



**Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022**  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

**Horizon Home Care** welcomes comments and suggestions from all our clients and their representatives, friends and relatives.

**Our objectives** are to improve the quality of the Client's experience and to ensure that all complaints and suggestions are promptly addressed, resolved and shared within the agreed timescales to ensure that lessons are learned and that the learning process improves the service quality and delivery.

Horizon Homecare understands complaints to be an expression of dissatisfaction requiring a response, communicated verbally, electronically, or in writing. Complaints may be made by any Client themselves, their family or advocate acting on their behalf, with their consent or in their best interests.

We at Horizon Homecare takes complaints seriously. We will aim to put things right that have gone wrong and learn lessons to avoid the problem happening again. This policy sets out the framework for how Horizon Homecare will achieve this.

Horizon Homecare will comply with legislation, national guidelines, regulation and best practice when managing complaints and suggestions. A systematic approach will be taken with all aspects of complaints and suggestions.

Complaints made or concerns raised by staff will be addressed via the grievance process if the complaint or concern relates to them individually, or via the **Whistleblowing procedure** where a protected disclosure is made.

Horizon Homecare understands its statutory obligations in respect of the **Duty of Candour** and will ensure it follows the agreed policy and procedure. We will ensure that our complaints and compliments process is fair and transparent and does not discriminate directly or indirectly because of a person's:

- Age
- Being or becoming a transsexual/transgender person
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or on maternity leave
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation



**Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022**  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

The complainant will feel free to complain without fear of reprisal and will be treated with courtesy, respect and compassion. Horizon Homecare will ensure that the process for how to make a complaint and the feedback given to the complainant are provided in a way that meets the Accessible Information Standard and are in a format that the Client can understand.

#### **Seeking Views and Engaging with Clients**

Horizon Homecare will seek out opportunities to obtain feedback from Clients and stakeholders. Horizon Homecare will act with sensitivity, integrity, and professionalism by treating individuals who do complain or make a suggestion with compassion, courtesy and respect. Horizon Homecare will protect the Client's right to confidentiality. Horizon Homecare will ensure that alternative methods of communication are available so that the complaints and suggestions procedures are accessible for Clients who experience difficulties with communication or whose first language is not English.

Staff will undertake training on how to manage complaints in line with their roles and responsibilities.

Horizon Homecare understands that it can be difficult to separate a complaint from a concern and, therefore, staff and the managers will follow this policy when there is any dissatisfaction with the service.

A full record is held of all complaints received regardless of the level of seriousness and means of communication. This approach allows an open and transparent culture around raising concerns at the earliest stage to allow resolution.

#### **Safeguarding Concerns**

Where a complaint or concern is raised that relates to a client being harmed or likely to be harmed, Horizon Homecare will follow its **Safeguarding Policy and Procedures** in addition to the complaints procedures, seeking advice and guidance from the **BCP Council and Dorset County Council Safeguarding Adults Team** and escalating concerns in line with BCP Council and Dorset County Council procedure. Horizon Homecare will also notify the CQC in line with its statutory duty.



**Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022**  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

### **Management Team at Horizon Homecare**

The management team at Horizon Homecare is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy, regulations, improvement planning and for having arrangements in place to provide relevant reports and information regarding complaints

**Kareen Rickman, Registered Manager and Hayley Hackett – Deputy Manager** are the main point of contact for the receipt, investigation and management of complaints within Horizon Homecare. However, this may be delegated to a senior member of staff within the team who holds the experience, knowledge and competence to investigate and manage complaints  
Horizon Homecare will ensure the procedure for raising a complaint is accessible and displayed prominently on the website and in Client information and guides. Alternative languages and formats will be available on request.

### **One Complaint, One Response**

Horizon Homecare will follow the [Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman best practice](#) and, where Clients are receiving services from more than one organisation, it will ensure they can make a complaint to anyone and be provided with a single response following a joint investigation.

### **Raising Complaints**

A complaint can be received either verbally or in writing and can be made by:

- **Clients**
- **Someone acting on behalf of a Client** and with their written consent, e.g. an advocate, relative, Member of Parliament.
- **Someone acting on behalf of a Client** who is unable to represent his or her own interests, provided this does not conflict with the Client's right to confidentiality or a previously expressed wish of the Client

Horizon Homecare will ensure that Clients are given information on how to make a complaint and the process once a complaint has been made, Horizon Home Care aims to respond to verbal complaints promptly once an investigation has been carried out, and to any formal written complaints within 28 days of receiving the complaint.



**Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022**  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

**Complaint Procedure:**

**Step 1**

When a complaint is raised to staff, staff will make an effort to resolve it immediately to the satisfaction of the complainant.

**Step 2**

Staff will apologise for the fact that there was the need to complain in the first instance and explain the complaints process as described in the procedure steps.

**Step 3**

Staff will report the complaint to the most senior member of staff on duty and the complaint will be logged.

**Step 4**

Formal acknowledgement of all complaints received (whether verbal or written) will be sent within **3 working days** to the complainant. This could be via letter or email. Horizon Homecare have staffing teams in place to manage out-of-hours and weekend complaints received.

The acknowledgement will include:

An invitation to meet and discuss the complaint

Who will be investigating the complaint

How the investigation will be handled - the response should state what the investigation will be focused on a time limit for the investigation to be concluded. This should be 28 days. However, in some cases may take longer and the complainant will be made aware of this.

The complaints procedure and contact details of bodies that can be accessed in the event of dissatisfaction with the outcome of the investigation.

**Step 5**

Following a full investigation, a response letter will be sent and this will include a summary of the issue from the complainant's point of view, details of the evidence and sources consulted in order to investigate the issue fully and fairly, and an findings and action taken including outcomes and learnings.

Horizon Homecare will include An apology where shortcomings or failings have been found.

**Step 6**

The complaint will be closed once confirmation has been received that there is satisfaction with the outcome. In the event of dissatisfaction, Horizon Homecare will support the complainant to access further support.

**The Complaints Log**

A record will be held of all complaints raised and contain the following information:

Each complaint received

Brief details

Action taken

Where the information is stored or located



**Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022**  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

Outcomes & Lesson Learnt.

- All investigations will be managed by using the following approach:
- Investigating the fact
- Assessing evidence
- Review of records
- Interviewing those involved

Where necessary, advice and support will be sourced via senior managers within the organisation. The complaint must be investigated by a member of staff with the knowledge, experience and seniority to undertake the investigation robustly.

Confidentiality of information will be considered at all times and staff will adhere to the confidentiality policies and relevant codes of practice.

If an investigation of a complaint results in disciplinary action against staff within Horizon Homecare, the complaint will continue to its conclusion. The complainant will be informed that the investigation has led to the disciplinary process, but the details of the outcome or ongoing investigation will remain confidential.

#### **Unresolved Complaints**

There are many bodies that can support with, or will need to be informed of, unresolved complaints and it is important to note that, during the current coronavirus pandemic, helpline opening times and ways of communicating may vary across each organisation:

#### **The Care Quality Commission**

The Care Quality Commission will not investigate complaints on behalf of individuals but does like to be informed of any concerns regarding a care provider, such as poor care that has been seen or experienced. Information given to the CQC will help to prevent others from going through the same experience and can be fed back via:

Website [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

Email [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

Address: Care Quality Commission (CQC) National Correspondence  
Citygate, Gallowgate Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA Tel: 03000 616161  
Fax: 03000 616171



**Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022**  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

**The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman** (for those Clients that are funded by local authority-funded social services care or self-funded)

Individuals have the right to raise their complaint with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. This is a free service and individuals can contact their Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman via: The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

PO Box 4771  
Coventry, CV4 EH  
Tel: 0300 061 0614

Email: [advice@lgo.org.uk](mailto:advice@lgo.org.uk)

Website: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/>

Complaint form: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/complaint-form>

Individuals must be advised that the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman will not investigate the complaint until the provider has had the opportunity to respond and resolve the matter in the first instance.

**Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman** (for Clients that are NHS funded)

Individuals have the right to raise a concern about a service that is NHS funded. This is a free service and individuals can make contact via:

Telephone 0345 0154033

Email [phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk)

Website [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)

Address: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, 30 Millbank, Westminster, London, SW1P 4QP

The staff and managers at Horizon Homecare can also signpost individuals to Healthwatch and the local Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS).

Integrated Care Systems Individuals can make a complaint about a health service they are receiving or have received and can discuss this with the commissioner of the service. Local contact details can be located [here](#).

**Local Authority Complaints Teams**

Individuals have the right to raise concerns and complaints about adult social care regardless of whether or not they pay for their own Care or if the Council funds it. Individuals can make a complaint about organisations who provide services on the Council's behalf. The contact details for the Local Authority Complaints Team are:



Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

BCP Council Adult Social Care: 01202 123970  
Email: [Comments.adultsocialcare@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Comments.adultsocialcare@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Dorset County Council    Tel: (01305) 221061.  
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/your-council/complaints-compliments-and-comments/how-to-complain-about-social-care-services>

### **Compliments and Suggestions**

Horizon Homecare welcomes compliments and suggestions and recognises their importance in celebrating and recognising the success of its service and opportunities for improvement. We will engage with a wide range of stakeholders in addition to Clients to support service development and improvement. We will share feedback with our staff.

Receiving compliments is an opportunity to celebrate and recognise success. Horizon Homecare will ensure that:

All compliments are shared with staff and displayed in a public area to highlight good practice  
Compliments are anonymised or permission is sought before displaying them.  
The number of compliments received is logged as part of a quality assurance programme.

Verbal, positive feedback from Clients and relatives is also deemed a compliment and will be recorded and shared with colleagues.

### **Suggestions**

Suggestions can be made verbally or in writing and generally are in response to seeking a means of changing practice for the better.  
Suggestions are not complaints, but in some circumstances, if they are not considered or actioned, they could lead to a complaint  
When suggestions are raised in meetings or as part of a conversation, these will be documented and then outcomes of such suggestions recorded to show consideration  
Staff will be encouraged to share their suggestions, or suggestions received by relatives and Clients, with the managers of the service.

### **Audit and Evaluation**

Horizon Homecare will monitor, review and analyse all information received about the service as a means of continuously reviewing performance, quality and safety.

Horizon Homecare will also:

Share themes and trends with Care Workers working for Horizon Homecare  
Ensure that staff are trained to deal with complaints and understand the procedure for managing complaints



**Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022**  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

### **Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints will be investigated in the same way as named complaints. They will be logged and any corrective action necessary will be taken and also logged.

### **One Complaint, One Response**

Where more than one organisation is involved in the Client's Care, they, or their representative, will be able to complain to any of them and Horizon Homecare will contact the other organisations, carry out a joint investigation and provide a single joint response. Clients must not have to contact each organisation separately.

If someone complains and Horizon Homecare is not responsible for the care or service complained about, rather than turning the complainant away, Horizon Homecare will share the concerns with the correct organisation(s). It will be necessary to obtain the individual's permission to do this. If the person prefers that their complaint is not shared with another organisation (or organisations),

Horizon Homecare

will signpost them to the right organisation instead and provide the person with their contact details. Horizon Homecare will follow [LGO guidance](#) for managing this.

All efforts will be made by Kareen Rickman to resolve all complaints within Horizon Homecare. If a Client does not wish to raise a complaint directly to management within Horizon Homecare, in the first instance, staff will try and sensitively establish their reasons why and aim to resolve and address any concerns that present.

Decisions to raise complaints outside of Horizon Homecare will be fully respected and the Client will be supported to raise their complaint with the commissioner of the service or to seek the support of an independent advocate or representative. Staff can also refer to section 5.6 for a further list of organisations that can be accessed.

Clients can also be signposted to [Citizens advice guidance](#).

### **Vexatious Complaints**

Occasionally, Horizon Homecare may receive complaints that are vexatious in that they cause considerable disruption to the work at Horizon Homecare, disproportionate cost and time to handle, and impact the wellbeing of staff (because of the way the complaint is made or because of its repetitive nature).

Horizon Homecare will ensure that it meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled Clients. In some circumstances, Clients may have a disability that makes it difficult for them to either express themselves or communicate clearly and/or





**Policy No: 67    Authorised: Horizon Home Care (Southern) Ltd    Reviewed October 2022**  
**The Right to Voice Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions**

appropriately. Where there is an indication that this may be the case, Horizon Homecare will consider the needs and circumstances of the Client or complainant in the first instance and use this information to inform any decisions that are made.

Where appropriate, Horizon Homecare will consider complaints to be vexatious, but would not label an individual complainant as vexatious. Even if Horizon Homecare decides that an individual's complaint about the service is vexatious, that does not preclude that person from making a formal complaint. Horizon Homecare would still consider any such complaints in line with the usual procedures, as outlined in this policy.