



COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

POLICY STATEMENT

Derbyshire Carers Association aims to provide a high-quality, responsive, user-led service. In order to ensure we do so we need to take account of the views and wishes of those we are here to help. We welcome every opportunity to monitor and improve our service and having a 'compliments and compliments' policy and a clear procedure for resolving complaints is one way of doing this.

COMPLIMENTING OUR SERVICE

Compliments are valuable, welcome and important and when they are received, either verbally or in writing, they will be submitted to recipients and Head Office where they will be recorded. Compliments enable Derbyshire Carers Association to:

- Understand that our service is being provided to our users' satisfaction;
- Provide positive feedback to our staff;
- Influence our organisational and service development;
- Inform our quality assurance programme

Objectives

The main objective of the Comments and Complaints Procedure (CCP) is to promote the right of users or their representatives, referrers, or other organisations, to question or comment on the quality and nature of the service, and where desired to challenge any decisions made.

Derbyshire Carers Association should aim to provide satisfaction in resolving complaints and to do this as speedily as possible and as close to the source as is acceptable and appropriate.

The Comments and Complaints Procedure is designed to be user friendly and to reflect DCA's commitment to issues of equal opportunities.

Association users, referrers and relevant statutory and voluntary organisations should be made aware of the Comments and Complaints Procedure. Copies of the CCP will be made available to any individual or organisation requesting same.

Process for Complaints

There are three possible stages:-

1. Informal, which can be verbal
2. Formal, which may involve verbal and/or written complaints.
3. Review or Appeal Panel.

1. Informal Stage

All complaints received should be notified to management and be recorded in a complaints book, acknowledged and the complainant kept informed at all stages. If the complaint involves a member of staff (even if the complaint is not about that staff member) the matter will be discussed between the staff member and management and a letter of explanation giving appropriate answers, (which may relate to some change of practice or otherwise or reason for delay in answering) sent to the complainant from management. This procedure should be carried out within ten working days.

2. Formal Stage

If the complainant is not satisfied with the explanation given or decision made, or if they do not wish to discuss it with a member of staff, they should write directly to a member of the management, or if preferred to the Chair of the Management Board, letters of this nature should be marked private and confidential and will be passed to the appropriate person unopened. Acknowledgement of the complaint should be made immediately and a full response made within 28 days or reason for delay given.

The response should be addressed to the complainant and copied to any third party who may have been involved in the role of advocate or representative of the complainant.

Any response given should state that if the complainant is not satisfied with the decision then they have 28 days in which to inform the Chair of the Association stating they would like the decision reviewed. At this point the Chair would set up a Review Panel.

3. Review Panel

The Review Panel should consist of a Chairman, Association Manager, (unless the complaint is about DCA management) and other Board Member. In certain circumstances the Chair may decide to go outside the Association for other Panel members.

The Chair of the Review Panel (this may not be the Association Chairperson) should then inform the complainant (in the same manner as in the Formal Stage) of the decision of the Panel. This should then be reported to the Management Board. (The decision of the Review Panel is final).

Monitoring

All comments and complaints should be recorded together with actions taken, process followed, decisions made and outcomes, where measurable.



Helen Robison
Chief Executive Officer
Derbyshire Carers Association