

**Your Health,
Your Right**

PROTECTING THE PUBLIC AND PROMOTING HIGH STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

An Initiative by:



إدارة الكفاءة المهنية
Fitness to Practice Department

المجلس القطري للتخصصات الصحية
Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners

Hotline: +974 4407 0370

FITNESS TO PRACTICE DEPARTMENT
QATAR COUNCIL FOR HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONERS



Fitness to Practice Department
Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners

Doha, Qatar
P.O.box 7744
Tel. +974 4407 0323

www.sch.gov.qa

complaints@qchp.org.qa
www.qchp.org.qa



**PROTECTING THE PUBLIC
AND PROMOTING HIGH
STANDARDS OF PRACTICE**

An Initiative by:



إدارة الكفاءة المهنية
Fitness to Practice Department

المجلس القطري للتخصصات الصحية
Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners

Hotline: +974 4407 0370



Regulation of private health care practitioners



The Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners and Permanent Licensing Committee were established to regulate private and public healthcare practitioners and facilities to ensure safe, high-quality healthcare for the public in Qatar.

All private and public health care practitioners require a license to practice.

This includes:

- Physicians
- Dentists
- Pharmacists
- Nurses
- Allied health practitioners

All healthcare facilities also must be licensed.

The Fitness to Practice Department of the Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners aims to:

- Protect the public from incompetence, unsafe or unethical practice
- Promote and support high standards of professional practice

What can I do if I am not happy with the healthcare service I have received?



If you are not happy with any aspect of healthcare treatment you have received, you should first try to speak to the practitioner concerned or the medical/ admin directors of the facility in order to explain what happened and why you are not satisfied.

Many complaints can be resolved directly by practitioners and facilities if concerns are raised promptly, and if both parties listen to each other and communicate openly and respectfully.

If the explanation or action taken at the local level does not resolve the problem to your satisfaction, you can make a complaint to the Fitness to Practice Department.

What kind of complaints does the Department deal with?



The Department deals with complaints about the professional conduct, competence or fitness to practice of healthcare practitioners.

Complaints about healthcare practitioners vary widely and could include:

- Poor standards of clinical care
- Unethical conduct or behavior
- Practicing without a license

Concerns might also be raised about a practitioner's physical or mental health which could affect their practice.

What information should I include in my complaint?



The Fitness to Practice Department has a Complaint Form that will help you to tell us all the information we need to deal with your complaint. Ask your healthcare provider for a copy of the form or print a copy from our website (**www.sch.gov.qa**).

If you are writing your own letter of complaint, please be sure to include the following information:

- Your full name and contact details
- The name of the practitioner/ facility and the location of the practice
- Date(s) of treatment
- Type of treatment received
- Details of what happened and the particular issues you are concerned about
- Names and contact details of any other witnesses, including other medical/ health practitioners you have consulted
- Copies of any documents you have related to your complaint, such as medical records/ reports, test results or correspondence

How will my complaint be managed?



The Fitness to Practice Department will initially assess your complaint to decide what, if any, action should be taken.

The level of investigation undertaken will vary dependant on the seriousness and circumstances of each complaint but may include:

- Gathering copies of medical records and reports
- Asking for an explanation and report from the practitioner/ facility concerned
- Speaking to witnesses
- Obtaining a report from an independent expert
- Arranging an assessment of the practitioner's competence or health

We aim to deal with all complaints as quickly as possible and we will contact you throughout our investigations (if required) and you will be notified about the outcomes of our investigations once completed.

What can the Department do?



The Fitness to Practice Department has powers to:

1. Issue advice or warnings
2. Require a practitioner to improve their knowledge or the way they practice
3. Require the practitioner to undergo performance/ health assessment
4. Suspend or cancel practitioner's license (not more than one year)
5. Revoke practitioner's license
6. Prosecute anyone practicing without a license through Department of Legal Affairs at SCH
7. Add practitioner's name to the blacklisting register and to be circulated among GCC

Note: The Department cannot award compensation or order a practitioner/ facility to refund fees.



Patients' Bill of Rights & Responsibilities



The patients' Bill of Rights & Responsibilities was created by Fitness to Practice to reach 3 major goals:

1. To help patients feel more confident in the Qatar health care system,
2. To stress the importance of a strong relationship between patients and their health care providers.
3. To stress the key role patients play in staying healthy by laying out rights and responsibilities for all patients and health care providers.

Thus, the Bill of Rights & Responsibilities:

- Assures that the health care system is fair and it works to meet patients' needs.
- Gives patients/ providers a way to address any problems they may have & to resolve them accordingly.

Encourages patients to take an active role in staying or getting healthy.

For further details please check the link below:

<http://www.qchp.org.qa/en/Pages/occupational-competency.aspx>

RIGHTS

RESPECTFUL CARE

- Patients have the right to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of age, gender, religion or culture.
- Patients have the right to receive health care services and treatment with appropriate attention, competence & without unnecessary delay.
- Patients have the right to receive essential physical, moral & behavioral support from health practitioners and caregivers.

SAFETY

- Patients have the right to receive treatment in licensed facilities and practitioners who are licensed to practice in The State of Qatar.
- Patients have the right to expect a safe and high quality care.
- Patients have the right to receive care in a healthy, safe & secure environment that maintains essential hygiene, mandatory equipment, safe sterilization & a smoke free environment as per Qatari Laws.
- Patients have the right to receive care that is free from unethical behavior, abuse or negligence.
- Patients have the right to be referred and/ or transferred to another facility when medically required or upon patient's request when medically permissible.

INFORMATION

- Patients have the right, upon request, to be given the name of his attending physician, the names of all other physicians directly participating in his care, and the names and functions of other health care persons having direct contact with the patient.
- Patients have the right to concise complete and easily understood information about their diagnosis and treatment options (except when it is medically inadvisable to do so, in which case the information should be given to the patient's guardian or representative).
- Patients have the right to be informed about the health facilities' charges for the services available and available payment methods & to be informed about the immediate and long-term financial implications of the treatment choices.
- Patients have the right to request a copy of their medical records & medical reports (except when it is medically inadvisable to do so, in which case the information should be given to the patient's guardian or representative).

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Patients in recognition of the care and/ or treatment being provided to treat a diagnosis agree to play their part in taking all reasonable steps to comply with any medical instruction which requires some responsibilities on the part of patients & their representatives.

INFORMATION

- Patients have a responsibility to give providers, to the best of their knowledge, complete and accurate information about their health and medical history, including current condition, past illnesses, hospital admissions, medications, and any other matters related to their health.
- Patients have a responsibility to ask questions if they do not understand any information or instructions & health education they are given.

FOLLOWING TREATMENT PLANS

- Patients have a responsibility to cooperate with their care providers and follow instructions for their care.
- Patients accept personal responsibility if they choose not to accept treatment advice/ change treatment plan without the treating physician's approval.
- Patients have the right to informed consent in treatment decisions.

RESPECT FOR OTHERS

- Patients have a responsibility to treat providers, staff, other patients with dignity, honor and respect and to follow the provider's rules and safety regulations.
- Patients have a responsibility to respect the privacy and confidentiality of others.

KEEPING APPOINTMENTS

- Patients are responsible for keeping appointments and notifying providers if they are unable to attend for any reason.
- When present at a healthcare facility patients must wait for the turn with patience so that care-givers can deliver their best to all the patients.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

- Patients are responsible for attending to financial obligations associated with their care in a timely manner.
- Patients are responsible for providing, to the best of their knowledge, complete and accurate information about insurance claims associated with their treatment plan and to co-operate with the providers to make payment arrangements.

DECISION-MAKING

- Patients have the right to participate in decisions about their care and treatment, including the right to refuse treatment (to the extent permitted by regulations). The patient's consent or refusal must be documented in the patient's medical record.
- Patients have the right to request a second opinion.
- Patients have the right to decide whether or not they want to take part in clinical training and medical research.

PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

- Patients have the right to have their personal information kept private and confidential (subject to disclosures necessary for medical care and administration) & be viewed only by the direct caregiver or authorized persons.
- Patients have the right to request a family member or nominate a support person to be present during examination and discussion of their case.
- Patients have the right to privacy & respect during physical examination & treatment.

COMPLAINT

- Patients have the right to make a complaint if not satisfied about the care they received, to the healthcare facility management, if not resolved, patients have the right to make a complaint to Fitness to Practice Department/ Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners.
- Patients have the right to expect that any complaint made to the service provider will be thoroughly and appropriately investigated in a timely manner and be informed of the outcomes.



Who can make a complaint?

- Any person who is aggrieved or hurt by the conduct of a health practitioner in the State of Qatar may file a complaint to The Fitness to Practice Department.

A complaint can be made on another person's behalf (such as on behalf of a minor/ family member with an official delegation). Employers of health practitioners or colleagues, Health Inspectors or any licensed Health Practitioner may also raise complaints.

Who can you complain about?

- A complaint may be made about:
 - Any licensed healthcare practitioner registered in the country if the complainant is not happy with any aspect of healthcare treatment he has received;
 - A practitioner who no longer has the right to practice;
 - A complaint may be made about a person who is not a healthcare practitioner but is suspected to be acting as a health practitioner.

How is a complaint made?

- A complaint must meet the following requirements:
 - Be made in writing using the complaint form published on our website.
 - The patient must consent to authorize The Fitness to Practice Department to investigate his/ her complaint, forward to the practitioner, access health information and medical records from relevant practitioners, clinics, hospitals and/ or other entities that hold your health information.

Send the complaint to:

The Supreme Council of Health, Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners, Fitness to Practice Department, P.O Box 7744

Or to be hand delivered after arranging it by calling:
44070359/ 306/ 323/ 347/ 321/ 387/ 458

What information should be in the complaint?

- To ensure that your complaint can be handled efficiently, include as much information as possible, such as:
 - Contain specific details of the issue (e.g. date and time of the event, what happened).
 - The name of the health practitioner/ facility about whom the complaint is being made.
 - The names of the persons who were present during the incident (if any).
 - The name of the person making the complaint, Health card number or QID number, email & phone number (to communicate)
 - Any additional information (including medical reports and prescriptions or any other information that may relate to your complaint).
 - The main reason/ purpose behind filing your complaint.

What can you complain about?

- There are no particular limits on what you can complain about. However, the Department is concerned in general with issues that relate to professional behavior, the skills and knowledge of healthcare practitioners and health and safety.

When a complaint is received, the Fitness to Practice Department decides whether to accept or not to accept the complaint depending on complaints authenticity and foundation.

To decide whether to accept a complaint the Department will be looking for whether there issues of public safety are involved or issues of professional conduct.

What outcome to expect from making a complaint?



If a complaint is found to be substantiated, the Department may take action that include the following:

- Issue advice or warnings for practitioners/ facilities
- Require a practitioner to improve their knowledge or the method of practice
- Suspend or cancel a practitioner's or facility's license
- Remove the practitioner's name from the register
- Suspend the practitioner's registration
- Add practitioner's name to the blacklisting register and to be circulated among GCC
- Impose a period of supervised practice
- Require the practitioner to undergo performance/ health assessment
- If investigations reveal that a person has practiced as a health professional without obtaining a license from QCHP, they will be prosecuted through Department of Legal Affairs/ SCH

Can Fitness to Practice Department award compensation?



The Fitness to Practice Department has no power to award compensation or order a practitioner/ facility to refund fees to complainants.

The Department only has limited powers to take disciplinary action against practitioners but it will determine whether the practitioner's conduct fell below the standard expected of practitioners in the same profession.

What information will I get about the investigation of my complaint?



The Act limits the sharing of information obtained by the Fitness to Practice Department throughout the investigation process and no detailed information about the investigation nor investigations' reports can be given to complainants, the reports are submitted to official authorities only.

The Department can tell you:

- The decision to accept or not accept a complaint
- The decision after a preliminary investigation - however you will not be provided with a copy of the report
- The decision or any action taken at the conclusion of investigations officially

How long does the investigation take?



Once a complaint is assessed and accepted the first step is to invite the practitioner to respond to the allegations. Depending on the type of complaint & number of practitioners who are involved in it; however a longer period of time may be needed.

Then the preliminary investigation report will be considered at an official meeting and practitioner(s) will be invited to attend a formal hearing before taking the final decision.

CONFIDENTIALITY



The Department treats all materials and communication gathered in the course of an investigation in a confidential manner and that information can only be used for the purpose of the investigation. Department proceedings in relation to conduct issues are not open to the public.

