Policy

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) will provide an effective and easily accessible process for receiving, managing and resolving feedback. This policy meets the requirements set out in the Excellent Care for All Act (2010) and is developed to take into account the TSH Declaration of Patient Values developed in June 2011.

Patient Relations is a vital function through which patients/family members can express their concerns, compliments, feedback and suggestions to the organization.

Patient Relations collaborates with other organizational groups at TSH such as Senior Management, Bioethics, Interprofessional practice, Risk Management and Legal Affairs.

Patient Relations assists in the improvement of quality care and service through effective and timely response to concerns, complaints, enquiries, and suggestions.

Patient Relations highlights and recognizes evidence of quality care and service by providing feedback on compliments to staff and physicians.

The Patient Relations Process is Accessible and Compassionate
- TSH welcomes feedback from patients, families, staff and physicians
- The Patient Relations Process must be easily accessed, effective and understandable
- The Patient Relations Process must be seen as fair and equitable to all who access it
- Complainants should feel that they have been heard and that their issues have been reviewed with respect, compassion, objectivity and thoroughness

The Patient Relations Process is Collaborative
- Front line staff, managers and physicians have the responsibility and accountability to manage patient and family concerns at the front line as they occur.
- Patient Relations works with staff and physicians to resolve matters as quickly as possible

The Patient Relations Process involves Effective Communication
- Communication should be timely, clear and direct
• Communication should be in the language of choice of the user of the Patient Relations services
• Communication should be ongoing and keep all parties updated about the progress of their matter

Procedure

1. E-mail and telephone calls will be acknowledged within 1-2 business days.

2. Letters will be acknowledged within 5 business days.

3. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process. When the person complaining is not the patient, we must get consent from the patient to discuss their case. In situations involving those incapable of giving consent, consent to release information must be obtained from the appropriate person.

4. Complaints are investigated based on the information provided. Investigation may include some or all of the following;
   • Contacting the care providers who were involved in providing care
   • Contacting managers, department chiefs or other supervisors
   • Reviewing the medical chart of the patient
   • Contacting other relevant departments, i.e. finance, dietary, facilities, diagnostic imaging etc.

5. Patient Relations will communicate the results of the investigation as soon as possible. The goal is to resolve complaints within 15 working days. Some complex matters may take longer than 15 days to resolve, however complainants will be provided with regular updates regarding the investigation and the status of the complaint.