

Complaints and Compliments



2. Dealing with Compliments and Complaints as they arise

2.1 If the nature of the complaint involves the potential harm or abuse of a customer then the recipient of the complaint must contact the relevant Registered Manager as a matter of urgency and in line with Safeguarding Adults at Risk (O.LE.01). When the nature of the complaint relates to safeguarding children, the Chief Executive must be contacted as a matter of urgency and in line with Safeguarding Children (O.LE.02).

2.2 Many areas of concern, or misunderstandings, can be dealt with as they arise and this may be reported on an Incident Report (OS/104) rather than a complaint dependent of the circumstances. A full discussion with the complainant (and their representative) may lead to resolution. If any remedial action is to be taken, this should be explained to the complainant.

2.3 A note of the discussion and any action taken should be made available to the customer and recorded on Customer Support Notes.

2.4 If the complaint cannot be resolved or a customer's suggestion isn't actioned at this stage, the procedure for making a formal compliment/complaint should be explained using the Compliments and Complaints leaflet.

3. Formal Compliments and Complaints Procedure

3.1 Compliments and complaints should be handled formally

when a customer:-

- indicates a wish to have their compliment/complaint investigated by management;
- remains dissatisfied after initial discussions;
- indicates further action is required.

3.2 All formal compliments and complaints must be forwarded to the Customer Advice Team who will acknowledge receipt within 48 hours. In this letter, the Customer Adviser will also include information on the external regulatory agencies, as per Appendix 1, that the customer can complain to if they remain dissatisfied.

At this stage a lead person is appointed to deal with the matter, usually the relevant Regional/Area Manager and a member of the executive is notified.

4. Complaints Resolution

4.1 The relevant Regional/Area Manager must be informed of any formal complaints that are not resolved. They have the responsibility for investigating the circumstances relating to the complaint. Other employees may be asked to assist by providing written reports or drafting responses.

4.2 Any employee involved in a complaint will be informed of any allegations made against them. The employee will be given the opportunity to respond and will be advised of their right to obtain advice from their professional association or Trade Union.

4.3 The relevant Regional/Area Manager

will report in writing to the Customer Advice Lead outlining their findings including all recommendations and actions within 14 days. The Customer Advice Lead will formally write to the customer outlining a resolution to the complaint, this will take into account the organisation's Duty of Candour. The outcome will be included on the central database.

5. Appeals

5.1 Complainants who remain dissatisfied after the investigations and responses set out above can ask to have their complaint considered further. This process may involve the Chief Executive or members of the Board of Trustees, as appropriate.

5.2 The appeal will be acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt. A response to the compliment/complaint will be made within twenty-one days of receipt of the appeal.

5.3 The individual reviewing the appeal will receive copies of relevant paperwork and may ask witnesses to attend meetings to further clarify aspects raised by the complainant.

5.4 The decision of the appeal is final and will be communicated to the complainant in writing and kept on the customer file and central compliments and complaints database.

6. Complaints Monitoring

6.1 The Executive, via a report provided by the Customer Advice Lead, will monitor compliments and complaints.

6.2 Documents relating to complaints will be kept securely with the Customer Advice Team for a minimum of six years in accordance with the Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967. All information will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

6.3 A statistical report (compiled from the Executive report) on compliments and complaints must be submitted to the Trustees annually, at the AGM. Such a report aims to:-

- monitor how complaints are handled and timescales;
- consider any trends in compliments and complaints;
- consider ways to improve the care/support offered by the Trust.

7. External Regulatory Agencies

In addition to the Trust's internal compliments and complaints procedure, the agencies mentioned in Appendix 1 can be contacted.

8. Confidentiality

Complaints and suggestions are to be treated as confidential. See Confidentiality and Data Protection policy (O.LE.03) for further guidance.

RELATED POLICIES

- Confidentiality and Data Protection (O.LE.03)
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk (O.LE.01)
- Safeguarding Children (O.LE.02)
- Whistleblowing (C.HR.26)

What is a complaint?



A complaint is when you feel **unhappy** about a service

This may happen because:

- We do something in the wrong way
- We don't do something that should have been done
- We do something that should not have been done

Who can help me make a complaint?



- A family member or friend
- A carer
- An advocate

What should I do if I am unhappy?

Step 1



Firstly, please talk to us.

Please ask to speak to your Oaklea named person or any Oaklea employee.

We can usually answer your questions and put things right quickly.

What happens next?



We will try and put things right.

We will explain why things went wrong.

We will try and make things better.

If you would like to log a compliment or if you are still unhappy...

How you can make a complaint or compliment...

Step 2



Contact: Oaklea Customer Advice Team

This can be done by post: The Oaklea Trust, 48 Stramongate, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4BD



Telephone: 01539 735025



You can also email: customeradvice@oakleatrust.co.uk

What we will do when you make a complaint



We will let you know we have received your complaint.

We will contact you to talk about the problem.

This person will be a Complaint Investigator.



We will look into the problem.

We will help you to understand what is happening at every stage.

Help and support to make a complaint



If you are not happy with the response

You can contact the Care Sector Regulator



Telephone: 03000 616161

You can also email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Or you can talk to the Health Service Ombudsman or Local Ombudsman



Telephone: 0345 015 033 or 0300 061 0614

You can visit their website: www.lgo.org.uk

Our promise to you

SORRY

Ensure you are treated fairly and you receive appropriate support throughout the complaint.

When mistakes happen we will acknowledge them, apologise, explain what went wrong and put things right quickly and effectively.



Ensure that we listen and learn from what you say if you complain about Oaklea support.

The Oaklea Trust Compliments and Complaints Policy Statement

This policy and procedure outlines the process, responsibilities and timescales for responding to informal and formal compliments and complaints relating to the Oaklea group.

Any complaint relating to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children must be dealt with under Safeguarding Adults at Risk (O.LE.01) and Safeguarding Children (O.LE.02).

please see Grievance or Whistleblowing policies.

PROCEDURE

1. Communication

The compliments and complaints procedure aims to provide:-

- An effective means for customers or their representatives to comment on the quality or nature of the care and support offered by the Trust and to suggest improvements.

- Duty of Candour – this places a duty on organisations to disclose to people using services, or family members where appropriate, when things have gone wrong and harm has arisen

- An effective resolution of complaints as quickly as possible and as close to the source of complaint as appropriate;

- A means of monitoring performance, quality and effectiveness and therefore contributing to continuous improvement.

For the purposes of this document, a customer is defined as an individual who has, will be, or is currently receiving care/support/advice offered by Oaklea. This policy also applies to others such as parents/carers, who have an interest in the wellbeing of the Trust's customers.

For complaints from employees –

1.1 The relevant Team Manager shall issue all new customers with welcome information; customer handbook; user-friendly complaints/compliments leaflet explaining what can be expected from both parties. This understanding is then confirmed by the signing of the customer agreement.

1.2 The complaints/compliments leaflet enables customers to put forward both positive suggestions and to complain if they are dissatisfied in any way with Oaklea practice and is freely available.

1.3 Oaklea customer welcome packs include the Care Quality Commission leaflets 'What standards you have a right to expect from ...' for customers whose care and support is deemed as a regulated activity.

1.4 All employees must ensure that they establish effective communication with the customer and/or their chosen representative (consent should be sought from the customer prior to contacting their chosen representative) and deal immediately with any queries or misunderstandings that may arise. ►