

**CROSSREACH**

Care you can put your faith in

# Complaints and Compliments

Policy

## **Policy Statement**

CrossReach aims to provide a quality service to all people who use our services, their families and their representatives. However, CrossReach appreciates that there will be occasions where problems arise and in these cases CrossReach will seek to address and resolve issues of complaint as quickly as possible.

The feedback received through compliments is as important as complaints. Compliments allow CrossReach to identify where things have gone well and this can allow CrossReach to introduce this positive practice in other parts of the organisation.

## **Purpose Of The Policy**

CrossReach recognises that the Complaints and Compliments Policy gives people who use our service, family members, customers, representatives, volunteers or members of the public a process in which to give feedback on the quality of the service provided and in turn it gives CrossReach the opportunity to learn and grow.

The policy is in place to ensure that:

- complaints are dealt with effectively
- complaints are appropriately looked into
- all complainants are treated with respect and dignity
- complainants are given the opportunity to appeal if they remain dissatisfied with the response given
- service and organisational learning is identified out of complaints and compliments.

## **Who Is Affected By This Policy**

People who use our services, family members, customers, representatives, staff, volunteers or members of the public who wish to give us feedback regarding the service provided by CrossReach.

## **Who Should know about this Policy**

All CrossReach staff members, including agency staff and students on placement, who may receive a complaint or compliment should be aware of the policy and the procedure to follow, in order to appropriately manage the issue(s) or to pass this on to the correct person.

All service users, family members, customers, representatives and volunteers should be aware of the policy. Any member of the public wishing to make a complaint should be made aware of the policy.

## **Definitions**

A Complaint – For the purposes of the CrossReach Compliments and Complaints Policy, a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the way in which CrossReach is perceived to have provided a service.

A compliment – A polite expression of praise or admiration. Positive feedback on the service being provided.

Service Complaints Recording Form – when a complaint is managed within the service this is the paperwork which is completed by the Service Manager and issued to the complainant on the outcome of their complaint.

Delegated Powers – this identifies the appropriate route to manage the complaint based on the nature and frequency of the complaint.

Complaint Manager – a Complaint Manager is appointed when the complaint is being managed by a manager external to the service. The Complaint Manager will be of at least Head of Service level. The Complaint Manager will be responsible for looking into the matter of complaint and formally responding to the complainant.

### **Core Principles**

1. The Complaints and Compliments Policy is an organisational policy and is applicable across all service areas.
2. All complaints will be acknowledged in writing in 3 working days.
3. Where a complaint requires to be investigated, a Complaint Manager will be appointed and they will seek to conclude the complaint within 20 working days.
4. During the admission process all Service Users will be given a copy of the Complaints and Compliments Policy Summary and will be made aware of how to access the full policy and how to make a complaint either verbally or in writing through the CrossReach policy. CrossReach will also ensure that Service Users are aware that they have the right to complain directly to the Care Inspectorate.
5. Posters are displayed within all CrossReach services to encourage feedback to be given.
6. When a complaint is received the nature of the complaint will be reviewed in line with the Complaints Delegated Powers. This will identify the route by which the complaint will be managed.
7. CrossReach expects that complaints will raise any issues within 12 months of the date a matter occurred, or the date the matter came to the attention of the complainant. CrossReach does reserve the right to consider complaints which are out with the 12-month timeframe if there are specific circumstances which have prevented the issue from being raised sooner.
  - a. The exception to this will be in services registered with COSCA who will, in relation to timescales recognise the COSCA complaints policy which says:
    - i. a) Complaints will be accepted for investigation up to three years following the date of the alleged breach of COSCA's Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice.
    - ii. b) Complaints will be accepted outside of this limit if they are deemed to be in the public interest.
8. Issues of non-recent abuse complaints will be managed through the Historical Abuse Policy and Procedure

9. CrossReach would welcome the opportunity to resolve any complaints prior to a complaint being made to an external body such as a Local Authority or Regulator such as the Care Inspectorate. However, where a complaint is made directly to a relevant external body CrossReach will fully comply with requests for information as part of their investigation.
10. Where a complaint concerns an individual who has left the organisation the complaint will still be investigated. If relevant, findings will be shared across the organisation.
11. Where CrossReach determines that a complaint is malicious or vexatious in nature, then further complaints by the same complainant, regarding the same issue will not be re-investigated. In these circumstances the situation will be reviewed by the Head of Service and if they are satisfied that there is no new evidence then the initial outcome will be considered to be final. This will not affect the right of the individual to appeal a decision.
12. All parties involved in a Complaint can, where relevant, declare a conflict of interest to a designated person. This would generally be the Investigating manager.
13. CrossReach will assist people to provide feedback. This could be by a staff member, volunteer or independent advocate.
14. CrossReach will keep written records of all complaints regardless of whether they are received verbally or in writing.
15. Complainants have the right to appeal against the outcome of their complaint if they believe it to be unfair.
16. Copies of written compliments are forwarded to the Business Partner – Quality, Compliance and Improvement and are presented on a quarterly basis to the Corporate Management Team and Quality, Compliance and Improvement Governance Group.
17. In addition to handling complaints, CrossReach welcomes constructive suggestions from individuals who wish to contribute to the improvement of our services. We recognise that suggestions can provide valuable insight and help us identify areas where enhancements can be made proactively.

## **Responsibilities**

1. Senior Management Team to ensure appropriate policy is in place and that Managers are appropriately applying the policy
2. The Service Manager will promote and adhere to the policy and ensure that all employees are aware of the policy and have read and understood it.
3. All staff must ensure they read and understand the policy and follow it when necessary.

## **Ethics & Legislation**

CrossReach will comply with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018  
Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.

## **References to other Policies/Documents**


BACP Complaints Policy  
Care Inspectorate Complaints Policy

Confidentiality Policy  
 COSCA Complaints Policy  
 Data Protection Act/Policy  
 Scottish Fundraising Standards Panel  
 Grievance Policy  
 National Care Standards  
 Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010  
 SSSC Codes of Practice  
 CrossReach Quality Assurance Scheme  
 Whistleblowing Policy  
 Historical Abuse Policy and Procedure

**Monitoring and Auditing**

This will be undertaken by Heads of Service through routine service inspections.

The Quality, Compliance and Improvement team will monitor compliance with the policy. Complaints and Compliments will be presented on an annual basis to the Quality Compliance and Improvement Governance Group on an annual basis or reported by exceptions. CMT will receive quarterly updates on Complaints and Compliments.

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