

# **Complaints Procedure Policy**

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## **Complaints Policy Statement**

Mode Rehabilitation has declared its commitment to establishing, developing, implementing and reviewing a policy of equality of opportunity. Effective record keeping and monitoring, and acting on information gathered, are essential in order to measure effectiveness and plan progress. The management committee will review the policy annually.

Mode Rehabilitation:

- Is committed to providing a good standard of quality services to service users, other agencies and organisations.
- Will take seriously any concern or complaint and will look into it promptly, for resolution as quickly as possible.
- Recognises that all service users, agencies and organisations have the right to raise concerns or complaints about our services, and have access to clear information on how to voice complaints and concerns.
- Concerns and complaints procedure is open to everyone who receives or requests a service from Mode Rehabilitation and people acting on its behalf.
- Will display an outline of this policy and procedure and make a copy available to anyone who asks for it.
- Will deal with complaints in line with Mode Rehabilitation's confidentiality policy.

- Will keep a register of all complaints, which will be reviewed regularly by the Board of Trustees.
- Complaints procedure will be part of the process of monitoring the quality, effectiveness and non-discriminatory nature of its services.
- All staff, volunteers and Board of Trustees members are required to read, understand and comply with this policy and its procedures.

## **Introduction**

Mode Rehabilitation strives for high standards in service delivery and welcomes feedback from individuals, service users, stakeholders, funding bodies and anyone who works with us, on all aspects of our services. Such feedback is invaluable in helping us evaluate and improve our work.

The objectives of this complaints policy and procedures are to:

- Ensure everyone knows how to make a complaint and how a complaint will be handled.
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and sensitively within clear time frames.
- Provide individuals with a fair and effective way to complain about our work.
- Ensure that complaints are monitored to improve our services.

Mode Rehabilitation will ensure that we:

- Listen carefully to complaints and treat complaints as confidential, where possible.
- Record, store and manage all complaints accurately and in accordance with the Data protection Act.
- Investigate the complaint fully, objectively and within the stated time frame.
- Notify the complainant of the results of the investigation and any right of appeal.
- Inform the complainant of any action that will be implemented in order to ensure that there is no recurrence.
- Report on an annual basis, the number of complaints received, the outcomes and any actions taken.

## **Definitions**

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by an individual, whether justified or not.

An individual may make a complaint if they feel Mode Rehabilitation has:

- Failed to provide a service or an acceptable standard of service or made a mistake in the way the service was provided.
- Failed to act in a proper way.
- Provided an unfair service.

This policy and procedure relate only to complaints received about Mode Rehabilitation, its staff and its services. Internal concerns will be handled following our internal processes.

## **Concern or Complaint**

It is important to establish the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the likelihood of their developing into formal complaints.

Complaints may come from any individual, volunteer or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Mode Rehabilitation including the general public if something is perceived to be improper. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should refer to Mode Rehabilitation's internal policy on such matters.

Our complaints procedure is carried out formally with either the person that provided the service, their manager or the Clinical Lead. Handling complaints is a collaborative process where the complainant is given the opportunity to discuss their complaints, with the aim of trying to resolve the issue in the process.

We have a Conflicts of Interest Policy which all members of staff adhere to. This is to ensure where conflict of interests occur, they are acknowledged and managed accordingly.

In addition to our formal complaint procedure policy, we also have a physical suggestion box available on site to receive informal feedback.

If you have any concerns about our work please tell a staff worker or their manager as soon as possible, so they can quickly work to understand your concerns and try to put things right. If you are not happy with the response to your concern and/or you want to make a formal complaint please follow the procedure below.

## **Complaints Procedure**

Mode Rehabilitation aims to settle the majority of complaints quickly and satisfactorily by the member of staff who provided the service. The complaint may be resolved quickly by way of an apology or by an acceptable explanation to the individual.

There are three stages to the complaint's procedure:

- Stage One – the complaint
- Stage Two – investigation
- Stage Three – appeal

### **Stage One – Complaint**

The complaint must be written, if the individual prefers, they can tell someone who will write it down for them. The complainant will need to sign it.

A complaint form is available as a separate document.

Individuals wishing to make a complaint should contact the person who provided the service, or their line manager. Alternatively, they can contact us by writing to: Mode Rehabilitation, The Ash, 101 Stockport Road East, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2AQ.

The complaint should include the complainant's name and address, the nature of the complaint, the date of the complaint and how they want to see it resolved. The complaints form can be requested and can be sent to the complainant or collected by the complainant.

On receipt, each complaint will be logged on the complaints register. Complainants must receive an acknowledgement within 3 working days of receipt of a signed complaint.

## **Stage Two – Investigation**

All complaints at this stage should be dealt with by a senior manager or the Clinical Lead. If they need to meet with the complainant, they will do so within 7 working days of receiving the written complaint.

Complaints will be fully investigated, and a written response provided to the complainant within 10 working days by the investigator.

The complainant will receive written confirmation of the outcome of any investigation, and any remedies made, such as reviewing of policies, staff development and training or appropriate improvement to our services.

Where the complaint is upheld, a formal apology should be offered.

Occasionally, investigations may take longer, particularly if the complaint is complex. Should this be the case, a letter will be sent after 10 working days to notify the complainant, with a final date given for a conclusion to be reached.

If an individual remains dissatisfied with the outcome from Stage Two, they can appeal within 14 working days of the date of the outcome and progress to Stage Three.

The complaints register will be updated, and any pending complaints flagged so they are followed up.

## **Stage Three – Appeal**

If the complaint cannot be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction at Stage Two, or if a manager feels that the complaint is of a very serious nature or concerns a service leader then it will be referred to the Clinical Lead.

If the complaint is about the Clinical Lead, then the matter will be discussed with two Trustees.

The Clinical Lead and/or Trustees will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days. They will review the Stage Two investigation and recommend one of the following actions within 10 working days (from the date the complainant stated they wanted to take the complaint to Stage Three):

- Uphold the action taken at Stage Two.
- Make changes to the Stage Two recommendation / actions.

The complainant should be informed in writing of the outcome of Stage Three, the decision reached about this complaint will then be final but other options available to the complainant (as listed below) should be detailed in the letter.

If after the three stages the complainant is still not satisfied with the result, they should be advised that there is no further right of appeal with Mode Rehabilitation, but they may approach any of the following agencies for advice:

- A solicitor
- Citizens Advice Bureau

This should be done within one month of receiving the outcome from the appeal.

As Mode Rehabilitation is a registered charity in England, the complainant can also complain to the Charity Commission for England and Wales at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the CC can involve itself in can be found on their website at: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

## **Receiving Complaints**

Complaints may arrive through varying channels including email and social media. Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded as such.

The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:

1. Write down only the facts of the complaint, including, nature of complaint and date of complaint.
2. Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number.
3. Note down the relationship of the complainant to Mode Rehabilitation, e.g. donor, client, relative of a client.
4. Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
5. Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
6. Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

## **Anonymous complaints**

Complaints received anonymously will be recorded and considered, but action may be limited if further information is required to ensure a full and fair investigation.

## **Data Protection**

To process a complaint, Mode Rehabilitation will hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides, and which other people give in response to the complaint. We will hold this data securely and only use it to address the complaint. The identity of the person making the complaint will only be known to those who need to consider the complaint and will not be revealed to other people or made public. However, it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in some circumstances, for example, where relevant legislation applied or allegations are made which involve the conduct of third parties.

Mode Rehabilitation will normally destroy complaints files in a secure manner six years after the complaint has been closed.

## **Monitoring**

Complaints are an important tool which, alongside data provided by exit surveys, service user feedback and focus groups, will allow us to learn about the services we provide. They provide a useful source of information about how individuals see our services and how we are serving them.

To ensure we can learn from complaints, the following data will be collected:

- Name and address
- Name of person dealing with the complaint
- Date of complaint and response
- Nature of complaint
- Action(s) taken / recommendations made in response to the complaint lessons learnt.

Complaints information will be considered on a regular basis by the Management Team and reported annually to Mode Rehabilitation board of Trustees. Wherever possible the data will be used to improve and develop the service.

## **Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees of Mode Rehabilitation.

This policy is to be reviewed regularly and updated as required.