

Compliments and Complaints Policy

1. Purpose

Sips & Smiles Holistic Care is committed to providing a high-quality, respectful and person-centred service. This policy sets out how compliments, concerns and complaints are received, recorded, handled and resolved. Feedback is welcomed as it supports service improvement, accountability and client wellbeing.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- clients receiving services from Sips & Smiles Holistic Care
- family members and informal carers
- commissioners and funders (where applicable)
- representatives/advocates acting on behalf of clients
- any member of the public engaging with the service

3. Principles

Sips & Smiles Holistic Care will ensure that:

- all clients are treated with respect and dignity
- concerns and complaints are taken seriously
- complaints are handled fairly and without discrimination
- clients will not experience any disadvantage for raising concerns
- complaints are handled promptly within stated timeframes
- confidentiality is respected
- learning is taken from feedback to improve the service

4. Definitions

- Compliment: positive feedback about any part of the service
- Concern: a minor issue raised informally
- Complaint: dissatisfaction that requires investigation and/or a formal response

5. Compliments

Compliments can be made verbally or in writing and are welcomed. Clients can leave comments on the [Small Good Stuff website](#) for Sips & Smiles services. Compliments will be recorded where appropriate to support quality improvement and professional development.

6. Complaints Procedure

Sips & Smiles Holistic Care operates as a Sole Trader, meaning the service is delivered and managed by Ms Xandria Noir. There is no internal hierarchy (for example, no Director/Chair/Committee). For this reason, the complaints procedure focuses on:

- early resolution (informal stage)
- formal written complaint and response
- external escalation options where appropriate

Stage 1: Informal Complaint / Concern

Clients are encouraged to raise concerns as soon as possible, to allow early resolution. Concerns can be raised directly with:

Ms Xandria Noir - care professional, Sips & Smiles Holistic Care

Where possible, concerns will be addressed immediately. If the concern is more complex, the client will receive an initial response within 5 working days

Stage 2: Formal Complaint (Written)

If:

- the matter is not resolved informally, or
- the client prefers to complain formally,

the complaint should be submitted in writing by email to:

Ms Xandria Noir

Sips & Smiles Holistic Care And Wellbeing Support

contact@sipsandsmiles.uk or/and xandria@sipsandsmiles.uk

Formal complaints will be:

- acknowledged in writing within 3 working days
- recorded in a complaints log
- investigated fairly and sensitively
- responded to within 10 working days

If a full response cannot be provided within 10 working days, an interim update will be issued explaining:

- the reason for delay
- actions taken so far
- expected date of full response

Stage 3: Further Action / External Escalation

As Sips & Smiles Holistic Care is a Sole Trader, complaints cannot be escalated internally beyond the Care Professional.

If a client remains dissatisfied after the formal response, they may seek independent advice or escalate to an appropriate external body depending on the arrangement/funding route, such as:

- the client's Local Authority Adult Social Care team
- the client's social worker / care coordinator
- The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/>
- Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
- Carers UK Helpline, on: advice@carersuk.org
- a legal advisor
- if the complaint is that of a safeguarding nature [Adults Safeguarding \(suffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/adults-safeguarding) to make a referral or Customer First on: 0808 800 4005

7. Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially. Information will only be shared when necessary to investigate the complaint appropriately, or where required by safeguarding responsibilities or law.

8. Safeguarding

If a complaint raises concerns that indicate potential:

- abuse,
- neglect,
- risk of harm,
- serious professional misconduct,

Sips & Smiles Holistic Care will treat this as a safeguarding matter and may refer the matter to safeguarding authorities or relevant agencies.

9. Recording and Learning

All complaints will be recorded in a complaint log including:

- the date received
- summary of complaint
- investigation actions taken
- outcome and response date
- any learning/actions to prevent recurrence

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- annually, or
- sooner if legislation, guidance, or service structure changes, or after serious incidents/complaints.