

SELECTED MEDICAL PRACTITIONER COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Board is committed to providing a professional and transparent service in the administration of Ill-Health, Injury and Death Benefits. This includes assessments carried out by the Board's Selected Medical Practitioners.

The Board expects all Selected Medical Practitioners to act fairly and honestly and treat claimants with dignity and respect, in line with the General Medical Council's code of practice¹.

Where an issue is raised with respect to the service provided by a Selected Medical Practitioner the Board will seek early resolution and if appropriate conduct a thorough, impartial and fair investigation of the complaint.

The Board aims to learn from any disputes or complaints that are made by taking action where appropriate, for example by amending practices or procedures, in order to improve the claimant's experience. Medical Practitioners appointed to the Board's call-off list will also be subject to performance monitoring and claimant's feedback will be sought on the assessment process.

What is a dispute or complaint?

The Board regards a dispute or complaint as any expression of concern or dissatisfaction with the conduct of the Selected Medical Practitioner as part of the assessment.

What does the complaint policy cover?

Complaints made under this policy should relate to the Selected Medical Practitioner's standard of service; treatment or attitude towards a claimant; or conduct during the assessment process.

It does not include matters which are covered under:

- the Board's Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (such as interpretation of the regulations, decisions taken by the Board or policy);
- the Board's Data Protection or Freedom of Information policies;
- appeal provisions within the Police Pension and Injury Benefit Regulations; or
- legal proceedings.

Where the complaint relates to serious concerns (e.g. violence, sexual assault or indecency; fraud or dishonesty; or any serious criminal offence²) the Board³ or the complainant may refer the matter directly to the General Medical Council.

¹ General Medical Council's Good Medical Practice (2013)

² As outlined in the General Medical Council's guidance on making a complaint.

³ In line with the General Medical Council's Referral Guidance.

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Time limit for disputes or complaints

Notification should be provided within 40 working days beginning immediately after the date on which the event you wish to raise occurred.

In exceptional circumstances the Board may accept a complaint after the time limit. You should set out in your correspondence why you consider the time limit should not apply.

Procedure for making a complaint

Any concern, dispute or complaint should be made in writing or by email and addressed to the Board's Police Administration Manager in the first instance:

NI Policing Board
Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road
Belfast
BT1 3BG

IOD.Pension@nipolicingboard.x.gsi.gov.uk

You should include the following details:

- your name, address and service number;
- details of your concern, dispute or complaint; and
- any action or remedy you seek to resolve the matter.

What happens next?

On receipt of your correspondence, it will be logged on the Police Administration Branch's Complaints Register and acknowledged within 5 working days.

The Selected Medical Practitioner will be afforded the opportunity to respond to your complaint and where appropriate to reach a resolution informally. This will normally be completed within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint. Where it is clear that this will not be possible, an interim reply will be sent, explaining why there is a delay and when a full reply can be expected.

Any further investigation will be undertaken by the Police Administration Manager who will make a decision on the complaint within 20 working days of receipt of the Selected Medical Practitioner's response. The decision will be communicated within 15 working days thereafter. Where it is clear that this will not be possible, an interim reply will be sent, explaining why there is a delay and when a full reply can be expected.

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What if I remain dissatisfied?

You may appeal the decision made by the Police Administration Manager to the Director of Resources. This appeal must be submitted within 20 working days of the Police Administration Manager's response and clearly set out your grounds for dissatisfaction.

The Director of Resources will normally issue a decision within 40 working days of the date of receipt of the appeal. Where this is not possible, an interim reply will be sent explaining why there is a delay and when a full reply can be expected.

Where you feel your concern or complaint about the Selected Medical Practitioner has not been adequately addressed you may wish to make a complaint to the General Medical Council (GMC).

Further information can be obtained from the GMC using the following contact details:

General Medical Council
Fitness to Practise Directorate
3 Hardman Street
Manchester
M3 3AW

Tel: 0161 923 6602 Email: gmc@gmc-uk.org Website: www.gmc-uk.org