



## Complaints Policy

### 1. Purpose and Scope of this Policy

Healthwatch Islington aims to provide a high quality service that meets the needs and expectations of our members, service users and statutory partners. However, we recognise that there may be occasions when service users and those working with us feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what you could reasonably expect.

We monitor and evaluate our services and welcome feedback that contributes to the development of our organisation.

We have developed this complaints procedure through which you can let us know of any reason if you are unhappy with our staff or service.

This policy does not cover complaints or concerns about the NHS which should be dealt with through the NHS complaints procedure or complaints about the provision of social care services which should be dealt with London Borough of Islington complaints procedure. Healthwatch Islington can offer information on these procedures.

Unless otherwise stated the procedure is confidential.

### 2. Procedure for dealing with complaints

If you are not happy with the service provided by Healthwatch Islington, or the behaviour of our staff, representatives or volunteers, please tell us. Complaints should be reported within three months of the concern that is being reported.

There are three stages to the process:

- Informal resolution
- Formal complaint
- Appeals process

### 3. Informal resolution

If you have a concern we suggest that you contact the Chief Officer to discuss the issue. This will be a private discussion aimed at resolving the issue. The discussion will be arranged for as soon as possible at a time

convenient to both parties. We would aim to have the discussion, where possible, within 10 days of the concern being raised. If it helps the resolution the Chief Officer may suggest a meeting with other people concerned if relevant.

If you prefer, or if your concern relates to the Chief Officer your concerns could be discussed with the directors of Healthwatch Islington.

If your concerns cannot be resolved informally you may wish to make a formal complaint.

#### **4. Formal Written Complaints**

If you are not satisfied with the informal resolution process or if you wish to raise the matter more formally, please put your complaint in writing to the Chief Officer (if your complaint is about the Chief Officer you can send your complaint to the Directors).

Complaints should be reported within one month of the informal resolution process.

#### **5. How Healthwatch Islington will deal with your complaint**

All written complaints will be logged with the Chief Officer and kept confidentially for monitoring purposes only. You will receive a written acknowledgement within ten working days.

Healthwatch Islington takes all complaints very seriously and will investigate your complaint and aim to give you a further detailed written response within twenty working days, setting out how the problem has or will be dealt with and any further action to be taken.

Healthwatch Islington is required to report the number, nature and outcome of any complaints to its funder, London Borough of Islington.

#### **6. Appeals process**

If, after we have responded you are still not satisfied with the outcome, please write to the Chair of Healthwatch Islington who will report the matter to the next Directors meeting at which the directors will decide on any further steps required to resolve the situation fully.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, your Appeal should be made within 20 working days of the Chief Officer informing you of the outcome of the complaint.

The appeal will only look at the information used for the original complaint. You will succeed on the appeal if there was:

- A failure to follow the right process;
- A failure take in to account some material matter available to them at the time;
- A recommendation which is not proportionate to the complaint.

We aim to provide a response to your appeal within 20 working days, although this could be longer at holiday times.

If your appeal is successful then whoever is dealing with it will make recommendations (if appropriate) and these will go to a panel of directors as if made during the original complaint.

## **7. Contact details**

**Chief Officer**  
**Healthwatch Islington**  
200A Pentonville Road, London N1 9JP  
[emma.whitby@healthwatchislington.co.uk](mailto:emma.whitby@healthwatchislington.co.uk)

**Healthwatch Directors**  
Please forward all comments or complaints for the attention of the directors of Healthwatch Islington to [info@healthwatchislington.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchislington.co.uk) marked as confidential.

## **8. Accessibility Statement**

Healthwatch Islington values equality of access. If you should need assistance to read and understand this procedure we can provide an accessible version or where possible a translated version. If it is not possible for you to put your complaint in writing, please contact the Chief Officer to discuss your access needs. Please contact the Chief Officer as above for further information or assistance.

This document will be posted on the Healthwatch Islington web-site and be made available in hard copy upon request.

## **9. Review**

Directors will monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy periodically.