



Policy and Procedure Manual

Topic: Complaints and Appeals					
Section: Organizational					
Cross Reference: Workplace Discrimination, Anti-Violence, Anti-Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct					
Relevant Legislation:					
Original date: February 2009					
Approved by: Management					
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Date: 02/16	Date: 07/19	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
Date of next review: 07/2021					
Person designated to ensure revision and adherence: Executive Director					

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that clients, community members, volunteers and staff of the Community Health Centres of Northumberland (CHCN) are aware of the process of making a complaint and that any such complaint is dealt with in a fair and timely manner.

Should the complaint reach the College level (i.e. the issue has been filed with a staff member’s professional governing body) a CHCN supervisor or Executive Director will support the employee as appropriate, to engage in the investigation process. Complaints related to workplace discrimination, violence, harassment, or sexual misconduct will be handled under the Workplace Discrimination, Anti-Violence, Anti-Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct policy as referenced above.

Policy:

A client/substitute decision maker has the right to register concerns and complaints about the care or service they receive at the CHCN.

CHCN endeavors to provide the best possible care for clients and community and to be an equitable workplace. CHCN recognizes, however, that concerns sometimes arise.

Clients, community members, volunteers and staff have the right to express concerns and suggestions without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal. Complaints will be promptly reviewed, and resolved as appropriate. (Any respondents to

a complaint have the right to be informed of allegations without undue delay, to respond to them, and to have the validity of the complaint justly assessed.)
CHCN will treat all information related to a complaint as confidentially as possible.

Procedures (Complaints Resolution Process):

Complaints may be resolved informally or formally.

Informal Resolution:

Individuals with a complaint are encouraged to discuss their concerns directly with the person involved. Many issues can be successfully resolved without initiating a formal process. If this is unsuccessful or inappropriate to the situation (in discussion with the supervisor), complainants may launch the formal process as outlined below.

Formal Resolution

The formal process has 3 steps. If the complaint is unresolved at one step, it moves on to the next.

Step 1: Provide a written statement outlining the complaint to the supervisor of the person, program or service concerned. Assistance will be provided to identify and contact the relevant Manager. The Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 72 business hours, review the complaint, consult with other CHCN staff as needed, complete an Adverse Event/Occurrence Report form, and provide, at minimum, an initial response in writing to the complainant within 10 working days. The Manager will notify the Executive Director that this process is taking place.

Step 2: If the issue has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction in Step 1, the complaint will immediately be forwarded to the Executive Director. The Executive Director (or designate) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint or notify the complainant of the status of the complaint. The Executive Director will make a decision about resolution of the complaint which will be communicated in writing to the complainant and to the staff member about whom the complaint has been made within 20 working days of the initiation of Step 2.

Step 3: If the issue has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction in Step 2, the complaint can be forwarded to the chairperson of the CHCN Board of Directors. The chairperson will acknowledge receipt of the complaint. The chairperson may deal with the complaint directly or forward the complaint to the applicable Board committee to address. The chairperson and/or committee will review all materials related to the complaint as appropriate. The Board /Board Committee will make a decision about resolution of the complaint within 2 months of the initiation of Step 3 and communicate it in writing to the complainant.

At each step the current status of the complaint and resolution process is documented.

The role of CHCN management and/or Board who implement this process is to ensure that the views of the complainant and respondent, are fully heard and wherever possible, a resolution acceptable to the complainant and to CHCN is found.

The following are examples of responses that may be appropriate after reviewing a complaint;

- providing an explanation,
- offering a service,
- changing a decision,
- confirming an existing decision,
- changing a practice to prevent a recurrence,
- changing a policy,
- providing additional training to staff or volunteers

If at any time during a complaint procedure, evidence exists to indicate possible staff misconduct, incompetence, or incapacity, the Executive Director will be immediately informed and appropriate steps will be taken.