

## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

Southend Carers is committed to providing high-quality services. Feedback is essential to this and so it welcomes all comments, compliments and complaints. These help the organisation to us review and develop its services and help it achieve the highest possible standards and provide excellent services to everyone.

Southend Carers accepts that sometimes things go wrong and that managing complaints well is central to improving both its services and reputation. How it manages complaints and then learns from them says a lot about its commitment to quality. If things do go wrong, the Centre needs to know about it so that it can take corrective action and learn from what has gone wrong. This policy enables people making a complaint to gain access to a system that is transparent and fair and which will settle all complaints fairly, as quickly as possible and with respect. Respect includes maintaining confidentiality and an individuals' right to privacy.

Complaints received by a child, young person or adult, member of staff or volunteer will be processed as described below.

### **What is a Complaint?**

A complaint may be about a delay, lack of response, discourtesy, failure to consult or about the standard of service received. In fact, a complaint is anything that leaves someone dissatisfied with Southend Carers. Complaints can be made in person, on the telephone, in writing or by completing a complaints form (see page 4).

Staff, trustees and volunteers with a complaint are advised to use the Grievance Procedure.

### **Complaints Procedure**

#### **Three Stage Process**

Southend Carers operates a three stage complaints process. If an issue cannot be resolved at the first stage, it will proceed to the next stage and so on. Time limits are set for all responses, but sometimes complicated complaints may take longer to investigate. If they do, the complainant will be advised and provided with new time frames in which a response will be received.

At each stage written records of discussions will be kept by Southend Carers and the outcome of each stage will be confirmed in writing to those concerned.

## **Stage 1**

### **Informal Discussion**

- In the first instance, any Carer or Service User who wishes to lodge a complaint should contact the Operations Manager. It may be necessary to make an appointment to arrange for the complainant to meet with the Operations Manager to have an informal discussion about the issue/s raised or the discussion may take place on the telephone by mutual consent.

If the issue/s remain unresolved at the end of the discussion, the Operations Manager will advise the Chair and/or Employee & Volunteers Group, and the complaint with all associated records will progress to Stage 2.

- If the complaint relates to the Operations Manager, the complainant can contact the Employee & Volunteers Group directly. It may be necessary to make an appointment to arrange for the complainant to meet with the Employee & Volunteers Group to have an informal discussion about the issue/s raised or the discussion may take place on the telephone by mutual consent.

If the issue/s remain/s unresolved at the end of the discussion, the complaint with all associated records will progress to Stage 2.

## **Stage 2**

### **Full investigation and written report**

- When the complaint is not resolved at Stage 1, the Operations Manager will, within ten working days of the complaint reaching Stage 2, undertake a full investigation of the situation and decide on appropriate action. The outcome will be notified to all those involved.

If the complaint is not resolved at Stage 2 and the complainant wishes to take the complaint to the next stage (Stage 3) the Operations Manager will advise the Employee & Volunteers Group within five working days and pass on all the relevant records. The complainant should then contact the Employee & Volunteers Group directly within ten working days.

- When the complaint concerns the Operations Manager and has not been resolved at Stage 1, the Employee & Volunteers Group will conduct a full investigation within ten working days of receiving the complaint and report the outcome in writing to the complainant.

If the complaint is not resolved and the complainant wishes to take the complaint to the next stage (Stage 3) the Employee & Volunteers Group will advise the Chair within five working days and the complainant should contact the Chair directly at Southend Carers.

## **Stage 3**

### **Review of investigation and written report**

- The Operations Manager will review the records of the investigations to date and seek further details or clarification from those concerned if required. The outcome will be notified to all those involved within ten working days of the complaint reaching Stage 3.
- When the complaint has not been resolved at Stage 2 and concerns the Operations Manager, a Trustee, or the Chair - the Employee & Volunteers Group will review the records of the investigation to date and seek further details or clarification from those concerned if required. The complainant will be informed of the outcome within ten working days of the complaint reaching Stage 3.
- The response from the relevant Chair and/or Employee & Volunteers Group will include the contact details of any independent bodies to which carers or service users have recourse (such as the Local Authority). Information will only be shared with external bodies with the complainants consent.

All complaints are recorded in the Complaints Log which is reviewed by the Employee & Volunteers Group each year.

## Complaints Form

- Please complete this form, if you wish to about Southend Carers services or personnel. If you are doing so on behalf of someone else, please give their name as well.
- Please read the leaflet before you complete this form. Attach extra sheets if you need to.

Contact Details			
<b>Name:</b>			
<b>Address:</b>			
<b>Telephone No:</b>		<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

Details of Complaint

Details of Outcome (if you are making a complaint, what would you like done to put things right)