

Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy & Procedure

Introduction

Leeds Mind is committed to providing a high quality service for our clients and service users. Our handling of compliments, comments and complaints supports this high quality service. Effective communication is a vital part of the process in dealing with comments and complaints as people are more likely to forgive errors when they are discussed in a timely and thoughtful manner.

One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the feedback from our service users and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints. Sometimes we can put things right, sometimes we can only explain our actions and apologize. This policy is not intended for use by staff who should use our grievance or whistle blowing policy.

All users of our services are advised of the process and are given a leaflet explaining the procedure.

What happens to Compliments and Comments

We welcome your compliments about our services. When you send in a written compliment we will ensure that it gets passed to the member of staff, volunteer or department.

Comments are really helpful to us in reviewing the services we offer, it is even better helpful if you can suggest a solution. We will consider all reasonable ideas and we will let you know if we have made any changes as a result

Complaints

We aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and in confidence. It is likely however that we will need to share details with relevant employees in order to investigate your complaint fully
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly;
- keep matters low-key;

- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

We encourage and support service users and anyone else involved in the organisation to communicate openly and assertively and to follow the Conflict Resolution procedure in the first instance to try to resolve the complaint at an informal level. Dealing with issues directly in this way maximises the likelihood of a positive outcome.

Persistent/vexatious complainants may have a genuine grievance but take inappropriate steps to complain. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and appropriately while ensuring that other clients, service users, staff or volunteers do not suffer detriment and that the resources of Leeds Mind are used effectively.

An informal approach is recommended when it can be achieved. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

If any member of staff or manager receives a complaint either verbally or in writing, they should pass the complaint to the Service manager, or if the complaint is about a service manager they should pass it to the relevant senior manager. If appropriate, this person will arrange a meeting with the complainant to ensure that they are aware of Leeds Mind's Conflict Resolution policy to resolve the complaint informally. They will discuss the available Conflict Resolution options, which include one-to-one meetings, meetings with other senior manager(s) or with an external mediator and agree how they wish to proceed. At this meeting, it will be made clear that this is not part of the Complaints Procedure, but precedes it.

If a complaint has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, informally then the procedure at Appendix 1 should be followed:

Monitoring of compliments, comments and complaints

A log of all compliments, comments and complaints is kept by the HR manager and a quarterly report is prepared for the Quality and Performance sub-committee. These reports are compiled into an Annual Report for the senior management team and the Board of Trustees.

Complaints are monitored to identify ways to improve practice and maintain a high quality service.

Support and training are offered to staff to enable them to conduct investigations.

Appendix 1. Complaints procedure

Stage 1 Submit a complaint in writing

1. Using the Complaint Form (Form 1), giving as much detail as possible. The HR Manager can provide details of where help / support can be obtained with filling in the form or making a complaint, if necessary.
2. The complaint should be submitted to the HR Manager, Leeds Mind, Clarence House, 11 Clarence Road, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4LB, who will send you written acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint within 5 working days
3. The HR Manager will forward the complaint to the person who will be investigating your complaint.
 - If the complaint is against a non-management employee the Service Manager will investigate the complaint.
 - If the complaint is against a Service Manager the relevant Senior Manager will investigate the complaint.
 - If the complaint is against a Senior Manager the Chief Executive will investigate the complaint
 - If your complaint is against the Chief Executive a member of the Board of Trustees will investigate the complaint.

In order to resolve issues as efficiently as possible, the complaint should be made as soon as possible after the incident.

When dealing with any complaints, the processes will be open to scrutiny, consistent with Leeds Mind's core values and records will be kept.

4. Service users can choose to make a complaint via an advocate, relative or friend. If this is the case, it should be made clear that it is the service user making the complaint supported by the 3rd person, rather than the 3rd person making the complaint. All communication will be sent to the complainant and if requested copies can be sent to the 3rd person.
5. If a third person (such as a relative or other worker) makes a complaint, the person investigating the complaint will first inform the individual concerned about this complaint. A meeting will be set up between the investigator, the individual making the complaint and the person they are making the complaint for.

Stage 2 Investigating the complaint

1. The manager /senior manager/ Chief Executive (as stated above) will first arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint with the complainant, to get full details of the complaint and find out how the complainant would like to see it resolved.

The manager /senior manager/ Chief Executive will complete their investigation within 15 working days. If this is not possible, they will write to you to explain the reasons why.

2. The person investigating the complaint will inform the person or persons who the complaint has been made against, and their line manager(s), outlining details of the complaint. As part of their investigation, they will interview this person or persons and any other witnesses.

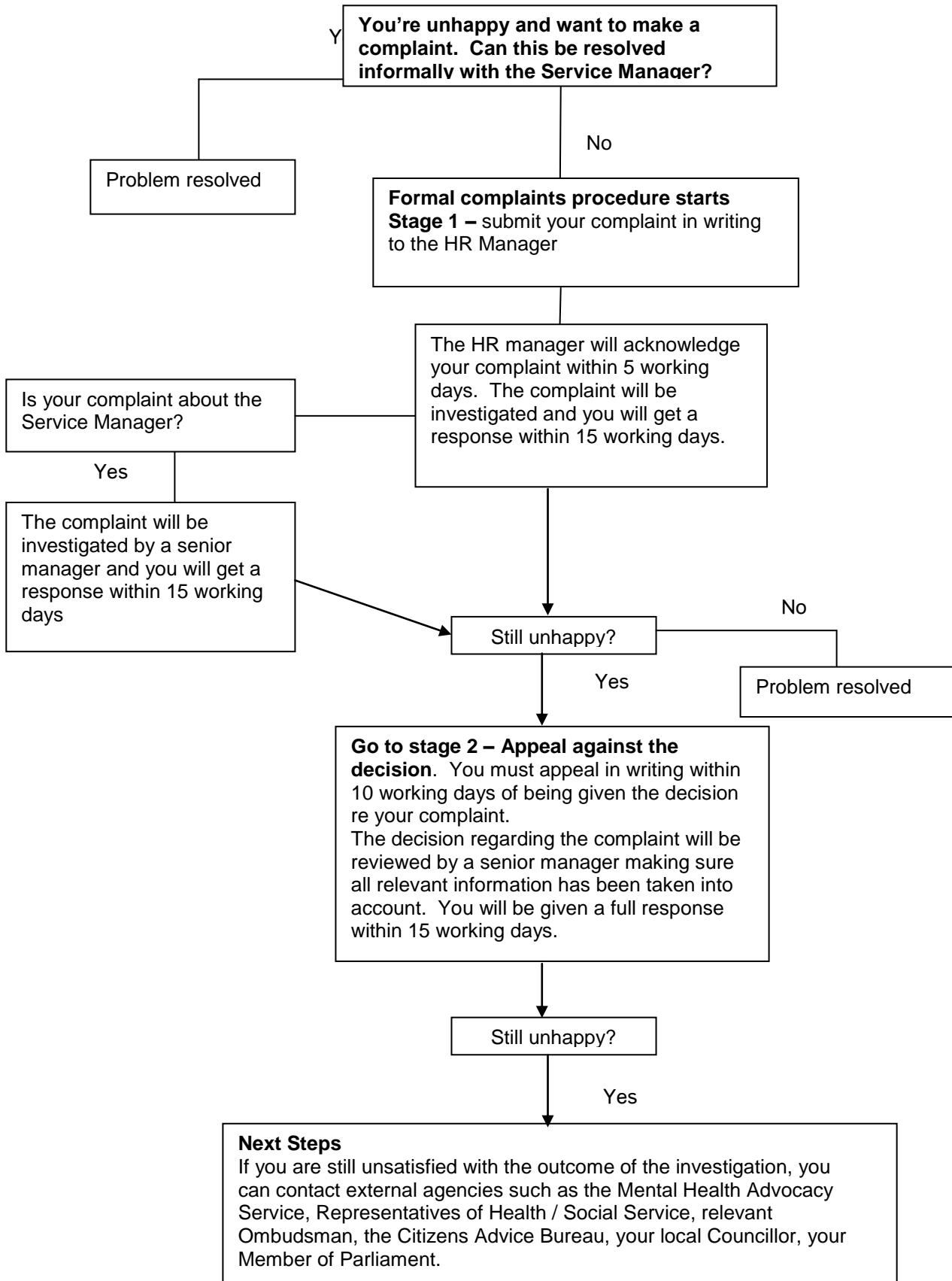
All interviews throughout the complaints procedure will be conducted in a private space to minimise interruptions and someone will be present to take notes (such as the HR Manager). At any point, a meeting can be adjourned if further advice is required.

3. The person investigating will write to the complainant, outlining the facts they have ascertained and the decision they have come to. The complainant will be asked to give their response in writing either that they are happy with the outcome or that they wish to appeal the decision.

Stage 3 Appealing against the decision

1. If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of the investigation and wish to
to
Appeal against the decision made, they must complete the Appeal form and send in to the HR Manager within 10 working days of receiving the decision.
 - If the complaint was investigated by the Service manager, the relevant senior manager will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary
 - If the complaint was investigated by a senior manager, the Chief Executive, will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary
 - If the complaint was investigated by the Chief Executive, a member of the Board of Trustees or the Chair of the Board, will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary
 - If the complaint was investigated by the Chair of the People Development Sub- committee the Chair of the Board of Trustees will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary
2. You will be informed of the outcome of your appeal within 15 working days
3. The response of the Appeal will be final and no further internal investigations will take place. If the complainant is still unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they can contact external agencies such as the Mental Health Advocacy Service, Representatives of Health / Social Service, relevant Ombudsman, the Citizens Advice Bureau, your local Councillor, your Member of Parliament.

Leeds Mind Complaints Procedure



LEEDS MIND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



FORM 1. COMPLAINTS FORM

This form to be completed by the person making the complaint. If someone is completing the form on your behalf, could they please complete section 1.2

Name: Tel:.....

Address:

.....

.....Postcode.....

1.2 I.....(name)

am completing this form on behalf of.....In the capacity of

Advocate /friend/other – please specify

Please give details of your complaint making it as specific as possible, including the name of the person(s) against whom it is made (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Please give names and addresses of witnesses if appropriate:

What is your desired outcome (what do you want to happen?)

Signature of Complainant..... Date.....

LEEDS MIND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



STAGE 1 FORM – Response to Complaint

Complaint from: date received.....

Investigated by

Details of Investigation/Response

Recommendations

Investigators signature..... Date.....

Complainant's response

- a) Complaint resolved
- b) Complaint not resolved and wishing to appeal the decision

Signature of Complainant..... Date.....

LEEDS MIND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



Stage 2. Appeal Form

Complaint from: date received

Regarding:

Heard by

.....

Date of Appeal hearing

Decision: (please give details)

Recommendations

Signature Date.....

Signature of Complainant

The decision of the Appeal panel is final