



Upper Great Southern Family Support Association Inc.

Policy On
**SERVICE USER COMPLAINTS
& GRIEVANCES**

Date Adopted: July 2002

Date Last Revised: August 2012

Latest Date for Next Review: August 2013



Upper Great Southern Family Support Association Inc.

Policies and Procedures

Policy and Procedure: Service User Complaints & Grievances	Date Adopted: July 2002
NUMBER OF PAGES: 4	Date of Last Review: August 2012
RELATED DISABILITY SERVICE STANDARDS:	Review Date: August 2013

Service User Complaints & Grievances

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish mechanisms for Service Users to lodge a complaint. To ensure complaints are dealt with fairly and promptly and in a sensitive and courteous manner. To assure Service Users complaints can be submitted without fear of reprisal and will be treated with confidentiality. To provide an avenue for complaint and dispute resolution which can be resolved within existing resources. Complaints are also seen to have an important role in contributing to service improvement in the agency.

The Policy

Service Users may bring their complaint/dispute to the notice of the organisation through the Chief Executive Officer, the Chairperson of the Board or a Board member. Service Users may present the complaint/dispute themselves or use an advocate.

Service Users have the right to take their complaint to an external outside agency. Please refer to the brochure for a detailed list of who can help Service Users make a complaint.

Treatment of complaints and disputes will be fair to both the person making the complaint and those receiving the complaint and will be given high priority for resolve.

Service Users, families, and advocates have the right to be informed about the Organisation's service user Complaints Policy & Procedure.

Disputes about the Association, its staff, Board or services are invited by the Association, to provide opportunities for improvement of service quality and strengthening of the Association and Service User relationships.

Complaints will be viewed as a means of evaluating and improving the Association's role and performance.

The Procedure

The organisation will:

- Treat all Service User complaints as private and confidential in accordance with the Privacy Act.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the existence of, and has access to, a copy of the Complaints Management File.
- The Chief Executive Office or associated staff member will assist people who may have difficulty making a complaint by completing the "Complaints Form".
- In the first instance encourage the complainant to discuss their issue with the person whom they have the complaint with, if appropriate.
- Recording and acknowledgement of the complaint using the association "Complaints Register" and attempt a resolution by first point of conduct.
- If the complaint can not be resolved at this level, the complaint will then be directed to the Chief Executive Officer. On receiving the complaint, the Chief Executive Officer is to inform the Board of the complaint.
- If the complaint is still not rectified then it is to be directed to the Board of Management.
- If the Service User has elected to have the complaint dealt with internally, the complainant is to be met within 7 working days to document the nature of the complaint or concern and a resolution identified.
- The Chief Executive Officer shall notify the complainant in writing of the outcome of the investigation within 10 working days after the investigations have been completed.
- If the complaint can not be resolved within the organisation, the complainant will be directed to an outside agency (refer to brochure). Ensure that consent is obtained prior to referring the complaint to the Office of Health Review. A consent form must be completed, signed and dated by the complainant and witnessed by an Association staff member or Board member.
- Ensure that the complainant does not have to meet or deal with the person allegedly involved or associated with the complaint, should they choose not to do so.
- All complaints, resolved and unresolved to be recorded in a complaints log book and a non-identifying summary of complaints to be tabled at the next Board of Management meeting.

External Grievance Mechanisms

While it is preferable that grievances are resolved at the level at which they occur, this is not always possible. There are a number of external grievance mechanisms which consumers or staff may wish to utilise. These include the following:

People with Disabilities (WA) Inc
Disability Resource Centre
Ground Floor
5/189 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004
Phone 9222 2973
Fax 9222 2975
Toll free 1800 193 331

Guardianship Board
Public Guardians Office
Phone 9261 7620
Fax 9261 7673
Toll free 1800 807 437

Legal Aid Commission of WA
105 St George's Terrace
PERTH WA 6000
Phone 9261 6222

Confidentiality is assured in regard to complaints. However, in instances where the law is broken there is a need to refer the matter to the appropriate authorities. In such cases the Chairperson will make the decision in conjunction with the Board after consultation with all parties.

Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.

ATTACHMENTS

- complaints form
- complaints register
- complaints running sheet