

Rutland Therapists

RT005 – Complaints Procedure

Policy Name: RT005 – Complaints Procedure

Policy Owner: Rutland Therapists

Written and Agreed: August 2026

Review Date: August 2027

1. Purpose

Rutland Therapists is committed to providing a professional, ethical and respectful therapeutic service.

We recognise that there may be occasions when a client is unhappy or concerned about some aspect of their therapy. Clients have the right to raise concerns or make a complaint and will be treated respectfully and fairly when doing so.

This procedure explains how concerns and complaints will be managed.

2. Raising a Concern

Where possible, clients are encouraged to raise any concerns with their therapist at the earliest opportunity.

Many concerns may be resolved through an open and honest conversation between the client and therapist.

Raising a concern or making a complaint will not result in a client being treated unfairly or adversely.

3. Making a Formal Complaint

If a concern cannot be resolved informally, or the client does not feel comfortable discussing the matter directly, they may make a formal complaint.

Complaints should preferably be made in writing and should include:

- the client's name and contact details;
- the name of the therapist concerned;
- a clear description of the concern or complaint;
- relevant dates or circumstances; and
- where appropriate, what the client would like to happen as a result of their complaint.

Where a client has difficulty making a complaint in writing, reasonable support will be offered to enable them to raise their concern in another appropriate way.

4. Responding to a Complaint

The therapist will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint within **10 working days**.

The complaint will be considered carefully, fairly and respectfully.

The therapist may contact the client if further information or clarification is required.

A written response will normally be provided within **28 working days** of receiving the complaint.

Where additional time is required, the client will be informed of the reason for the delay and given an indication of when they can expect a response.

Where a complaint relates specifically to data protection, the requirements set out in Section 11 will also apply.

5. How Complaints Will Be Managed

Each therapist working with Rutland Therapists is individually responsible for their own professional practice.

A complaint relating to the therapeutic work of an individual therapist will therefore normally be managed by the therapist concerned.

Where appropriate, the therapist may:

- discuss the complaint within clinical supervision or peer review;
- seek professional or ethical guidance;
- seek advice from their professional indemnity insurer;
- review relevant records or documentation; and
- consider whether any changes to their practice are required.

Information relating to the complaint will be treated confidentially and only shared where necessary and appropriate.

6. Outcome

Following consideration of the complaint, the client will receive a response explaining the outcome and, where appropriate, any action that will be taken.

This may include:

- an explanation or clarification;
- acknowledgement that something could have been handled differently;
- an apology where appropriate;
- changes to practice or procedures; or
- confirmation that the therapist does not uphold the complaint, together with an explanation of the reasons.

Rutland Therapists recognises the importance of being open and honest where something has gone wrong and of learning from concerns and complaints.

7. Complaints to a Professional Body

Each therapist working with Rutland Therapists maintains their own professional registration or membership with **BACP and/or NCPS**, as applicable.

If a client remains dissatisfied, or believes that their therapist may have breached the professional or ethical standards of their professional body, they may be able to make a complaint directly to that organisation.

The therapist will provide details of their professional body and registration/membership information to enable the client to access the appropriate complaints procedure.

Clients can find current information about complaints procedures directly from:

- **British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)** – Professional Conduct Procedure
- **National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society (NCPS)** – Complaints Procedure

The professional body's own eligibility requirements, procedures and timescales will apply.

8. Complaints Involving Children and Young People

A child or young person has the right to raise a concern or complaint about their therapy.

A parent, carer or appropriate representative may also raise a concern on behalf of a child or young person where appropriate.

Any complaint involving a child or young person will be considered sensitively, taking account of their age, understanding, wishes, confidentiality and safeguarding responsibilities.

Information will not automatically be shared with a parent or carer simply because they have made a complaint. Any information sharing will be considered in accordance with **RT003 – Confidentiality Policy** and **RT004 – Safeguarding Policy**.

9. Safeguarding or Serious Concerns

Where a complaint raises a safeguarding concern or indicates that someone may be at risk of harm, the therapist will follow **RT004 – Safeguarding Policy**.

Where a complaint relates to potentially serious professional misconduct, legal proceedings or another matter requiring specialist advice, the therapist will seek appropriate guidance from their professional body, clinical supervisor and/or professional indemnity insurer.

10. Recording and Confidentiality

A record of formal complaints, responses and outcomes will be maintained securely.

Complaint records will be kept separately from routine therapeutic notes where appropriate.

Personal information relating to complaints will be managed in accordance with **RT003 – Confidentiality Policy**, **RT008 – Privacy Notice**, UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Only information necessary for considering and responding to the complaint will be shared.

11. Data Protection Complaints

Where a complaint relates specifically to how personal information has been collected, used, stored, shared or otherwise handled, it will also be treated as a **data protection complaint**.

Receipt of a data protection complaint will be **acknowledged within 30 days**, in accordance with ICO requirements.

The person making the complaint will also be informed of their right to raise their concern with the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**.

12. Learning from Complaints

Complaints provide an opportunity to reflect upon and improve practice.

Following a complaint, the therapist should consider whether:

- changes to their individual practice are required;
- the matter should be discussed within clinical supervision;
- additional training or professional development would be beneficial; or
- any Rutland Therapists policy, procedure or working arrangement needs to be reviewed.

Where a complaint identifies an issue relevant to the wider practice, this may be discussed between the therapists while maintaining appropriate client confidentiality.

13. Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually, or sooner where:

- BACP or NCPS complaints procedures or professional requirements change;
 - relevant legislation or ICO requirements change;
 - a complaint identifies a need to review the procedure; or
 - experience indicates that changes are required.
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Policy Agreement

We confirm that we have read, understood and agree to follow **RT005 – Complaints Procedure**.

Name: Kim Searle

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: Lou Burt

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: Catherine Andrew

Signature: _____

Date: _____