and locum staff.

## **5. Unacceptable Behaviour Policy**

- At Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd, we are committed to managing complaints with respect, fairness, and courtesy. We recognise that people may feel frustrated or upset when raising a complaint. However, we expect all interactions to be conducted in a respectful manner, and we have policies in place to address situations where complainants behave in an unacceptable way.
- Unacceptable behaviour may include, but is not limited to: Aggressive or Abusive Language, Excessive Communication, Unreasonable Demands.

## **Stage 2 – Internal Independent Review**

If you are not satisfied with our Stage 1 response, you may escalate your complaint to Stage 2. To do so:

- Submit your request in writing within **6 months** of receiving the Stage 1 response, using the contact details above.
- Your request should include a summary specifying which matters remain unresolved and what you seek from further investigation.
- New issues raised in the Stage 2 escalation will be treated as new complaints under Stage 1 if relevant, but Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd may choose to address minor or related matters at Stage 2.

### **1. Acknowledgement**

- Stage 2 complaints will be acknowledged within **3 working days** of receipt.

## **2. Investigation and Response**

- We will review your complaint independently, aiming to provide a written response within 20 working days or, if the investigation takes longer, an update every **20 working days**.
- The Stage 2 process aims to be concluded within 3 months, with reasons given if additional time is needed.
- Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd will issue an invitation for a meeting (in person, by phone, or via video call) at the start of Stage 2, allowing you to clarify unresolved issues.
- Stage 2 reviews are conducted by a senior staff member who was not involved in Stage 1 to maintain objectivity.

The Stage 2 Investigation will include:

- Examination of Stage 1 Findings, the original response and any unresolved matters will be reviewed.
- Where appropriate, additional responses from those involved in Stage 1 will be gathered.
- Evaluation of Stage 1 standards & whether these were met adequately.

### **Stage 3 – ISCAS External Independent Adjudication**

If you remain dissatisfied following the Stage 2 response, you may escalate your complaint to the **ISCAS Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS)** within **6 months** of receiving the Stage 2 response. This process is free of charge.

#### **Contact Information for ISCAS Adjudication:**

**Address:** CEDR, 3rd Floor, 100 St. Paul's Churchyard, London, EC4M 8BU

**Phone:** 020 7536 6091

For additional information on ISCAS's procedures, please visit their website.

### **Confidentiality and Learning from Complaints**

All complaints are kept in a secure and confidential register, which we report annually to the relevant regulatory authorities. Anonymized details of complaints are shared with staff for training purposes, ensuring our team learns from feedback and strives for continuous improvement in our service.

Please note that escalation to Stage 3 ISCAS Adjudication is free of charge for service users.

For additional information on ISCAS's procedures, please visit their website [here](#).

**ISCAS CEDR 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor 100 St. Pauls Churchyard, London, EC4M 8BU, 020 7536 6091**



### **Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd Policy on Handling Unacceptable Behaviour**

#### **1. First Notice**

If a complainant's behaviour is deemed unacceptable, we will first address the issue by politely informing the complainant that their behaviour is affecting our ability to investigate their complaint effectively and will ask them to modify their approach.

#### **2. Limits on Contact**

If the unacceptable behaviour continues, Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd reserves the right to restrict the complainant's communication to

a single point of contact, specify communication times, or limit the communication method to writing only.

### **3. Ceasing Investigation**

In rare cases where behaviour persists despite these measures and disrupts our ability to deliver fair and thorough investigations, Dr Kim Whitaker Ltd may choose to cease further handling of the complaint. In such cases, we will notify the complainant in writing, explaining the decision and providing information on any remaining avenues available.

### **4. Escalation Option**

The complainant retains the right to escalate the complaint to the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS) if they disagree with our handling of the situation.

This policy ensures that our complaints process remains fair and respectful for all parties and that resources are managed effectively to maintain high-quality care for all our patients.

