

Reference Number: UHB 604 Version Number: 1	Date of Next Review: 15.09.2029 Previous Trust/LHB Reference Number:
Complaints Policy and Procedure (Health Charity)	
Policy Statement To ensure the Health Charity delivers its aims, objectives, responsibilities and legal requirements transparently and consistently, we will ensure we abide by Charitable law, industry regulations and charitable best practice.	
Policy Commitment The Health Charity is committed to ensuring it operates in an open and transparent manner,	
Supporting Procedures and Written Control Documents <i>Other supporting documents that the reader needs to be aware of alongside this document:</i> - Concerns (Complaints) and Claims (Clinical Negligence, Personal Injury and Redress) Management Policy - Safeguarding Allegation/Concerns About Practitioners and Those in Positions of Trust Procedure	
Scope This policy applies to all involved with the Cardiff and Vale Health Charity, including the Trustee, members of the Charitable Funds Committee, team members, fund holders, others in the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board with oversight of charitable activity, freelance team members, and volunteers.	
Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) Part 1 - Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed and this found there to be no impact. Key actions have been identified and these are incorporated within this controlled document.

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) Part 2 - Health Impact Assessment (HIA)	A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has been completed and this found there to be no impact. Key actions have been identified and these are incorporated within this controlled document.
Policy Approved by	Charitable Funds Committee
Group with authority to approve procedures written to explain how this policy will be implemented	Health Charity
Accountable Executive or Clinical Board Director	Executive Director of Finance

Summary of reviews/amendments			
Version Number	Date Review Approved	Date Published	Summary of Amendments
1	Approved by Charitable Funds Committee 15/09/2026	21/09/2026	<i>New document</i>
2			

Complaints Policy

1. Purpose

Cardiff and Vale Health Charity (CAVHC) is committed to operating in an open, accountable, transparent and responsive manner. We welcome feedback, compliments, concerns, and complaints as opportunities to learn, improve our services, and strengthen public trust.

This policy provides a clear and fair process for managing complaints from patients, families, donors, volunteers, fundraisers, NHS staff, beneficiaries, contractors, and members of the public. It aligns with recognised charity sector complaints handling principles, NHS complaint-handling standards, and Welsh public service expectations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints about:

- CAVHC activities, services and programmes.
- Fundraising activities.
- Communications and marketing.
- Events organised by CAVHC.
- Grant-making decisions and processes.
- Conduct of CAVHC staff, volunteers, and members of the Charitable Funds Committee.
- Management of donations.
- Administration and customer service.

This policy does **not** apply to:

- NHS clinical treatment or care.
- Employment grievances from staff.
- Whistleblowing disclosures.
- Data protection requests.
- Freedom of Information requests.
- Safeguarding allegations requiring immediate referral.

These matters are managed under separate NHS policies and procedures.

3. Policy Statement

CAVHC will:

- Treat all complaints seriously.
- Investigate impartially and objectively.
- Respond courteously and promptly.
- Make reasonable adjustments for those with protected characteristics.
- Offer communication in Welsh and English.
- Learn from complaints and use feedback to improve services.
- Maintain confidentiality consistent with legal obligations.
- Ensure complainants suffer no disadvantage for raising concerns.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has regard to:

- The Equality Act, 2010.
- Data (Use and Access) Act, 2025.
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act, 2018.
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, 2011.
- Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act, 2019.
- NHS Wales "Putting Things Right" arrangements where complaints relate to NHS services delivered in partnership with the Charity.
- The Charity Commission's guidance on complaints and concerns.
- The Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice.
- The Gambling Commission.
- Alternative Dispute Resolution Independent Provider.

5. Definitions

Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the charity's actions, decisions, services, conduct, or failure to act, where a response is expected.

Concern

A concern is an issue raised informally which may be resolved immediately without entering the formal complaints process.

Compliment

Positive feedback regarding services, activities, or individuals.

6. Who Can Make a Complaint?

Complaints may be made by:

- Donors.
- Patients and families.
- Service beneficiaries.
- Volunteers.
- Members of the public.
- NHS staff interacting with the Charity.
- Suppliers and partners.

A representative may submit a complaint on another person's behalf with appropriate consent.

7. Accessibility and Welsh Language Requirements

The Charity recognises its commitment to provide accessible services to its stakeholders.

Complaints can be submitted:

- In Welsh or English.
- In writing.
- By email.
- By telephone.
- In person.
- Through a representative with appropriate consent.
- In alternative formats where required.

Where a complaint is received in Welsh, responses will be provided in Welsh unless otherwise requested.

Reasonable adjustments will be offered for people with disabilities, communication difficulties or additional support needs.

Complaints Procedure

8. Stage 1 – Early Resolution

Where possible, concerns should be resolved promptly by the staff member, volunteer or manager involved.

The Charity will:

- Listen to concerns.
- Clarify the issues.
- Seek an immediate solution where appropriate.
- Explain any actions taken.

Many concerns can be resolved at this stage without a formal investigation.

Timescale

- Acknowledgement within **5 working days**.
- Resolution sought within **10 working days**.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint Investigation

If the complainant remains dissatisfied or the matter is serious, a formal complaint may be submitted.

Submission

Complaints should include:

- Name and contact details.
- Description of the issue.
- Relevant dates.
- Individuals involved.
- Desired outcome.

Investigation

The Charity will:

- Allocate an investigating officer.
- Review records and evidence.
- Meet relevant staff if necessary.
- Contact the complainant for clarification where required.

Timescale

- Acknowledgement within **5 working days**.
- Full written response within **20 working days** wherever possible.

Where additional investigation is required, the complainant will be informed of revised timescales.

Outcomes

The Charity may:

- Apologise.
- Explain what happened.
- Correct errors.
- Improve processes.
- Provide training.
- Reject the complaint with reasons.

Stage 3 – Review

If dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, the complainant may request a review within **20 working days**.

The review will:

- Be led by a senior manager or member of the Charitable Funds Committee not previously involved.
- Consider whether the investigation was fair and reasonable.
- Consider whether procedures were followed.

Timescale

- Acknowledgement within 5 working days.
- Review response within 20 working days.

The review decision is the Charity's final internal stage.

9. Complaints Relating to NHS Charity Activities

Because the Charity operates alongside NHS Wales services, some complaints may involve both organisations.

Where this occurs:

- CAVHC and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CAVUHB) will agree which organisation leads the response.
- Appropriate information-sharing agreements will be followed.
- Patients will be informed if their complaint is being shared.
- NHS complaints processes will take precedence where the principal issue concerns healthcare delivery.

10. Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be considered where:

- Sufficient information is provided.
- There is a potential safeguarding issue.
- There is evidence of misconduct.
- There may be reputational or regulatory risk.

CAVHC may be unable to provide feedback where the complainant is unknown.

11. Vexatious, Unreasonable or Persistent Complaints

CAVHC may apply restrictions where complainants:

- Use abusive language.
- Make repeated complaints without new evidence.
- Harass staff or volunteers.
- Pursue unreasonable demands.

Any restriction will be proportionate, documented and approved by the Head of Charity or Chair of Charitable Funds Committee.

12. Safeguarding Concerns

Any complaint involving actual or potential harm to:

- Children
- Young people
- Vulnerable adults

must be referred immediately under the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) or through adhering to the CAVUHB Safeguarding Allegation/Concerns About Practitioners and Those in Positions of Trust Procedure and may be reported to safeguarding authorities and the Charity Commission where required.

13. Recording and Monitoring

The Charity will maintain complaints register including:

- Date received.
- Nature of complaint.
- Complainant category.
- Investigation outcome.
- Learning identified.
- Date closed.

Quarterly reports should be presented as appropriate to the Charitable Funds Committee.

14. Learning and Continuous Improvement

Complaints data will be analysed to identify:

- Trends.
- Service improvements.
- Training needs.
- Fundraising issues.
- Governance risks.

The Charitable Funds Committee will receive an annual summary report demonstrating organisational learning and corrective action.

15. External Escalation

Following completion of the Charity's process and if the complainant is still not satisfied with the results, they may proceed to raise their concern with external agencies:

Complainants may refer **fundraising** complaints to:

- Fundraising Regulator.
- Charity Governance Concerns.

Complainants may refer **marketing / communications** complaints to:

- The Information Commissioner's Office.

Serious concerns relating to **misconduct, financial mismanagement or governance** may be referred to:

- Charity Commission for England and Wales.
- NHS Service Complaints

Where a complaint concerns **NHS treatment, care, clinical decisions** or **NHS staff** acting within NHS duties, the complainant should be directed to the relevant NHS Wales complaints process.

For complaints relating to **healthcare received** in Wales, NHS concerns are handled through:

- **Listening to People** arrangements

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Complainants may seek advice from the Ombudsman where appropriate.