

Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose of the Complaints Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to assist the understanding of the processes needed to deal with complaints directed against the IPM and to help members and staff of the IPM to respond effectively to a complaint.

2. Background

2.1 The IPM Prospectus (revised 2014) states:

The IPM is a learned society for the promotion of psychosexual medicine.

The Institute aims to:

- a) Advance the study of sexual medicine with particular reference to the effect of psychosexual problems on health and well-being
- b) Encourage the study and research of psychosexual medicine particularly with regard to the practitioner-patient relationship
- b) Promote high standards in psychosexual medicine through seminar training and examination

The IPM is therefore responsible for the quality and standard of training and examination provided by the organisation and its members. It is also responsible for the administration of its affairs.

The IPM provides training for Health Care Professionals and occasionally other professionals who work in the field of sexual medicine. Examination is only provided for members of the medical profession who have undertaken the IPM training.

2.2 The IPM is a registered charity.

2.3 The IPM employs administrative staff only.

The IPM pays fees and expenses to those practitioners who are accredited to train and examine professionals who sign on for these services.

2.4 IPM members (Associates / Diplomates / Members) work within:

- a) NHS settings where they have contractual obligations with their employing authorities (NHS Trusts / Health Authorities)
- b) General Practice or the Private sector where they are self-employed or work as a salaried partner.

2.5 All IPM members working in their various settings are expected to abide by the GMC guidance on Good Medical Practice or the guidance of their regulatory body.

3. The Objectives of this Procedure

The key objectives are:

- a) To assist those who wish to make a complaint against the IPM
- b) To provide a simple procedure, with common features, to process complaints received by the IPM
- c) To ensure a rapid and open process
- d) To provide an approach that is honest, thorough and with the prime aim of satisfying the concerns of the complainant
- e) To make it easy to extract lessons on quality from complaints and therefore to improve services provided

4. Publicity for this Procedure

The IPM will ensure that all Health Care Professionals and other professionals undertaking training and examinations provided by the IPM will be informed about this Complaints Procedure.

5. To Whom to Complain

Oral complaints can be made but written complaints are preferred. All complaints should be made, or referred, to:

- a) The Training Committee for all general training issues
- b) The Chair of Examiners for all Diploma and Membership examination issues.
- c) The Chair of the IPM Council for all other issues. Discussion with other appropriate Council Officer(s) will take place if indicated

6. Performance Management and Data Collection

- 6.1 Oral complaints will be dealt with directly if possible
- 6.2 A written acknowledgement of receipt of a written complaint will be made within 5 working days
- 6.3 A written reply will normally be sent within 20 working days. If investigation into the complaint is going to take longer than this time, the complainant will be contacted with an explanation
- 6.4 Records will be kept regarding complaints and a report, ensuring anonymity, will be provided for Council:
 - a) To monitor arrangements for handling complaints
 - b) To consider trends in complaints
 - c) To consider lessons which can be learned from complaints, particularly for improvement in services provided
- 6.5 Consideration should be given to collection of data regarding:
 - a) Oral complaints which are not recorded in writing
 - b) Comments and suggestions made by IPM members
 - c) Changes in procedures made as a consequence of complaints handling

7. Complaints that Cannot be Dealt with by The IPM

The IPM cannot deal with complaints from patients about treatment received from/by one of its members. The Chair of Council will deal with a complaint of this nature received from a patient. The Chair will respond to the complainant and advise them to contact the Health Care Professional's employing authority, practice or regulatory body.