



Norfolk Carers Support  
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## COMPLAINTS POLICY AND GUIDANCE NOTES

Norfolk Carers Support aims to provide a high quality service which meets the needs of its Carers and service users. Norfolk Carers Support views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint. The organisation will aim to resolve complaints about the service, trustees, staff and volunteers from Norfolk Carers Support effectively within set timescales and guidelines to the complainant's satisfaction.

This document sets out Norfolk Carers Support's complaints procedure

### 1. Scope

1.1 This policy covers anyone who comes into contact with trustees, staff and volunteers at Norfolk Carers Support from any location. This may be an individual, a family, a group of people, a company or an organisation.

### 2. Our Policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure that is easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our complaints policy and procedure so that people know how to contact us in the event of a complaint.
- For complaints to be dealt with promptly, courteously, systematically and fairly.
- For complaints will be dealt with in confidence.
- That complaint will be recorded, monitored and acknowledged where appropriate.
- For complainants to be kept informed of progress and the outcome of any investigation.
- To ensure everyone at Norfolk Carers Support recognises and knows what to do if a complaint is received and that all staff handling complaints will be trained.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and relationships repaired.
- For Norfolk Carers Support to use any complaints to learn from its mistakes and improve their services.

### **3. Definition of a Complaint**

3.1 A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Norfolk Carers Support.

### **4. Implementation**

#### **Information**

4.1 Information on Norfolk Carers Support Complaints Policy is available upon request and on our website

#### **Procedure**

4.2 We hope that the majority of complaints can be resolved by speaking directly to the individual or persons involved. If the problem cannot be resolved by this initial contact, it can be pursued as a formal complaint. The formal complaint procedure is as follows:

#### **Stage 1**

- Anyone with a complaint about Norfolk Carers Support should put it in writing to the organisation using the complaints form provided. Where a complaint is made in person or by telephone the person taking the complaint will write down the details and send/give a copy to the complainant.
- A written acknowledgment of the complaint will be issued within three working days.
- Complaints will be dealt with by the Complaints Officer who has five working days to attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint has not been resolved within five working days, the Complaints Officer must inform the complainant of the reason for delay, and pass the complaint to the Executive Manager.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the complainant moves to Stage 2 of the procedure.

#### **Stage 2**

- The Executive Manager will investigate the complaint and the action taken to date.
- Recommendations will be made for resolving the complaint and will be put in writing to the complainant within ten working days of receipt of the file.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the proposal the complainant moves to Stage 3

#### **Stage 3**

- The Executive Manager will advise the Chair or Vice-Chair of Trustees and (s)he will appoint two Trustees to form a panel at the earliest opportunity.
- The Executive Manager will make arrangements for the panel hearing and advise the complainant accordingly giving at least five working days' notice of the time, date and location.
- The Executive manager will submit a written report regarding the complaint to the panel detailing the background to the complaint including his/her opinion why the proposals for resolving the complaint at Stage 2 of the process had not been successful.
- A copy of this report will also be sent to the complainant at least 3 days before the panel hearing.

- At the hearing the complainant will be given the opportunity to explain his or her complaint and why they feel it has not been resolved at the earlier stages of the process. They may be accompanied by a friend who can speak on their behalf, if required, but cannot answer any questions on behalf of the complainant.
- The Chair of the panel will notify the complainant in writing of the outcome within ten working days of the hearing and the reasons for the panel's decision.
- Whether the complaint is upheld or not the report should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation and any action taken as a result of the complaint.
- The decision taken at this stage is final unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution

## **5. Complaints Officer**

5.1 The current Complaints Officer is Alison Easton.

5.2 Her contact details are:

Telephone: 01603 219924  
 Email: [Alison.easton@norfolkcarerssupport.org](mailto:Alison.easton@norfolkcarerssupport.org)  
 In writing to: Norfolk Carers Support  
 Charing Cross Centre  
 17-19 St John Maddermarket  
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## **6. Monitoring and Training**

6.1 Using information taken from the Complaints Log the Complaints Officer will report on the volume, nature and resolution of any complaints to the Board on a half yearly basis. The report should also include details of any changes made as a result of the investigation and resolution of the complaints

6.2 The Complaints Officer will carry out an annual review of the Complaints policy and make any required changes.

6.3 The Complaints Officer will ensure that all staff are trained in complaint handling and encourages staff to view complaints as a means by which positive change may be brought about.