

## **PATIENT CLIENT COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE POLICY**

**PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines for the systematic receipt, documentation, evaluation, resolution, and response to client or provider grievances.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all Care Staffing Professionals employees and to all healthcare contingency staff.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** Care Staffing Professionals is committed to providing quality patient care and promoting patient/family satisfaction. Care Staffing Professionals shall handle all patient/family complaints and grievances consistently and in a timely manner. Care Staffing Professionals shall track and evaluate trends in complaints and grievances and implement necessary changes and process improvements under the direction of the Chief Nursing Officer and Patient Safety and Service Committee.

### **Definitions**

**Complaint** is defined as a verbal expression of dissatisfaction by the patient/ family regarding care or services provided by a Care Staffing Professionals employee which can be resolved at the point at which it occurs by the staff present. Most complaints will have simple solutions that can be promptly addressed and are considered resolved when the patient/family is satisfied with the action taken on their behalf.

**Grievance** is defined as a formal verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction with some aspect of care or service that has not been resolved to the patient/family's satisfaction at the point of service. All verbal or written complaints of abuse, neglect, patient harm or the risk of patient harm, a violation of the Patient Rights and Responsibilities are examples of grievances. A verbal or written complaint sent to Care Staffing Professionals or any request from a family to treat a complaint like a grievance will be considered grievance.

**Quality, Patient Safety and Service Committee** is chaired by Care Staffing Professionals Chief Nursing Officer and comprised of any combination of three (3) of the following:

- Client Manager/Director of the department
- Client Care Coordinator
- Client Administrator
- Risk Management Manager
- CSP Chief Executive Officer
- CSP Chief Operations Officer

## **Complaints - Employee Responsibilities**

If a client, patient, or service provider expresses dissatisfaction verbally or in writing, the Care Staffing Professionals staff member will attempt to resolve the situation within their role of authority.

If the complaint cannot be immediately resolved, the employee shall escalate the complaint through the appropriate chain of command. Depending on the setting:

- Healthcare staff assigned to a healthcare facility may escalate the complaint to their immediate supervisor. Immediate supervisor be the facility Director of Nursing, Chief Nursing Officer, Risk Management, Human Resource Manager, or Care Staffing Professionals for direction.
- Healthcare staff assigned to a residential assignment may escalate the complaint to the on-call Critical Care Coordinator, Nurse Practitioner, or Care Staffing Professionals for direction.

## **Complaints - Supervisor Responsibilities**

The Supervisor or manager shall resolve the complaint or take steps to continue the resolution process with the knowledge and agreement of the patient/family making the complaint.

At any time during the complaint resolution process, Care Staffing Professionals may be contacted for assistance, advice or support.

At any time during the complaint process, the patient's physician should be notified if appropriate under the circumstances and should be given the opportunity to assist in resolve any complaints related to clinical care.

Upon completion or resolution of the complaint, the manager/director of the department, facility, or client shall communicate all findings to Care Staffing Professionals so that it is placed on the Complaint/Grievance Log (See attached Grievance QA Log).

## **Grievances**

If the complaint cannot be resolved or meets the definition of a grievance, the manager/director of the department where the grievance occurred shall contact Care Staffing Professionals and notify the Operations Division within 24 hours. Care Staffing Professionals shall place the grievance on the Complaint/Grievance Log. The Operations Division should be notified immediately of any sentinel events, any actual or potential patient injury, patient confidentiality, any allegation of abuse or neglect, or any potential for continued risk to patient safety.

The Care Staffing Professionals Chief Nursing Officer shall assist the Operations Division in the investigation of the grievance and shall determine if any peer review committee should be involved in any investigation. The investigation should address any identified opportunities for improvement.

Upon conclusion of the investigation, the Operations Division shall assist the facility manager/director or Department Chair in completing a final written summary of the investigation which shall be maintained by Operations Division.

Operations Division shall provide a written response to the patient/family making the grievance. If the patient or authorized representative of the patient is not the person making the grievance, Protected Health Information of the patient that may be included in the investigations summary can only be released as allowed by law.

If the investigation of the grievance cannot be completed within 10 days, the Operations Division shall inform the person making the grievance that the investigation is continuing and that a written response will be forwarded immediately upon completion of the investigation. All grievances should be identified, reviewed and responded to within 30 days. All complaints and grievances shall be logged, analyzed and tracked by Care Staffing Professionals Operations Division. Scheduled reports of complaints and grievances shall be made to the Chief Nursing Officer.

The Chief Nursing Officer shall receive scheduled reports from the Operations Division and shall be responsible for reviewing and addressing trends and for overseeing improvement opportunities. The Chief Nursing Officer shall make the necessary reports to the Operations Division.

All complaints, grievances, investigations, follow-up, tracking and trending reports prepared by the Chief Nursing Officer and the minutes and proceedings of the Quality, Patient Safety and Service Committee are considered committee information and are privileged and confidential. No information shall be released without the permission of the Quality, Patient Safety and Service Committee chairperson. Laws pertaining to disclosure of Protected Health Information may also apply.

### **Internet Links**

- The Joint Commission ([www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org))
- Care Staffing Professionals Contact Form (<https://carestaffingprofessionals.com/contact-us/>)

### **Additional Resources**

Also see:

- Code of Business Ethics
- EPP 27 – Patient Rights and Responsibilities Policy
- California Administrative Code, section 70707

Attachments available at Care Staffing Professionals