



Darryn Gibson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Sciensus

**Sent by email**

16 October 2023

Dear Mr Gibson,

I am writing to you to raise concerns about complaints my Office has received about Sciensus' complaint handling, and issues complainants have experienced with your service. I ask respectfully and with urgency that you review how your organisation handles complaints and use the learning from these complaints to improve the service you provide to patients.

As the Ombudsman for the NHS in England, I have an important insight into the types of issues patients are experiencing with your service. Complaints are a highly valuable resource that provide vital feedback to an organisation which can be used to improve its service. They should be handled effectively and used as an opportunity to learn and make improvements. Complaints should not be ignored and must be seen as an important part of the relationship between people and public services.

Since January 2020, my Office has received 27 complaints about your organisation. We have been unable to look into the majority of these complaints, primarily because the complainants had not been able to complete your complaints process. This is not acceptable or fair to complainants.

As a care provider you have a responsibility to listen to complaints, respond in a timely fashion, and act on the learning they generate. The ongoing delays in resolving complaints suggest that this is not happening. It is essential that you now review how your organisation handles complaints and use the learning from these complaints to improve the service you provide to patients.

My Office has identified the following common themes in the concerns complainants have raised with us:

- The majority of those who brought their complaint to use said that Sciensus either did not deliver, or repeatedly delayed the delivery of their medications. Several told us they spoke to Sciensus staff about their concerns, and that delivery errors continued even after they brought the issue to Sciensus's attention.



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- Complainants told us they received poor and inconsistent communication about their appointments with Sciensus healthcare professionals, and that they received poor communication about medication deliveries.
- Several complainants approached us with concerns about Sciensus's handling of complaints. They told us they did not receive responses to complaints they made through the company's formal process meaning they were left without the opportunity to resolve their concerns.

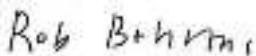
My Office recently updated our [NHS Complaint Standards](#) which set out how organisations delivering NHS services should approach complaint handling. The Standards help to make sure complaints can resolve concerns through local resolution processes as quickly and efficiently as possible. The Standards provide guidance for staff handling complaints on delivering effective complaint handling and how to take learning from complaints to improve services.

I recommend strongly that you review the Standards and reflect upon how you can improve your complaints process to more effectively address customer concerns. Our Liaison Team would be happy to speak with your complaints manager about the training we offer organisations on how to put the NHS Complaint Standards into practice. Please contact the team if this would be of interest to you: [Liaisonmanagers@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:Liaisonmanagers@ombudsman.org.uk).

Please respond by Monday 13 November 2023 setting out the steps you will take to review your complaints processes and make sure patients' concerns are listened to and taken seriously.

Once patients have completed your complaints process, they can bring their complaint to PHSO if they remain dissatisfied with your response. Further and unnecessary delay on your part will now lead us to consider seriously examining the complaints in any event.

Yours Sincerely,



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Rob Behrens CBE  
Ombudsman and Chair  
Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman



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