



SBRI Healthcare Complaints Procedure

The SBRI Healthcare programme is committed to providing a high quality, responsive and accessible service. The following sets out the formal process for making a complaint which we have designed to be as efficient and effective as possible. Please note that complaints relating to disagreements about scientific judgments and any matters that are the subject of legal proceedings are excluded from this complaints process (see section on Scientific Judgments at the end of this document). Compliments and general feedback will also be dealt with outside of this process.

Definition of a complaint

Complaints submitted through this procedure should be concerned with the way in which a decision has been made or an action taken, rather than objections to the merits of the actual decision or action. Examples include:

- When we have said we would do something and it has not happened;
- When the quality of our process was not as expected e.g. we took too long, lacked consistency or were unclear;
- When a member of our staff or someone working on our behalf acts in an inappropriate or discourteous way.

How to make a complaint

Stage 1

The people who dealt with your enquiry, application or project are probably best equipped to deal with the complaint. A simple misunderstanding may have arisen and we would therefore hope to be able to resolve it quickly and informally. Please contact the member of staff who has been dealing with your enquiry, proposal or project initially.

Stage 2

If this is not possible you can make your complaint in writing, by letter or email to the Chief Executive, Health Enterprise East, 1010 Cambourne Business Park, Cambridge, CB23 6DP

sbrienquiries@hee.co.uk.

You will receive an acknowledgement within 5 working days and a written response within 20 working days. If this is not possible, you will be given an explanation of the reasons for the delay and a timescale by which you will receive a full reply.

The Chief Executive will co-ordinate the handling of the response in conjunction with the SBRI Project Manager with responsibility for the area to which the complaint refers. The process will generally include the following activities:

- Gathering of all relevant information;
- Agreeing the issues and facts with the complainant;
- Assessing the validity of the complaint in the context of stated procedures and, if applicable, published service standards;
- Informing the complainant of the outcome and, if applicable, any remedial action to be taken.

Stage 3

If you remain unhappy with the outcome, you can ask for the complaint to be referred to the National Director for the SBRI Healthcare programme who will conduct a fresh review of the evidence. If this is not possible then this review may be undertaken by another member of the SBRI Healthcare Audit & Risk Committee. A written response will be received by the complainant within 20 working days. As we escalate our part of the process we would expect a reciprocal escalation on the part of the complainant e.g. involvement of an executive at a higher level in the organisation than the complainant.

Stage 4

If your complaint has gone through all our internal processes and you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, you have the right to refer the matter to NHS England. Further information on how to go about this is available from <http://www.england.nhs.uk>.

Data Protection and Recording of Complaints

As a programme distributing public funds we have a duty to record and track any complaints we receive. This requires us to keep information concerning complaints and to evaluate our responses in

order to improve our services. Information about complaints will be stored on our electronic data storage systems but access will be restricted to staff dealing with the complaint and our professional advisors. Personal information is stored in accordance with The Data Protection Act (1998).

Scientific Judgments

Competitions for SBRI Healthcare funding are regularly issued by the programme. Please note the following points regarding judgements made in these competitions.

- Ultimately a SBRI Healthcare competition is precisely that, i.e. a competition where an application is judged in relation to other applications.
- The SBRI Healthcare programme employs a panel of independent assessors to review, assess and make recommendations as to suitability for funding.
- The panel operates under a confidentiality agreement with the SBRI Healthcare programme and names of panelists are not routinely disclosed, to allow full and thorough judgments to be expressed freely.
- The panel assesses applications using its skills and experience and is charged with creating a ranked ordered list which includes a recommendation or otherwise for funding.
- The SBRI Healthcare programme does not change the ranked ordered list provided by the panel, and uses it to finally agree the list of successful applicants according to the funding available for that particular competition.
- Feedback is offered to applicants that aims to provide some understanding of why they might have been unsuccessful.
- Unless an issue arises which falls into the complaint definition described above, it is not SBRI Healthcare programme practice to reconsider applications after the panel has made its decision.