

**Patient Advocate
Consumer Complaints
WORK FLOW**

REGULATIONS: N.J.A.C. 10:37

https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/providers/rulefees/regs/NJAC%2010_37%20Community%20Mental%20Health%20Services%20Act.pdf

QI ROLE:

1. Consumer Complaint phone call comes in to a dedicated Patient Advocate Line 732-235-3921 housed in the QI Department.
2. QI Support Staff listens to voice mail and enters preliminary information into the Consumer Complaints excel spreadsheet shared folder (**Box\QI Department\Advocate\Consumer Complaints CY2021**) that includes:
 - a. Name of Caller
 - b. Caller relationship to Consumer
 - c. Contact Information
 - d. Reason for the call
3. QI sends out an e-mail to the assigned Advocate, per the Patient Advocate Rotation Schedule, that includes the contact information, nature of the complaint and the MRN #
4. In addition to sending the complainant info, the QI team will directly forward the voicemail via e-mail to the Patient Advocate.
5. If there is insufficient information left on the voice mail message, the QI Support Staff will return the call to gather more information and enter the preliminary information onto the Consumer Complaints excel spreadsheet shared folder (**Box\QI Department\Advocate\Consumer Complaints CY2021**)
6. QI Department will generate an Initial Acknowledgement letter once a complaint is received to be reviewed by the QI Director/Vice President of Operations.
 - a. Once approved, the Initial Acknowledgement letter will be printed and signed by the QI Department.
 - i. The QI Department will mail the Initial Acknowledgement letter to the complainant within **7 working days** of the complaint.
 - b. The Initial Acknowledgement letter will be scanned to the shared folder (**Box\QI Department\Advocate\Written Letters**) by the QI Department.
 - c. QI Department will enter the date of the Initial Acknowledgement letter sent onto the QI Department excel spreadsheet shared folder (**Box\QI Department\Advocate\Consumer Complaints CY2021**)

TIME FRAMES:

1. Investigations will be initiated promptly after receiving notification of the complaint.
2. Initial Acknowledgement letter will be sent to the complainant by the QI Department within **7 working days**.
3. If an Advocate is unable to close a complaint, **within 5 working days**, this needs to be escalated and reported to the Vice President of the respective program.

4. The Advocate shall submit a written report of findings, resolutions and/or recommendations to the Vice President of the clinical area and to the complainant immediately upon completion of the investigation.

ADVOCATE WORK FLOW:

1. To the extent possible, the Advocate returns the call within 24 hours of receipt of the complaint and collects details regarding the complaint.
 - a. If the complainant is other than the consumer, ensure we have appropriate consent and/or a release on file to disclose information to this individual.
2. The Advocate calls and e-mails the Unit Director to inform the Director of the nature of the complaint and asks the Director to follow up.
3. The Unit Director or his/her designee responds to the Advocate promptly so that the Advocate can review and negotiate a resolution.
4. The Advocate may have more questions for the Unit Director for follow up.
 - a. The Advocate calls the complainant back with possible resolution.
5. This process is repeated if the caller is not satisfied with the resolution to the extent that the Advocate determines that there are other available options.
6. Where indicated, the Vice President and/or Medical Director is involved in resolution of the complaint.
7. A written report of findings, resolutions and/or recommendations are documented by the Advocate under “actions taken” in the Consumer Complaints excel spreadsheet shared folder (**Box\QI Department\Advocate\Consumer Complaints CY2021**)
8. For **all** complaints, the Advocate will generate a Final letter draft, to be reviewed by the Vice President of the clinical area.
9. Once approved, the Final letter will be printed and signed by the Advocate. The letter will then be sent to the QI department at quality-improvement@ubhc.rutgers.edu.
 - a. The QI Department will mail the Final letter to the complainant once received from the Advocate, **no more than 2 working days later**.
10. The QI department will scan a copy of the letter to the shared folder (**Box\QI Department\Advocate\Written Letters**)
 - a. QI Department will check off and enter date that the Final letter was sent on the Consumer Complaints excel spreadsheet shared folder (**Box\QI Department\Advocate\Consumer Complaints CY2021**) and QI Department excel spreadsheet.
11. If the complaint has been resolved to the complainant’s satisfaction, the grievance process shall end at this point.

Date

Client's Full Name

Client's Mailing Address

City, State Zip Code

Dear Client's Name ,

This letter is to let you know on DATE we received your inquiry to the Patient Advocate at Rutgers University Behavioral Healthcare related to your experience at PROGRAM NAME.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that we will conduct a thorough review of the issues and concerns you have raised. We appreciate your patience while we investigate this matter. Please be assured that we are actively looking into your concerns and our team will get back to you as soon as the investigation has concluded.

Your satisfaction with the treatment and services our organization provides is very important to us. Your feedback helps us to identify areas where further improvement may be needed. We appreciate you for sharing your concerns and giving us the opportunity to serve you better. If you have any additional concerns, now or in the future, please feel free to contact us again at 1-732-235-3921.

Sincerely,

Kerianne Belbachir
Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care
Director, Quality Improvement

Date

Client's Full Name

Client's Mailing Address

City, State Zip Code

Dear Client's Name ,

This letter is in response to your recent inquiry to the Patient Advocate at Rutgers University Behavioral Healthcare related to INFORMATION. Your satisfaction with the treatment and services our organization provides is very important to us, and we appreciate you for sharing your concerns and giving us the opportunity to serve you better.

The result of your inquiry in terms of findings, resolutions and recommendations is as follows: INFORMATION.

Your opinions and concerns are valued. We hope that our involvement has improved, clarified or resolved the issues you brought to us regarding your satisfaction with the services offered here at Rutgers UBHC. If you have any further concerns, now or in the future, please feel free to contact us again at 1-732-235-3921.

Sincerely,

TYPE NAME
Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care
Patient Advocate

What Is a Hospital Patient Advocate?

Having to stay in the hospital can raise a lot of questions.

Questions about a health problem ... treatments, tests, equipment, medicines, bills, who does what ... the list goes on.

And the hospital staff does its best to answer your questions.

Everyone wants to help out ... whether it's an X-ray technician, a nurse, or your doctor.

But sometimes, you don't get as much information as you'd like ...

... or maybe you don't agree with something.

The hospital knows that these things happen sometimes.

And that's why it has someone ... the hospital patient advocate ...

to help you when you're not getting the answers you need.

The patient advocate helps make your voice heard ...

and works with other staff members to take care of questions and problems.

This can be before, during, or after a hospital stay.

Here are some examples of situations where an advocate could help.

You've been waiting all day for a test result. Now it's early evening.

You've asked several people about your test result, but you haven't received it yet.

Or let's say you want to know what each of your medicines is for, but ... after talking to the nurse several times, it's still not clear to you.

Or maybe you and your family don't understand your doctor's treatment plan, and you can't get the answers you need.

Your hospital staff wants to help. But when there's a problem ...

and you feel frustrated or lost ... it's important to take charge of your health and ask for the hospital patient advocate.

Current as of: December 13, 2018

Author: Healthwise Staff

Medical Review: Catherine Devany Serio, PhD - Psychology, Behavioral Health & Kathleen Romito, MD - Family Medicine & Adam Husney, MD - Family Medicine

<https://www.peacehealth.org/medical-topics/id/abp7881>

Is there an advocate in the house? The role of health care professionals in patient advocacy

<https://www.peacehealth.org/medical-topics/id/abp7881>