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| *National Complaints Governance & Learning Team*  *Patient and Service User Experience* |

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| **Health Service Executive** |
| Guidance for the Appointment of Complaints Officers and Review Officers |
| *Your Service Your Say, The Management of Service User Feedback for Comments, Compliments and Complaints, HSE Policy 2023* |

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**Note: This document is intended as a guide only to support the Appointment process. The information contained in this guide is accurate as at 01.02.2023.**

**1.0 Appointment of Complaints Officers and Review Officers**

It is the role and responsibility of Chief Officers of Community Healthcare Organisations, Chief Executive Officers of Hospital Groups and National Directors of relevant National Services to:

* *Appoint Complaints Officers and Review Officers in their respective administrative area.*

It is recommended that the numbers of appointed Complaint Officers within a CHO or Hospital Group is kept to the minimum needed to ensure a timely response to complaints received but also to ensure that the Officers appointed deal with complaints in sufficient volume to build experience and expertise. In addition, those appointed as Complaints Officers should have sufficient seniority to discharge the role. (Please see Your Service Your Say policy for the roles and responsibilities of Complaints Officers and Review Officers)

**2.0 Appointment Templates**

***The form versions referred to in this guidance are correct as at November 2022. Please check with the National Delegations Office for the current version at the time of completion.***

***2.1 Timeframe***

*Note: Appointment Templates now include a ‘****from - to date’****. It is recommended that end dates of appointments are recorded and appointments reviewed at that time to ensure that the appointment is still appropriate. The recommended duration for appointment is three years.*

***2.2 Revocation***

*Where appointment is no longer deemed appropriate the Complaints Officer / Review Officer should be issued with an* ***Appointment Revocation Notification*** *[ version 2.0 (Nov 2022)]. A copy of the Appointment Revocation Notification should be issued and stored as per the Appointment Orders.*

**3.0 Community Healthcare Organisations**

Chief Officers of Community Healthcare Organisations must complete the following appointment templates to appoint Complaints Officers and Review Officers:

* **Appointment of Complaints Officers pursuant to Article 5(1) of the Health Act 2004 (Complaints) Regulations, 2006. [Version 7 (Nov 2022)]**
* **Appointment of Review Officers pursuant to Article 5(2) of the Health Act 2004 (Complaints) Regulations, 2006. [Version 5 (Nov 2022)]**

**Sub-Delegation No.**

The Sub-Delegation No. referred to in the forms relates to the sub-delegation number that Chief Officers, CHOs, would have received from the National Director Community Operations to act as Chief Officer.

**4.0 Hospital Groups**

Further to their engagement with the HSE National Delegations Office, the following procedure for the appointment of Complaints Officers / Review Officers shall **only** apply to the Hospital Groups listed below:

* **Saolta University Health Care Group**
* **University of Limerick Hospital Group**
* **South / South West Hospital Group**
* **Dublin Midlands Hospital Group**
* **Ireland East Hospital Group**

In these Hospital Groups, Chief Operations Officers, who have a delegation from the Group Chief Executive Officer, have delegated to General Managers of the HSE statutory Hospitals in their Group the authority to appoint Complaints Officers / Review Officers.

General Managers of the HSE Statutory Hospitals within the Group must complete the following appointment templates to appoint Complaints Officers and Review Officers:

* **Appointment of Complaints Officers pursuant to Article 5(1) of the Health Act 2004 (Complaints) Regulations, 2006. [Version 7 (Nov 2022)]**
* **Appointment of Review Officers pursuant to Article 5(2) of the Health Act 2004 (Complaints) Regulations, 2006. [Version 5 (Nov 2022)]**

**Sub-Delegation No.**

The Sub-Delegation No. referred to in the forms relates to the sub-delegation (no.) the General Managers of the HSE statutory Hospitals within the Group will have received from the Chief Operations Officer to appoint Complaints /Review Officers.

For the **RCSI Hospital Group**, **only** the Chief Executive Officer has the delegated authority to appoint Complaints Officers / Review Officers.

Therefore, the Chief Executive Officer of RCSI Group must complete the following appointment templates to appoint Complaints Officers and Review Officers:

* **Appointment of Complaints Officers pursuant to Article 5(1) of the Health Act 2004 (Complaints) Regulations, 2006. [Version 7 (Nov 2022)]**
* **Appointment of Review Officers pursuant to Article 5(2) of the Health Act 2004 (Complaints) Regulations, 2006. [Version 5 (Nov 2022)]**

**Sub-Delegation No.**

The Sub-Delegation No. referred to in the forms relates to the delegation (no.) the Chief Executive Officer received from the National Director of Acute Operations to act as CEO.

**5.0 Voluntary Hospitals**

This guidance does not extend to Voluntary Hospitals. As a Service Provider, Voluntary Hospitals are responsible for the appointment of Complaints/Review Officers under their own governance arrangements.

**6.0 National Services**

The appointment of Complaints Officers and Review Officers within relevant National Services (for example PCRS, National Screening Services, National Ambulance Services, Community Operations, Acute Operations etc.) will need to be made by the relevant National Director using their delegation number received from their line report, for example the Chief Operations Officer, Chief Clinical Officer, Chief Strategy Officer, etc.

The National Delegations Office can advise a Manager or Director of a national service if they have delegated authority to appoint Complaints Officers / Review Officers.

**7.0 Issuing and Storage**

Once completed, the original Appointment Order must be sent to the Complaints Officer / Review Officer with a copy sent to the following:

1. the **Complaints Manager** for filing or held by the Chief Officer / Chief Executive Officer / Chief Operations Officer / General Manager (as appropriate) / National Director where no Complaints Manager is appointed.
2. **National Complaints Governance and Learning Team at** [**nationalcglt@hse.ie**](mailto:nationalcglt@hse.ie) **only** where the Complaints Officer or Review Officer is accessing the Complaints Management System (CMS)as part of the governance for the CMS and where the Review Officer is attending for Review Officer training.

The same process should be followed for Appointment Revocation Notifications.

**8.0 Public Awareness of Complaints Procedures**

Under Section 19 ***Public Awareness of Complaints Procedures*** of the Health Act 2004 (Complaints) Regulations 2006 (<https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2006/si/652/made/en/print> ) it states:

*The Executive, service providers and bodies to whom or persons to which the Executive has assigned its functions under section 49(4) shall make publicly available information on their complaints and review procedures, as appropriate, including-*

*(i) the names and contact details of all complaints officers,*

*(ii) the names of all review officers*

*(iii) the procedures, if any, available under Regulation 8 (2), and*

*(iv) advice on all matters relevant to making a complaint or seeking a review.*

Please ensure that online information on your service contains a section on, or link to, how to provide feedback and the procedures involved, as well as a listing of the **names and contact details** of your appointed Complaints Officers and **names only** of your appointed Review Officers.

Please include the date that the information is valid as of, and insert the date that the information will be next reviewed and updated.

For your listing of Review Officers, you may also wish to outline that it will be the local Complaints Manager that will assign a Review Officer to any review request received.

**9.0 Change of post for Complaints Officers or Review Officers**

It is important that Complaints Officers and Review Officers are advised of their requirement to notify the following should they leave or change their post for any reason.

* Complaints Manager for their Community Healthcare Organisation, Hospital Group or National Division
* The National Complaints Governance and Learning Team ([nationalcglt@hse.ie](mailto:nationalcglt@hse.ie)) as appropriate, as part of the governance for the CMS.
* Local Consumer Affairs Office

**10.0 Appointment Forms**

Copies of the most up to date appointment forms for Complaints Officers and Review Officers can be requested from the National Delegations Office.

**11.0 Further Information**

Further queries regarding appointments can be directed to the National Delegations Office at [delegationsoffice@hse.ie](mailto:delegationsoffice@hse.ie)

The National Complaints Governance and Learning Team can be contacted on [nationalcglt@hse.ie](mailto:nationalcglt@hse.ie)