



COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION POLICY

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COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION RECORDING POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Scottish Huntington's Association aims to provide efficient and effective services and whilst every care will be taken to ensure that these are of good quality, we accept that, on occasions, complaints will be made.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the SHA, or our staff, affecting an individual client or group.

The SHA will treat complaints positively and recognises that they are a means of identifying improvements which can be made to our standards.

The SHA will deal with complaints quickly and will take prompt action to resolve the complaint and take steps to ensure that complaints of a similar nature do not arise in the future.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Executive is the nominated recipient for complaints.

All complaints received by any department of the SHA should be immediately referred to the National Office.

Complaints may be received from a variety of sources and may be submitted verbally or in writing.

3. VERBAL COMPLAINTS

When a verbal complaint is received the complaint should as far as possible be addressed at the time by the staff member in charge of that area i.e. the Huntington's Advisor, Team Leader or Chief Executive.

The recipient of the complaint will offer to meet with the complainant and in order to resolve the situation; the following Procedure should be followed:

PROCEDURE

- Explain the complaints procedure fully to the complainant
- Listen carefully to what is said and make sure that the nature of the complaint is clearly understood.
- Ensure that the complainant has the necessary privacy and assistance required to discuss the complaint
- Take all reasonable steps to resolve the verbal complaint at the time it is made and agree action to be taken as appropriate
- Take care to avoid misleading the complainant by making promises of action which they, the recipient, do not have the authority to implement
- Seek guidance from their line manager where any doubt exists
- Summarize in writing, the details and resolution of the complaint and forward the complaint summary inclusive of action taken to the Chief Executive.
- Ensure that a copy of the agreed action is given to the complainant.

- Log the complaint in the Complaints Record Summary held at the National Office.

Telephone Complaints

Recipients should respond positively by noting the name and address of the complainant and details of the complaint. The complainant should be asked to put their complaint in writing if possible and offered a copy of the SHA complaints procedure.

The complainant should be informed that the complaint will be acknowledged in writing and told of the procedure in place for investigating it.

A copy of the acknowledgement and summary of the complaint will be registered, assigned a numerical code and processed as with documentation described below.

If the complaint is resolved to the satisfaction of the complainer no further action is required at this point.

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4. WRITTEN COMPLAINTS

When a written complaint is received by the SHA it will be forwarded immediately to the National Office for attention of the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will advise which staff member is to be the responsible officer for dealing with the complaint.

The complaint shall be acknowledged immediately by the National Office indicating that the complaint is under investigation. When appropriate the Chief Executive will also advise the complainant of local authority and Health Service complaints procedures.

Standard Letter (Appendix 1)

The complaint is registered, assigned a numerical code and all details are recorded in the **Complaints Record Summary (Appendix 2)** which is retained in the Complaints Record Register at the National Office.

The complaint will be sent to the relevant Officer allocated as the “**complaint investigator**” by the Chief Executive

The investigator will be responsible for investigating the complaint and compiling a report for the Chief Executive detailing the complaint resolution /action taken or recommended.

Once the draft response has been approved a final reply will be sent by the Chief Executive to the complainant within the timescale noted below.

5. TIMESCALE/STANDARD OF REPLY

It is the SHA's policy to respond to complaints **within 21 days** (15 working days)

Where the timescale for complaints cannot be met the complainant is sent an interim letter advising the reason for the delay

Complaints received by the SHA must be given **priority for action at all stages** of the procedure including registration, processing and typing.

The final reply which is sent to the complainant must fully answer the complaint.

It should be factual, sympathetic, where appropriate admit fault or refute the allegation, with an appropriate explanation.

If the complaint relates to circumstances in which a client has been harmed, the investigation must take account of the charity's duty of candour. The charity has a policy which outlines its responsibilities in relation to candour.

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APPENDIX 1

6. Acknowledgement letter

Dear

I write to acknowledge your letter of ----- in which you were concerned about -----

The points you raised will be investigated and a full reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

John Eden
Chief Executive

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Scottish Huntingdon's Association

COMPLAINTS RECORDING SUMMARY

APPENDIX 2

7. COMPLAINTS RECORD SUMMARY

Name of Complainant	
Address	
Post Code	
Contact Number	
Complaint code number/reference	
Date registered	
Investigating officer	
Nature of complaint Attach letter/Summary	
Department/Service/Branch	
Date complaint received	
Date of acknowledgement letter	
Date response due	
Date of interim reply	
Date of final reply	
Case closed/awaiting appeal	

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Outcome/comments	
Summary completed by	
Date	

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8. APPEALS PROCEDURE

Where someone making a complaint indicates that he or she remains dissatisfied with the outcome, the Chief Executive will within 21 days of notification organize a meeting of the appeal panel

- The appeal panel will consist of the Chairperson of the Association and one member of the Board of Directors and where possible one person independent of the organisation. Complaints by members of ethnic minority communities will be heard by a panel, which includes a member of the ethnic minority community
- The Chief Executive of the Association may attend the appeal hearing to advise the panel
- The complainant has the right to bring someone to accompany them or to speak on their behalf
- Where an individual member of staff is the subject of a complaint, and they are asked to give evidence in person to the panel, they will have the right to have someone accompany them
- They may, if they wish be accompanied by a representative from a staff organisation, although it should be noted that the complaints review panel is not a disciplinary, nor a staff grievance panel. Matters related to staff discipline and staff grievances are addressed in separate procedures. Staff members may not be accompanied to complaints review panel hearing by their line manager or supervisor
- The task of the panel will be to review all the circumstances of the complaint, and the investigation of it
- The panel will then recommend such action as it deems appropriate
- All parties involved will be informed of the recommendations in writing, as soon as possible after the hearing

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- Response to the appeal will be recorded in the Complaints Record Register

OTHER CHANNELS FOR SUGGESTIONS & COMPLAINTS

The Association's Suggestions and Complaints Process is not the only means of making representation to the Association. Those who are receiving a service from the Association or indeed their carers, have the right to make use of other established channels for doing so. This may include Members of Parliament, or local Councilors.

They may also seek assistance from local branch of the Citizens Advice Bureau, or Statutory Authorities such as the appropriate Local Authority. Service users should be advised, if they make a complaint to another agency which commissions SHA to provide services, except in exceptional circumstances, the complaint will be forwarded in the first instance to SHA, to resolve. This process complies with the current Model Complaints Handling Process.