



## Complaints Policy

### Introduction

Total Wellbeing Matters aims to provide high quality services and to be responsive to the wants and needs of customers.

Customers, their families, carers and advocates and those who have requested or been referred for a service have the right to raise concerns, objections or make complaints about the services and responses they receive from the Company. All concerns and complaints from customers or others will be taken seriously, listened to carefully, investigated fully where necessary, and responded to with respect and courtesy.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- enable customers to comment on weaknesses and to let the Company know about things that have gone wrong or cause concern
- improve the quality of services by taking notice of the views of people affected by the services, building on what is good and changing what needs improving
- ensure that the Company takes users' views seriously and will follow up any problems that they bring forward
- protect the interests of individual customers
- enable users, potential users and carers to challenge decisions
- protect staff and enable them to deal with complaints consistently.

A complaint shall mean, a written or oral expression of dissatisfaction or concern relating to the everyday operations of the services and activities provided by Total Wellbeing Matters. This dissatisfaction could include the actions of the Company's personnel, their failure to act, or delay in taking action, which requires the Company to account for its conduct.

This Complaints Policy should not be used by staff who should use the Staff Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures.

If a complaint is made about a member of staff, the Staff Disciplinary Procedures will be followed.

### The Complaints Procedure

There are three distinct stages to the procedure:

Step 1 – The Informal Approach

Step 2 – The Formal Approach

### Step 3 – The Review Committee.

1. In the first instance, some concerns or complaints will, by their nature, be easy to resolve immediately, to everyone's satisfaction. The complaint or concern should be raised with the member of staff providing the service or by contacting the office. Most issues will usually be resolved in this way.
2. If the complaint is unresolved it should be put in writing (assistance can be arranged if required) and sent to the Managing Director of Total Wellbeing Matters. An acknowledgement will be made in writing, an investigation undertaken and in most circumstances a response will be formally made within 10 working days of receipt.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved an appeal can be made in writing to Total Wellbeing Matters. An independent Complaints committee will be formed within 10 working days comprising three members of the community.
4. The Committee will consider the complaint and may ask the customer, carer or advocate to meet with them. The complainant may request a personal hearing with the Committee and has the right to be supported or represented by a person of their choice.
5. The Committee will then seek the views and investigate the actions of the officers of the Company and seek to obtain any other relevant information. The Complaints Committee will endeavour to reach its decision within 10 working days and notify parties accordingly. Where this proves impracticable, due to the complexity of the case or external factors such as a wait for a key piece of information, the Committee will issue an interim or final report within one calendar month.
6. Should the complainant or other interested party be dissatisfied with the decision of the sub committee, they can request an appeal. Such an appeal must be based either on the grounds that the procedure followed by the committee was incorrect, or, because new information has come to light. Should this be the case the complainant may be represented by a person of her or his own choosing. A new Complaints Sub-committee will be convened to consider any further representations within 10 working days of such a request. The decision of the Complaints Committee will then be final and the process concluded.

This procedure does not cover matters of law or where a police investigation may be involved.

Those making a complaint or raising a concern will be given a copy of the Complaints Policy and offered assistance in understanding, interpreting or translating its effective use.

Formal complaints i.e. those for which a written reply is required (see paragraph 2 of the procedure), will be recorded and monitored.