

## Compliments and Complaints Procedure

Carers Support West Sussex aims to provide a high quality, responsive, carer led service. To do this we take account of the views and wishes of the community we work with. We welcome every opportunity to monitor and improve our services. We have developed this procedure to ensure that you receive the service standards that you expect and so that there is a clear process in place for you if you wish to make either a compliment or complaint.

### Complimenting our Service

Compliments are valuable, welcome and very important to us. When they are received, either verbally or in writing they will be recorded. Compliments enable us to:

- Understand that we are providing a quality service which is meeting the needs of carers;
- Put carers at the heart of all we do and give carers a strong voice in shaping support and services, particularly service quality;
- Provide positive feedback to our staff;
- Influence our organisational and service development;
- Inform our quality assurance programme.

### Complaining about our service

Carers Support West Sussex recognises that there may be times we get things wrong. In order to learn from such mistakes we need to know about them and encourage people to comment or complain. Such comments or complaints will always be taken seriously, recorded and responded to.

### Procedure for Resolving Complaints:

#### Who can use this procedure?

This procedure is for anyone who comes into contact with trustees, staff and volunteers from Carers Support West Sussex. By anyone we mean carers, people with care needs, the families and friends of carers, other voluntary groups, statutory agencies, professionals and any other members of the public. It is not intended for

use by employees or past employees as they have access to Human Resources Policies and Procedures.

### **What you can do?**

You can make a comment or complaint either in person, by email, on-line, by telephone or in writing. If you wish you may use the assistance of a friend or relative in doing this, or you may prefer a member of staff to write it down for you in a way that is acceptable to you.

We hope that the majority of complaints can be resolved informally by speaking directly to the person or persons involved, who will listen carefully to what you have to say. We will then either alter the service for you or explain why this cannot be done. Verbal complaints will be recorded on our complaints schedule.

### **What happens next?**

If you feel that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved and you feel unable to discuss it with the member of staff involved, you may write to the Carer Services Manager or Chief Executive.

If your complaint is about the Chief Executive you can write to The Chair of the Board who will handle complaints at this level. If it is about the Chair of the Board the complaint will be handled by the Vice Chair.

You can request a copy of our Compliments and Complaints Policy Statement.

All queries will normally be acknowledged within three working days and formally responded to within 20 working days. We will treat all queries sensitively and in the strictest confidence.

If your comment or complaint involves a member of staff, they will normally be informed unless you specifically request otherwise, although this may limit the extent of further investigation.

### **What if I am still not satisfied?**

You can ask the Chief Executive for your complaint to be considered by a small Review Panel. The panel will consist of two of our Trustees and an independent external Chair. They will normally take place within 20 working days of your request. You will be notified in writing about the time and place of the meeting at least 10 days beforehand, so that you may attend and be accompanied by a friend or relative if you wish. Alternatively, you may wish your friend or relative to attend and speak on your behalf if you feel unable to do so.

The Review Panel will let you know their decision and the reason for it within 7 days.

This will be the final stage in the Compliments and Complaints Procedure, but this does not affect your right to contact:

- Your MP
- Social Services, West Sussex County Council, County Hall, West Street, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RQ

## **How to contact us**

Our service can only improve if you let us know when we get it right or wrong, so please let us know. Our office is open Monday to Friday 0900 – 1700. We also have an answerphone so please feel free to leave your name and telephone number and we will contact you as soon as possible. Alternatively you may contact us by e-mail or letter.

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