

# Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy

## Purpose

To provide a safe and open environment where all compliments, concerns and complaints are welcomed as opportunities for improvement.

To assist members, their family/whanau and/or visitors to communicate their compliments, concerns and/or complaints.

To actively monitor and acknowledge:

- compliments to enable Arvida Good Friends to continue doing those things that they are doing well and to provide an opportunity to share and implement positive initiatives and actions.
- concerns and complaints and any identified trends as the basis for continuous quality improvement.

To ensure all concerns and complaints are:

- managed in a professional manner by the Care Manager and/or an appropriately designated person and resolved fairly, simply and efficiently.
- Documented and investigated and corrective action taken, where appropriate, to ensure resolution for all parties. Where no agreement or satisfactory resolution can be found, management are to escalate the complaint to the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Financial Officer. The complainant is advised that, where the complaint relates to services to a member, they are able to seek help from the Health and Disability Commissioner's Advocacy Service and/or the Health and Disability Commissioner.

## Scope

These policies apply to all contractors, members, families/whanau, nominated representatives and volunteers.

It is the Care Manager's responsibility to ensure that all compliments are acknowledged and shared and that all concerns and complaints are fully reviewed in an objective and professional manner and resolved fairly, simply and efficiently.

## Definitions

*A compliment* is a positive expression of praise or admiration.

*A concern* is a matter of interest or importance to someone. An expression of concern indicates that the person wishes to have a matter addressed and/or resolved.

*A complaint* is an expression of dissatisfaction. It may be written, verbal or expressed anonymously. All complaints, whether verbal, in writing or anonymously received will be tracked through to resolution, wherever practicable. For the purposes of this policy, complaints are categorised into major or minor complaints.

*A major complaint* is anything a Member/Relative is not happy with or whenever they feel their rights have been breached. Major complaints may include:

- Unsafe acts or service
- Unexpected, harmful incidents to members
- A service not up to standard
- A service which is late or forgotten
- Contractor or visiting health professional complaint
- Complaint escalated to the local District Health Board, Health and Disability Commissioner, Police or Coroner.

*A Minor complaint* is anything that can be dealt with at once to the full satisfaction of the complainant.

### **The standard is met when**

- Members are assisted to provide compliments or raise concerns/complaints either verbally or in writing and have these addressed simply, fairly, appropriately and in a timely manner.
- All concerns and complaints raised are viewed as opportunities for improvement.
- All complaints are acknowledged and resolved, simply, fairly, and quickly. Where appropriate and received in writing, the complaint is entered into the complaint management system and the written complaint letter is attached to the complaint file.
- Information on the Compliments/Concerns/Complaints (CCC) process is made available on admission to all new members and their family/whanau. It is also readily available within the Good Friends website and communications together with details of local advocates.
- All concerns/complaints are treated as private and confidential and worker's and member's confidentiality is maintained throughout the process.
- At any time throughout the CCC process, a complainant who wishes to access an advocate is encouraged to do so and information and contact details for the HDC Advocacy Service, the Health and Disability Commissioner and/or Aged Concern is provided. A Maori advocate is contacted as and when appropriate.
- Where practicable and available, an interpreter is provided as and when appropriate.

- If on any occasion a member or their family/advocate should contact or call the police or their legal representative in relation to a complaint, the Care Manager must be contacted immediately and if not available, the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Financial Officer. Contractors are not to get involved or offer comment unless specifically asked to by senior management.

### *Compliments*

- Compliments are shared with the Care Manager and the contractors concerned.
- Where the compliment is in writing or in card format, acknowledgement of the compliment is provided where possible, and the compliment noted in the Compliment management system. Where the compliment is verbal, verbal acknowledgement is made at the time.

### *Concerns/complaints*

- Members, their family/whanau or others are supported to raise a concern or make a complaint to improve outcomes for a member.

Everybody has the right to have their concerns heard and/or to make a complaint.<sup>1</sup>

Concerns/Complaints can be made verbally or in writing. They may also be made anonymously, although this means that they are often more difficult to address and cannot be responded to individually.

- A Compliments/ Concerns form (CC form) is completed by the contractor, member or relative who:
  - Wishes to raise a concern and/or make a complaint
  - Is involved in the complaint
  - Witnesses the complaint, or
  - To whom the concern/complaint was reported
- The CC form is completed as soon as practicable after the concern/complaint occurs, but before the contractor goes off duty. Members and relatives will have access to the CC form for completion in privacy at their convenience.
- The complaint is registered on the complaint management system and the CC form attached to the complaint file.

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<sup>1</sup> If a member with dementia raises a concern or expresses a complaint, then the member and their EPOA/family/whanau input is sought to enable an effective resolution.

Complaints from people with dementia are taken seriously and not minimized due to their cognitive functioning.

It is acknowledged that members with dementia may not be able to communicate a complaint and that the role of the EPOA/family/whanau/advocate is very important in representing the member. It is also acknowledged that they must be able to express their concerns without fear of them or the member being disadvantaged in any way. It is acknowledged that they will be expressing their views, which may or may not be the same as those of the member, had they been able to communicate effectively.

- The contractor/Care Manager or their delegate considers the complaint and immediately takes any appropriate action necessary and/or initiates an investigation.
- Written acknowledgment of a concern/complaint is sent to the complainant within five days. Within a further ten working days, the complainant is contacted in writing with an explanation that provides a substantive response to the concerns/complaint or states more time is necessary to investigate and why. If this timeframe is not sufficient to investigate and resolve the issue, the complainant is kept informed and an extended period for resolution is agreed between the parties.

#### *Outcomes*

- The complainant is informed of the outcome either verbally or by letter. Once all parties are agreed that the concern/complaint has been appropriately addressed the matter can be closed. This is noted in the complaint management system.
- Any agreed corrective actions MUST be undertaken and noted in the complaint management system against the complaint to evidence this.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the concerns/ complaint investigation and/or subsequent action taken by management, they are informed of their right to access an independent advocate, who can be provided through the Health and Disability Commissioner (HDC) Advocacy Service and/or Aged Concern, and the matter escalated to the Care Manager and advice sought as to how to best manage the ongoing concerns.
- It is the responsibility of the Care Manager or their delegate to:
  - Keep the management system up to date. This includes ensuring that the concern/complaint is entered into the management system together with the written CC form and all relevant documentation generated as part of the complaint investigation, corrective actions and resolution and then closed on the system.
  - Ensure all concerns and complaints are analysed, trends noted, and corrective actions developed as appropriate and discussed at quality meetings.
  - Ensure compliments are summarised and reported as feedback to contractors.

#### *Contractor Training/Education*

- Contractors are aware of their role in, and act in accordance with the CCC process.
- Contractors are provided with training in the CCC process during orientation and every two years.

### **Associated Documentation**

- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Compliments/Concerns Form
- Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights – Right 10
- Helper Agreement

### **Reference**

NZS 8134.1.1.13 Complaints Management;

The right of the consumer to make a complaint is understood, respected and upheld.

NZS 8158:2012 1.9 Complaints