

Complaints Procedure

1.0 How to Raise a Complaint

- 1.1 If wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the service(s) you have received from Options Wellbeing Trust, you can do so by writing (letter or email), in person or by telephone. A complaint may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.
- 1.2 Initially a complaint should be raised with the Service Manager (contact details on page 4 of this document).
- 1.3 Anonymous complaints will not usually be investigated, however the Service Manager will determine whether an anonymous complaint needs further investigation.

2.0 Time Scales

- 2.1 Concerns or complaints should be received within three months of the incident, or where a series of incidents have occurred, within three months of the latest of these incidents. Where exceptional circumstances apply we will consider complaints made outside of this timeframe.

3.0 Scope of Complaints Procedure

- 3.1 This procedure covers complaints about services provided by Options Wellbeing Trust.

3.2 Resolving Complaints

- 3.1.1 At each stage of the procedure, Options wants to resolve the complaint. We will acknowledge receipt of a complaint and whether it is upheld in whole or part. We may also offer any of the following:

- a) An explanation
- b) An admission that a situation might have been handled differently or better
- c) An assurance that we will try to ensure there is no recurrence of an event
- d) An explanation of the steps that will be or have been taken to ensure events do not reoccur
- e) An undertaking to review policies and procedures where applicable
- f) An apology.

3.3 Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing (letter or email).

4.0 Stage 1

- 4.1 In the first instance formal complaints must be made, preferably in writing, to the Service Manager.
- 4.2 The date of the complaint will be recorded, and formally acknowledged in writing (either by letter or email) normally within 10 business days of receipt.
- 4.3 Within the response we will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see.
- 4.4 An investigation may be carried out by the Service Manager, or delegated to another appropriate member of staff.
- 4.5 Where appropriate, a face to face meeting will be arranged with the complainant to discuss details of the complaint.
- 4.6 An investigation will, if necessary, interview those involved in the incident and/or those complained about, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish.
- 4.7 A written record will be kept of any meetings / interviews in relation to the investigation.
- 4.8 Upon conclusion of the investigation, a formal written response to the complainant normally within 10 days.
- 4.9 The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint, and provide a full explanation of any decisions and reasons for them. Where appropriate, details of any actions required by Options Wellbeing Trust to resolve the complaint will be outlined.
- 4.10 The response will detail how a complaint may be escalated if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome (Stage 2).

5.0 Stage 2

- 5.1 If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Social Care in Action's Complaints Officer (contact details on page 4 of this document).
- 5.2 The request may be made in writing (including email) or by telephone.
- 5.3 The Complaints Officer will record the date the complaint is received, and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (including email) normally within 10 days of receipt of the complaint.
- 5.4 A complaint that is escalated to Stage 2 will be investigated by the Complaints Officer, the Head of Health and Wellbeing, and where appropriate, the CEO or other member of the senior management team, or the Chair and/or Trustees of the Options Wellbeing Trust board (the Complaints Committee).
- 5.5 The Complaints Committee investigating the complaint will offer the complainant an opportunity to attend a meeting to discuss the matter, and may bring someone with them for support. This will usually be a family member or friend.
- 5.6 Where a complainant cannot attend any dates provided, the investigation will continue in their absence, on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

- 5.7 Any written material will be circulated to all parties normally within 10 days ahead of the meeting.
- 5.8 Note, the Complaints Committee will not accept as evidence, recordings of conversations that were made covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.
- 5.9 The Complaints Committee will not review any new complaints, or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint, nor will it accept as evidence, recordings.
- 5.10 Minutes of all meetings as part of the investigation will be taken.
- 5.11 The Complaints Committee will consider all the evidence presented at the meeting(s) and a decision will be made as to whether to:
 - 5.11.1 Uphold the complaint in whole or part
 - 5.11.2 Dismiss the complaint in whole or part.
- 5.12 If the complaint is upheld in whole or part, the Complaints Committee will:
 - 5.12.1 Decide the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
 - 5.12.2 Where appropriate, recommend review and changes to procedures to ensure similar issues do not happen again.
- 5.13 The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

6.0 Stage 3

- 6.1 Should a complainant believe that their complaint has not been handled appropriately or is dissatisfied with the outcome, they can contact the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) for further support. How to complain & contact details on Page 4 of this document.

7.0 Contacts

7.1 Stage 1

Claire Taylor - Service Manager
Options Wellbeing Trust
147 Shirley Road
Southampton SO15 3FH

E: Claire.taylor@sciagroup.co.uk

T: 023 8063 0219

7.2 Stage 2

Marcus Wrycraft - Complaints Officer
Social Care in Action
1 Paynes Road
Southampton SO15 3DL

E: Marcus.wrycraft@sciagroup.co.uk

T: 023 8036 6663

7.3 Stage 3

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

Please complete our [online professional conduct complaint form](#)

If you need help filling in the form, or have any problems making your complaint, please email us at professional_conduct@bacp.co.uk.

Alternatively, you can download and complete a Word version of the form and send it by post to

Professional Conduct
BACP House
Unit 15, St. John's Business Park
Lutterworth LE17 4HB