

Complaints Management

Policy

Athens District Family Health Team staff provide services to patients in the Medical Clinic (individuals, families, groups) in a family practice.

Athens District Family Health Team services are provided through a multidisciplinary team approach with other staff and physicians. All staff as members of the team share responsibility for provision of service and follow-up of complaints. All staff are governed by respective governing bodies and the Policies and Procedures of the Athens District Family Health Team.

Complaints related to Athens District Family Health Team services and/or staff will be investigated and a response will result.

Complaints may originate from a patient or others in the community, as well as from a fellow employee in the Athens District Family Health Team.

Procedure

- 1) Complaints from the patient or other sources in the community
 - a) Staff Member Receiving the Complaint
 - i) collects and documents the specific details of the concern on an Incident Report form.
 - ii) assesses whether he/she can provide the explanation to resolve the complaint or whether it is necessary to follow-up directly with the other staff member or directly with the Executive Director.
 - iii) Follows up with the patient, other staff member, or Executive Director, depending on above assessment to the satisfaction of the recent complaint.
 - iv) Staff members have responsibility to discuss complaints from patients, even if they seem relatively minor, especially if ongoing with Executive Director. Whether the complaint is from a patient or a professional, the complaints should be treated in a similar manner.

b) Executive Director Receiving the Complaint

i) See above for same procedure with the addition of the following:

- Follow up with the original source of the complaint, providing the appropriate explanation/response

Note: This may include clarification, a follow-up meeting, written explanation and/or a formal apology. The response may include utilizing existing mechanisms, e.g. team evaluations, or performance appraisals.

2) Complaints from one staff member about another staff member

a) Reporting Staff Member

- I. Approaches fellow staff member and attempts to discuss the concerns/situation in a non-threatening/ non-judgmental manner, describing specifics of the concern
- II. Is responsible for follow-up, either directly with the identified staff member to the satisfaction of the reporting staff member OR, refer the incident directly to the Administrative Lead. This discussion should take place as soon as possible after the situation comes to the attention of the reporting staff member.
- III. If reporting staff member is satisfied that the identified staff member has acknowledges the inappropriate action and the issue is appropriately resolved or is satisfied that the complaint is unfounded, no further action is required.
- IV. If the reporting staff member is not satisfied with the resolution or if the situation/concern is repeated:
 1. Either re-approaches the identified staff member OR
 2. Informs the Executive Director directly (unless the staff member feels the Executive Director is complicit in the issue)

NOTE: Registered Nurses, Registered Practical Nurses, Registered Dietitians, Physicians and others are required to comply with the regulations of the Regulated Health Professionals Act, regarding complaints about other registrants.

- b) Identified Staff Member
 - I. Meeting with Reporting Staff member regarding the complaint
 - II. Presents details of occurrence

- c) Executive Director
 - I. Collects and documents the specific details of the situation/concern from the reporting staff member and identified staff members, clarifying and assessing the severity of the situation
 - II. Determines if the complaint is valid or not
 - III. May consult with the Board of Directors, depending on the severity of the incident and develops a plan of action
 - IV. Access other sources of information as necessary for assessment purposes, e.g. direct patient information, patient records, memos

- d) Athens District Family Health Team Board of Directors
 - I. Lead Physician/ADFHT Board Chair as well as Executive Director sign off on all Incident Reports.