

Date: 10/10/2012
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Policy for the Management of Complaints

Purpose:

At myhomecare.ie our clients, service users and employees are encouraged to provide positive or negative feedback about the service provided.

At myhomecare.ie we will ensure that their concerns will:

- Be dealt with in a open and transparent manner
- Be acknowledged and responded to promptly and sensitively
- All complaints are dealt with in a manner that is effective, complete, and fair to all and provides a just outcome.
- Complaint management policy, practices, and data are regularly evaluated and the information is used to improve services.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Encouraging an environment where complaints are handled seriously and thoroughly.
- Ensuring an effective complaint management system is in place.
- Ensuring appropriate resources are available and utilised for effective complaint management
- Ensuring appropriate actions are implemented to eliminate risk or minimise similar complaints reoccurring.

The complaints officer will take responsibility for:

- Creating a Ref on the Complaints Ref. List and then will open a file on the Complaints Summary Log
- Acknowledges complaint within 24 hours and explains clearly to the complainant the complaints procedure, the timeframe and options available to the complainant at each stage of the process
- Documents all the information in relation to the complaint
- Document each stage in the complaint management form (Appendix A)
- Ensure that all statements and documentation and the outcome is filed in the complaints file.
- Provide a written or in some cases a verbal explanation of the investigation within 5 working days of receiving the complaint.
- Advise complainants of their entitlement to refer their complaint to the Ombudsman, if they are dissatisfied with the outcome or handling of the complaint.
- Monitoring of all complaints.
- Ensuring local action is implemented to minimise the risk of similar complaints reoccurring
- Review trend of complaints and data at least every quarter
- Implement policies and local procedures to support staff, including staff training on management of complaint.

Who may make a complaint?

Complaint can be made by the following

- Service users
- Immediate family member
- Carer
- Legal Representative
- Other person with signed authority of complainant.
- Public Representative
- Complaint made by a third party e.g. Family member, friend
- Person with special needs – should be offered support or be permitted to involve a relative, advocate or friend to communicate on their behalf

Procedure for making a complaint:

Complaints will be accepted by the complaints officer at the following locations:

Myhomecare.ie
Quayside Business Park,
Mill Street,
Dundalk, Co. Louth
Tel: 042 93 52723

Myhomecare.ie
International House,
Tara Street,
Dublin 2
Tel: 01 473 0474

Myhomecare.ie
16a Sandyford
Business Centre,
Bohermore, Galway
Tel: 091 762 426

Myhomecare.ie
4 Bruach Na Laoi
Union Quay
Cork
Tel: 021 427 9916

Some may be so serious and will require immediate action:

- Complaints include allegation of a criminal nature – If their evidence for suspecting that criminal activity has taken place, the matter will be referred to An Garda Síochána for investigation
- Those where there is evidence of negligence
- Alleged Physical / Emotional or Sexual abuse – Where complaints relates to Physical / Emotional or Sexual abuse the complaints officer and supervisor of facility must be notified immediately and a formal investigation will be initiated by myhomecare.ie and the relevant authorities

INFORMAL COMPLAINT**Verbal Complaint**

The complaint should be referred to the appropriate person e.g. complaints officer. The complaint log should be completed with the following details.

1. Complainant name & address
2. Service users name and address
3. Contact telephone numbers.
4. Nature of complaint
5. Outcome of complaint

FORMAL COMPLAINT**Written Complaint**

Written complaints may be received at any of the Myhomecare.ie offices, it should be stamped and dated on receipt and forwarded to the complaints officer.

Complaints require a more formal response if any of the following occur:

- The initial complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant
- Further complaints are received either verbally or in writing. The complainant should be at this stage advised to put their complaint in writing.
- A written request is received from the complainant.

DOCUMENTING A COMPLAINT

Documenting of a complaint is an important part of the complaint process.

- Documentation should contain the following information:
- Details of complaint

- An accurate record of what the complaint is concerned about
- A record of staff responses
- A record of steps taken to resolve the complaint
- A record of out come of complaint

All documents must be clear and accurate. Completion of management log form must be undertaken by the complaints officer as soon as possible after receiving the complaint.

Complaint Management Log Form

The various stages of the complaint i.e. the receipt, request for comments and responses will be recorded on the log form and on the TSS database. Each complaint will be given a reference number which should be used in all further communication with the complainant.

Resolution of Formal Complaints

All formal complaints must receive a positive and full response as quickly as possible, with the aim of satisfying the complainant that his or her concerns have been dealt with appropriately and satisfactory. It may be appropriate to offer an explanation and an apology while at the same time being fair to all staff.

Timeframes

- Acknowledgement of complaint within 24 hours
- Issuing verbal or written explanation of the investigation within 5 working days.
- Independent review response within 30 working days.

Investigating a Complaint

- Introduce yourself and try and make complainant feel relaxed
- Choose a quiet location where the complainant can talk without distractions and in confidence
- If you need to make notes ask the complainant's permission before doing so
- Listen without interruption while the complainant tells you details of the complaint
- Establish the complainants understanding of the facts and try to understand exactly what the issue of concern is.
- Do not apologise until you have received all the facts.
- Refrain from given your personal opinion, only deal with facts as they are presented to you
- Explain to the complainant the steps you will take and what other options are available if they are not happy with your response.
- Remain fair and objective to both the complainant and staff.
- Identify what the complainant wishes the outcome to be.
- Identify specific events leading to complaint
- Ensure the complainant that confidentiality will be maintained and also staff area aware of their obligation in this regard.

Acknowledgement Letter to Complainant

- This letter should include the following:
- Thank you for your letter of complaint
- Regret that complainant is dissatisfied with service
- Appointment to meet should complainant wish to do so.
- Inform the complainant that they have the right for someone to accompany them to the meeting should they wish.
- Invite the complainant to contact you if they have special needs e.g. wheelchair access, sign language or need for an interpreter.
- Include your contact details and also summary of the complaint process.

Communication with staff involved in incidents and complaints

This communication should include:

- A statement indicating that a complaint has been received and giving the date and service area referred to in the complaint.
- Enclose details together with summary points the complainant wishes to have addressed
- Request a written report that addresses the key point raised
- Request that this report should be returned within 10 working days and (sooner if possible depending on the severity of the complaint)
- Stress that this matter is confidential and should not be discussed openly with work colleagues
- Invite the person to contact you if need clarification on any points

Letter of response to the complainant should include the following:

Regret that the complainant was dissatisfied with the service

- Brief summary of the facts of the complaint with dates
- Explanation of the result of any investigation and statement to indicate that investigation has been completed
- Where indicated an apology to the complainant should be included
- Explanation of any remedial action undertaken to ensure non-reoccurrence
- Invitation for the complainant to contact you to discuss the report
- Details of further action which can be taken through the office of the Ombudsman and the contact number LoCall: 1-890-223030 (from outside 01 area).

Feedback

On completion of an investigation into a complaint, the details of the outcome must be communicated to all staff involved.

Independent Review Panel

The HSE may request an independent review panel to investigate the complaint. The investigation panel must have access to all relevant documentation in relation to the complaint. In such circumstances the investigation review panel will conduct the necessary investigations and report back to the complainant within 30 days of receiving the complaint.

External Appeal

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they should be advised of the right to appeal to the ombudsman.

Monitoring of Complaints

In order for us to improve our service it is important that we monitor and review all complaints received and pass on any learning from the outcome of resolved complaints to all staff.