



Complaints Policy

Procedure for dealing with complaints regarding services provided by Cardiff Consultancy Services

1. Introduction

This procedure is concerned with complaints made against Cardiff Consultancy Services staff or volunteers.

2. Principles

2.1 The opportunity to make a complaint or grievance is an essential right for all those who use the services provided by Cardiff Consultancy Services. Complaints can be a valuable way of evaluating and improving our services and of ensuring that they remain responsive to the needs and preferences of service users.

2.2 Cardiff Gate Counselling Service's complaints procedure intends to be quick, effective and clear. To ensure fairness any investigation required will be carried out by someone who was not involved in any way with the incident relating to the complaint.

2.3 Cardiff Consultancy Services recognises that bringing a complaint can be difficult and stressful. Assistance will be available to the complainant while information will be provided about independent advocacy.

2.4 Any member of staff or volunteer against whom a complaint is made will be given the fullest opportunity to answer any criticisms and assistance and support will also be available for them if required.

2.5 In situations where a complaint may have financial or legal consequences for Cardiff Consultancy Services its insurers require Cardiff Consultancy Services to cease direct contact with the complainant. It may then be necessary, in the best interests of the complainant, to refer them to a third party, both for assistance with the complaint and to ensure that their service needs are met.

2.6 Cardiff Consultancy Services will respect the confidentiality of both the complainant and any person complained about, subject to the provisions of Cardiff Consultancy Service's Confidentiality Policy. This states that, if a complaint is to be properly investigated and action taken as a result of a complaint, it may not always be possible to avoid a breach of confidentiality. The permission of the complainant

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will be sought for this but when the welfare of the complainant or other people is seriously at risk it may be necessary to breach confidentiality even if that permission is withheld.

2.7 The outcome of all complaints and investigations will be reported in confidence and in writing to the complainant. A report on Complaints will also constitute part of the evaluation of Cardiff Consultancy Services.

2.8 Cardiff Consultancy Services will make efforts to ensure that every user of its services is aware that this procedure exists, through leaflets and other forms of publicity.

3. Procedure

3.1 1st Stage: discussion with the service user to see if the complaint can be resolved informally by a member of staff who is not the subject of the complaint.

3.2 2nd Stage: formal complaint in writing, sent as follows:

- Where a complaint is against a member of staff or volunteer, to the Business Manager;

The person who receives the complaint (normally the Business Manager) will carry out an investigation, or where appropriate, appoint someone else to do so. The investigator will report the result in writing within three weeks to the complainant and the relevant members of staff.

The complainant and the person or persons against whom the complaint has been made will be invited to attend the meeting, separately, if preferred. Any such persons may be accompanied by a friend, supporter, union representative or independent advocate.

Cardiff Consultancy Services works within the professional standards and guidelines of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). You may wish to use the complaints procedures outlined in the Ethical Framework for counselling and psychotherapy if you fail to gain a satisfactory result from the full Cardiff Consultancy Services procedure, as outlined above.

BACP can be contacted on:

Telephone:

General Enquiries: 01455 883300 **Email:** bacp@bacp.co.uk

Website: www.bacp.co.uk

Mailing address:

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
BACP House, 15 St John's Business Park, Lutterworth, Leicestershire LE17 4HB.

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