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Applies to: Person (client, resident, partner) and Workforce (staff and volunteers) for Hull and East Yorkshire Mind (the Charity)			
Reviewed by: E Normington	Version 2	Date issued: January 2023	Date of next review (unless legislation or guidance dictates earlier review): January 2026

Purpose

The Charity is committed to providing good quality services, and welcomes feedback and suggestions to support with the improvement of service delivery. The Charity recognises that on occasion people may be dissatisfied with their experience. This policy covers the core procedures and best practice in dealing with complaints to the Charity’s services. Throughout this policy, the term Person will be used to cover everybody (clients, residents, partners) except for staff.

The Charity welcomes complaints, suggestions and feedback to inform improvements to services and organisational practice. The Charity will act in the best interests of the person at all times and attempts will be made to resolve all matters in a mutually satisfactory manner. Where this is not possible, an apology and explanation will be issued.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone affected by the way the Charity provides services can make a complaint. A representative may complain on behalf of an affected person if they:

- Have died
- Cannot make the complaint themselves
- Have given consent for the representative to act on their behalf.

A complaint should be made as soon as possible after the date on which the event occurred. Complaints received after twelve months may not be eligible for investigation, unless it is reasonable for the complaint to have not been made sooner.

For staff internal complaints, the procedures to be followed are:

- Grievance procedure
- Raising Concerns in the Public Interest policy
- Anti-harassment and Bullying policy.

Where the above policies have their own procedure, the Complaints and Suggestions policy should no longer be followed.

If there is legal or Police intervention, the complaint procedure stops.

Complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made by an individual, representative or group, which requires a response. A person may complain in person, by letter, telephone, email, via the website or by using the Charity's Complaints form (Appendix 1).

When a complaint is made

Staff receiving complaints must:

- Acknowledge the persons feelings and apologise appropriately
- Establish whether the person wishes to pursue their complaint formally or informally
- Inform the person of the Charity's complaints procedure
- Ensure the complaint is referred to the Executive Assistant in the first instance

Where a verbal complaint is made, a staff member must record detail of the complaint, ensuring the name, contact details and date of the incident (if applicable) within the complaints form. Detail of the complaint must be confirmed by the complainant.

Informal Complaints

In some circumstances, it may be possible to resolve a complaint without the need for a full investigation. Staff responding to informal complaints should acknowledge the views of the person and make every attempt to resolve the issue. Complaints cannot be resolved informally if they are regarding:

- Abuse of a child or vulnerable adult
- A criminal offence
- Something which, if upheld, would result in disciplinary action against an employee
- The conduct of a Trustee

Staff should respond to informal complaints within 5 working days, ensuring sufficient time is allocated to resolving the complaint.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Complaints that cannot be resolved informally must be subject to a formal investigation. Complaints should be made as soon as possible following an event, where possible.

On receipt of a formal complaint, the Executive Assistant will record the complaint on the complaints database and assign a log number. An acknowledgement letter will be sent to the complainant via letter or email within 7 working days, the

Executive Assistant will then assign an Investigating Manager from the Leadership Team.

All complaints forms, acknowledgment letters, investigation notes and outcome letters will be saved in a confidential folder on the F drive. Access to complaints information will be issued only to managers as deemed appropriate by the Senior Leadership Team.

Investigation Procedure

The Investigating Manager should begin investigating the complaint received, making contact with the complainant where further information or clarity is required regarding the incident, or desired outcome.

To ensure a thorough investigation, the Investigating Manager will collate any supporting documentation and may interview or request written statements from those involved in the complaint, or witnesses. Detail of any meetings held during the investigation should be recorded on an Investigation Form (Appendix 2), the notes made should be confirmed by all attendees.

All statements and interviews should be treated in the strictest confidence, ensuring documents are stored in compliance with General Data Protection Regulations. Complaints should not be placed on staff records unless formal action is taken against an employee.

Outcome and Response

On completion of the investigation, the Investigating Manager must decide whether there are grounds to uphold the complaint, and establish any recommended actions to be taken as appropriate.

A letter detailing the outcome of the investigation, any accompanying actions and the appeals process should be sent to the complainant within 20 working days from the date of the complaint. Where this is not possible, an update letter will be sent, detailing the reason for the extended investigation.

If the complaint results in staff disciplinary action, the disciplinary policy will come into effect.

Support for Staff and Trustees

If a staff member or trustee has a complaint made against them, they may feel worried or threatened. Staff will therefore:

- Be told immediately and fully about any complaint made against them
- Be given an opportunity to provide their side of the story
- Be informed of their right to be accompanied by a companion if supporting with a disability, or where an interpreter is required
- Have their confidentiality protected

- Be informed that the investigation is not a disciplinary process, and be informed of the progress and outcome of the complaint.

Appeals

Stage 1: Review of Appeal

Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation into their formal complaint, they should forward their appeal to the Executive Assistant within 10 working days of the final outcome of the complaint being received.

Appeals will be referred to the Chief Executive, or a nominated Senior Manager, who will decide if the appeal should progress to stage 2. The complainant will be informed of the outcome by the Executive Assistant and advised of the reasons why, within 10 working days from receipt of the appeal. The Chief Executive's decision is final.

Stage 2: Appeals Panel

If the Chief Executive or a nominated Senior Manager progresses the appeal, an appeal panel should be convened, the panel must include the Chief Executive as Chair, one manager and one member of staff. All panel members must have had no previous involvement in the investigation. Where the complaint involves the Chief Executive, a Trustee will be appointed to Chair the panel.

The panel will review the investigation and provide an outcome within 15 working days. The decision of the panel is final.

Suggestions

In order to ensure continual improvement to services and procedures, the Charity welcomes any suggestions, compliments or feedback made by staff, volunteers, students, service users and partners.

Suggestions can be made by emailing suggestions@heymin.org.uk.

All suggestions will be collated by the Administration Team and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team monthly. Update emails will be circulated to all staff acknowledging suggestions made, including an outcome and update on agreed actions.



Complaint Form

Hull and East Yorkshire Mind aim to build successful long term relationships and act in the best interests of our clients/residents/service users at all times and to always follow up their complaints or concerns within 20 working days. All investigations carried out as a result of a complaint will be conducted on a confidential basis.

Once you have completed this document please either:

Hand it in/ post to: Wellington House, 108 Beverley Road, Hull, HU3 1YA

Email it to: info@heymin.org.uk

Alternatively, you can complete this form online at: <https://www.heymin.org.uk/complaints/>

You will be sent a written acknowledgement that your complaint has been received within 7 working days.

Date of the incident(s) leading to this complaint	
Names of all the people involved (if known):	
Details of the complaint: (Please describe the problem clearly, with as much detail as possible (continue overleaf if necessary))	
What would you like to happen as a result of your complaint?:	

Your name:	
Address:	
Post code:	Contact tel no:
Email address:	Preferred contact method:
Today's date:	Project/service:
Name of team member supporting you (if applicable):	
<i>Office use only:</i>	
<i>Date Received:</i>	<i>Log No:</i>