

## **PUBLIC COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mid and North Powys Mind believes it is essential that everyone has a clear, effective and easily understandable procedure through which any complaint can be dealt with.

Mid and North Powys Mind will ensure that all complaints receive a full and fair hearing, also that any staff member or volunteer is given the fullest possible opportunity to answer any criticism.

### **PRINCIPLES**

The confidentiality of the person making the complaint and any staff member or volunteer affected is fully recognised and protected.

Where a complaint is to be investigated this will be done impartially by someone not involved in any way in the issue(s) being complained about.

Anyone making a complaint may be represented at any stage by an advocate of their choosing.

Any problem is best resolved as soon as it arises, if this cannot be done then the complaint will be dealt with in the timescales set out below.

At every stage of a complaint being processed by Mid and North Powys Mind everyone involved in the complaint has the right to be kept fully informed.

All service users should have access to this Complaints Procedure. It is also available to anyone on request from the offices of Mid and North Powys Mind.

Records are kept of all complaints and their outcomes by the Operations and Development Manager.

## **STAGE 1 INFORMAL**

Mid and North Powys Mind believes that many complaints can be dealt with by informal discussion between the people involved, and the relevant members of staff. If this is not possible this stage can be by-passed.

**Sometimes, it may be difficult to tell if an individual wishes to register a complaint or is merely making a passing comment. Wherever there is doubt, the individual should be asked whether she/he wishes to make a formal complaint.**

## **STAGE 2 FORMAL**

Stage 2 is started by first formally complaining either in writing or verbally. The complaint should be made to the Operations or Development Manager. Where the complaint is against one of these Managers, it must be handled by the other Manager or the Chair of the Board of Directors. Where the complaint is about the Chair it would normally be made to the Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors.

Whoever the complaint is made to at this stage then becomes the responsible person for following the complaint through to completion.

Any verbal complaint, should be written up and then checked with the complainant, to ensure the details have been correctly grasped (this could be done by reading out over the phone if necessary) and the complainants agreement noted and dated.

The responsible person will inform the Chair or Vice-Chair (as appropriate) of the Board of Directors immediately of the complaint

being made and within two weeks complete a thorough investigation of the circumstances, including any actions that need to be taken.

The full written report will be presented to the person making the complaint and the Chair/Vice-Chair and summary a report to the Board of Directors.

### **STAGE 3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS SUB-GROUP**

If the person making the complaint is unhappy with the outcome of Stage 2 they may request the Board of Directors set up a special working party to consider the complaint. This working party will not include the person who initially dealt with the complaint at Stage 1 or Stage 2.

The working party will re-investigate the complaint and report to the person making the complaint and the full Board, within three weeks.

### **STAGE 4 FULL BOARD AND EXTERNAL INVESTIGATION**

If a person making a complaint is unhappy with the result of Stage 3 then they have the right to request investigation by an independent external body. Such an outside body must be agreeable to both Mid and North Powys Mind and the person making the complaint.

The external body will liaise with a nominated member of the Board of Directors, investigate the complaint and report to the full Board of Directors within eight weeks.

Bodies that are recognized by Mid and North Powys Mind for external investigation of complaints include PAVO, the Powys Teaching Health Board or another independent third sector or statutory body.

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