**Complaints Policy and Procedure**

**Introduction**

At Fit to Perform, Sport and Exercise Medicine, I am committed to providing high-quality medical care and excellent patient service. I take all complaints seriously and view them as an opportunity to improve my services. This policy outlines the process for patients to raise concerns and how I will address them, in line with Regulation 16 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

**2. Aims of the Policy**

* To ensure service users, their families, advocates, and other stakeholders can raise concerns or complaints in a safe and accessible way.
* To investigate complaints thoroughly, fairly, and promptly.
* To take appropriate action where failures are identified.
* To learn from complaints and improve service quality.
* To ensure no one is disadvantaged or treated unfairly for making a complaint.

**3. How to Make a Complaint**

Complaints can be made:

* Verbally (in person)
* In writing (email)
* By a representative or advocate on behalf of the service user

Contact details:
**Name**: Dr Rachel Hamilton-Cruse
**Email**: DrHamilton-Cruse@fittoperform.co.uk

Information on how to complain will be available in formats suitable to meet the needs of service users, including easy-read or translated versions where necessary.

**4. What Happens When a Complaint is Made**

1. **Acknowledgement**:
	* Verbal or written complaints will be acknowledged within **3 working days**.
	* Anonymous complaints will be investigated as far as possible.
2. **Investigation**:
	* A proportionate and prompt investigation will be conducted.
	* The process may include reviewing records, discussing with involved parties, and identifying any issues.
3. **Response**:
	* A full written response will be provided within **20 days**, or the complainant will be updated on progress if more time is needed.
	* Actions taken, or reasons for no action, will be clearly explained.
4. **Outcomes**:
	* Any learning or changes as a result of the complaint will be communicated and implemented.
	* Records of complaints, investigations, outcomes, and actions taken will be securely maintained.

**5. Support for Complainants**

Complainants can request:

* Help from a relative, carer, or advocate
* Access to interpreter or translation services if needed

Care and treatment will never be affected as a result of making a complaint.

**6. Duty to the Care Quality Commission (CQC)**

* I will provide the CQC with a summary of complaints, responses, and relevant information **within 28 days** of a formal request.
* Failure to provide this may result in regulatory action or prosecution.

**7. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

* All complaints will be handled in accordance with confidentiality and data protection laws. Any personal information collected as part of the complaint process will be managed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
* Information will only be shared where legally required (e.g. safeguarding).

**8. Review and Learning**

* Complaints will be monitored for themes and trends.
* I will regularly review this policy and the complaints process to ensure continuous improvement.

**9. Escalation Process**

If, despite following the above process, you are unsatisfied with the outcome, or you feel you can't raise the complaint directly with me, please have a look at the following webpage written by the General Medical Council. This is for concerns specifically about my professions behaviour or fitness to practice:
<https://www.gmc-uk.org/concerns/supporting-you-with-your-concern/local-help-services/help-services-in-england>

Additionally, if you feel vulnerable or need support, you can get in touch with the advocacy service VoiceAbility:
<https://www.voiceability.org/about-us>

**Signed –** Dr Rachel Hamilton-Cruse

**Updated – 13.04.2025**

**Renewal - 13.04.2026**