



Complaints Policy

Originator: Julie Monk

Date of initial approval: March 2019

Next review date: April 2021

Revision date:

Approved by: HR & Governance Committee

Date of meeting: 8th May 2019

Name of chair: Joanne Bowe

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Date of meeting:

Name of chair:

Document Summary: This policy sets out a framework for both customers and staff to ensure that Hospice at Home West Cumbria provides effective and fair management of its complaints processes and procedures.

Document Control Table

Policy Number	Gen/Pol/01
Equality Impact Assessment date	

Amendment history

Version	Date	Author
1	April 2017	Linda Hewitt
2	Mar 2019	Julie Monk

Policy Impact Assessment

The impact assessment is used to ensure:

- we do not inadvertently discriminate as a service provider or as an employer
- that the information governance implications of any changes in the way we work, implicit in any new policies or revisions to existing policies, are considered and addressed appropriately

To be completed and attached to all policies when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

		Yes/No	Comments
1.	Equality Impact		
a.	Does the policy affect one group more or less favourably than another on the basis of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - race - ethnic origins - nationality - gender - culture - religion or belief - sexual orientation (including lesbian, gay and bisexual people) - age - disability (e.g. physical, sensory or learning) - mental health 	No	
b.	If potential discrimination has been highlighted, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	n/a	
c.	Is the impact of the policy likely to be negative? If so, can the impact be avoided or reduced?	n/a	
2.	Information Governance Impact		
a.	Is the policy (or any of its associated procedures) likely to have an adverse impact on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information quality - information security - confidentiality - data protection requirements 	No	
b.	If so, have these issues already been raised with SMT? What action has been agreed?	n/a	

Contents

	Page
1. Purpose	1
2. Introduction	1
3. Overview of process	2
4. Management of the process	2
5. Persistent and unreasonable complaints	4
6. Equality and diversity	4
7. Complaints policy information to customers	4
8. Complaints policy information to staff	4
9. Monitoring and reporting arrangements	5

1. Purpose

1.1 We realise that things can sometimes go wrong and people may not be happy with the service they have received. At Hospice at Home West Cumbria we are committed to providing excellent service to all our customers. We value diversity and do everything we can to make our services available to as many people as possible. So we can improve and get things right, we welcome complaints and compliments from our customers.

1.2 An informal complaint or concern is defined as a complaint that is locally resolved and not given formal complaint status.

1.3 Complaints are valuable as they:

- give customers the opportunity to provide feedback on services
- give us the opportunity to put things right where mistakes have been made and reward and repeat exceptional performance
- allow us to improve our services and make sure mistakes are not repeated
- enable us to tailor services to customer needs

1.4 Complaints can be made:

- in person at any Hospice at Home West Cumbria office
- by telephone
- by e-mail
- by letter
- by someone acting on behalf of a customer
- with the assistance of other organisations including:
 - Citizens Advice Bureau
 - Voluntary and charitable organisations With the use of facilities and information provided for people including:
 - Those with a disability
 - anyone who may need assistance with communication
 - people whose first language is not English

2. Introduction

2.1 This policy sets out a framework for both customers and staff to ensure that Hospice at Home West Cumbria provides effective and fair management of its complaints processes and procedures.

2.2 This policy guidance should be followed by all relevant staff.

3. Overview of process

3.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, where someone is unhappy about the service, actions or lack of action by Hospice at Home West Cumbria or a person or body acting on its behalf.

3.3 The policy covers complaints relating to the following:

- we have failed to provide a service
- the standards of the service were not acceptable
- we provided the service in an unfair or discriminatory manner.

3.3 The policy does not cover complaints:

- in areas where other statutory procedures, rights of appeal or legal remedies already exist
- about employment matters from members of staff
- about Trustees - complaints of this nature will be dealt with by the relevant code of conduct and governance procedures
- about financial impropriety – these will be referred to the Head of Finance
- that refer to matters over six months old unless the complainant has good reasons why they didn't come forward sooner

4. Management of the process

4.1 We will:

- nominate an individual to deal with the complaint
- make sure that key employees are properly trained in complaint handling
- record complaints properly
- review complaints, causes and changes to service provision arising from them
- identify trends in respect of complaints and review services accordingly

4.2 Customers need to inform Hospice at Home West Cumbria of their complaint within six months of the problem occurring.

4.3 A complaint can be resolved at any time during the two stages.

STAGE ONE

We will aim to acknowledge the complaint within 2 working days of the customer getting in touch.

This will include a relevant member of staff:

- contacting the complainant by telephone to introduce themselves and confirm the complaint has been received
- getting more details about the complaint
- establishing what the complainant would like to happen
- trying to resolve the problem and agree with the complainant what will happen next; this could result in:
 - an apology
 - an explanation of what happened
 - an assurance that the same thing will not happen again
 - the complainant gets the service he/she wants
- details of any other remedial action that provides a reasonable response to the complaint
- details of any changes to practices and procedures resulting from the complaint

If the complaint is too complicated to solve at Stage One, or if a course of action cannot be agreed, the complaint will go to Stage two.

Once a complaint has been closed at Stage One, a complainant has 30 days to come back to us and say that they are not happy about what we have done.

If 30 days have passed, the complaint will be treated as a new complaint

STAGE TWO

If a complaint is not resolved at Stage One, the complainant can ask to move it to Stage Two.

The complainant needs to inform us why they want to move to Stage Two and what they think we should have done to sort out their complaint at Stage One.

We will contact the complainant within 3 working days of them telling us to move their complaint to Stage Two.

The complaint will then be investigated by a senior manager or the CEO who will review the decision making process.

We aim to contact the complainant within 20 working days to let them know what we have found out and what we will do to resolve their complaint.

This concludes the complaints procedure.

If you are still not satisfied with the decision you may contact the Charity Commission <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity> Helpline 0345 015 4033.

If the complaint is regarding a fundraising activity it can be referred to the Fundraising Regulator:

2nd Floor CAN Mezzanine Building
49-51 East Road,
London N1 6AH
0300 999 3407

5. Persistent and unreasonable complainants

5.1 Where a complainant persists in pursuing a complaint, which has no reasonable basis, or where Hospice at Home West Cumbria has already taken reasonable action in response to the complaint, we will exercise discretion as to when a matter will be regarded as closed and will not be reinvestigated.

6. Equality and diversity

6.1 We value equality and diversity and do everything we can to make our services available to as many people as possible. In relation to complaints, we will ensure that:

- complaints will be dealt with impartially, objectively and professionally
- complaints will be taken seriously
- no one will receive adverse or discriminatory treatment as a result of making a complaint

7. Complaints policy information to customers

7.1 We know that people won't use the complaints procedure if they don't know it exists, so we will publicise it widely by:

- producing information which clearly explain how to complain
- posting information on the website

8. Complaints policy information to staff

8.1 Staff will be briefed on the Complaints Policy in line with this document and key staff will receive training on this Policy and the detail of the process.

9. Monitoring and reporting arrangements

9.1 Complaints and compliments are a major source of information about what people think of the service we provide. To make sure the system is working we will:

- Undertake customer surveys of those who have made complaints
- Undertake surveys of users and user groups
- Undertake detailed analysis of the complaints process to highlight problem areas and change things accordingly

9.2 Senior Management Team will review:

- how many and what type of complaints and compliments received
- how many complaints are resolved at each step of the process
- how many complaints are resolved within the target timescale
- changes to service provision arising from complaints and compliments
- trends concerning complaints

9.3 The number and type of complaints received will be published annually in the Annual Review.

9.4 All complaints will be taken to the HR and Governance Committee and notified to the Board.

9.5 All information will remain confidential within the terms of Hospice at Home West Cumbria's Privacy Policy.