

Client Complaints – Guidelines and Procedures

Purpose:

To provide the client with an opportunity to identify any aspect of Stonegate CHC with which they are not satisfied.

Rationale:

Staff at the Stonegate Community Health Centre embrace the philosophy of client-centred care and believe that clients have a right and responsibility to be fully informed about and directive in the management of their health. Clear communication mechanisms and pathways must be in place in the event that clients have complaints or comments about the care or service provided at the Centre.

Every complaint will be viewed as:

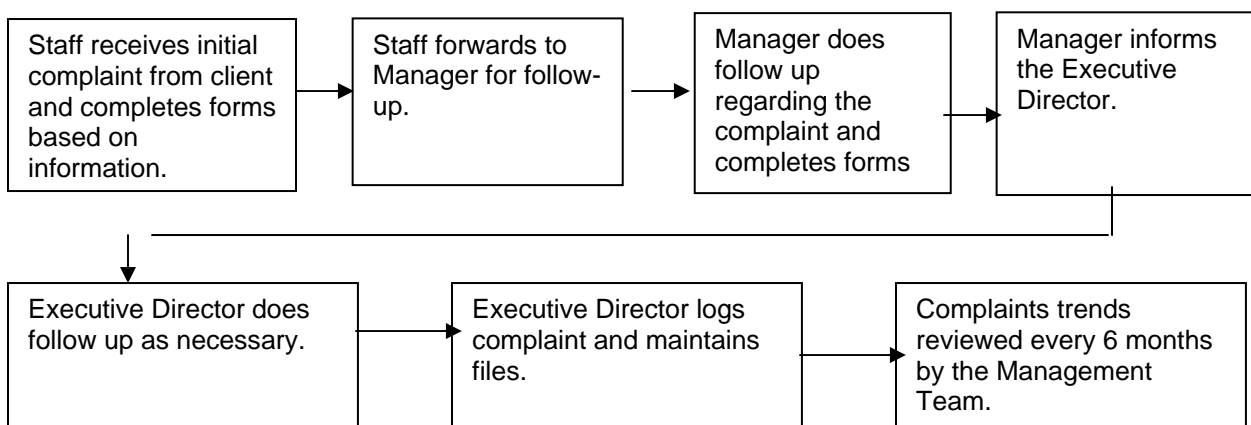
- An opportunity to do things better.
- A way to reduce the possibility of a potentially risky situation.

Guidelines

- The client has a right to complain about their experience of any aspect of Stonegate CHC with which they are not satisfied.
- The client may approach any staff member with a complaint and all staff members will be familiar with our Complaint procedure.
- The Client Complaint Procedure shall be provided to any person on request.
- The responsibility for handling any complaint about a staff performance issue rests with the Manager.
- Where a complaint has legal implications, the Executive Director shall be informed immediately.
- Complainants will be given the names of the Provincial bodies dealing with professional care issues, if they wish to make a formal complaint there.

Client Complaint Procedure

1. The initial response to the person making the complaint needs to happen within 2 working days.
2. The staff member who is approached by a client with a complaint talks to the person who is making the complaint to determine what their issue is and what they want done about it.
 - a. In the course of this discussion the staff member should try to inform the person making the complaint of the process within Stonegate CHC for making complaints. At the very least, they should offer the person an opportunity to speak with a manager.
 - b. Whether or not the person wants to pursue the matter any further, they should be informed that the issue will be brought to the attention of management.
3. The staff person who received the complaint will then inform their manager or the manager responsible for the program area involved of the complaint.
4. The staff person will complete "The Complaint" form and submit it to the manager.
5. The manager reviews the complaint and speaks with the staff person who received the complaint to clarify the situation as required.
6. The manager determines whether any follow up/further investigation is required. If follow up is required the manager pursues further investigation with the person making the complaint and other parties.
7. The manager informs the Executive Director of the complaint and any next steps that need to happen, either by leaving a message or speaking with the ED directly.
8. The manager submits the "Complaint" and a record of any follow-up conducted to the ED.
9. The Executive Director reviews the information provided.
10. If the complaint requires further action by the Executive Director, the ED follows up with the relevant staff, person making the complaint, and other parties as necessary.
11. The ED will have all documents related to the complaint filed in a locked cabinet.
12. The complaint will be resolved within 10 working days.



Complaints against Specialists, Non-CHC providers

- Clients that may not like or take issue with the specialist/other provider that they have been referred too. Staff will document the complaint/issue in client file and consider not referring to that specialist/provider in the future.
- If the client and staff express dissatisfaction with the specialists/provider's opinion then a second opinion/referral to other specialists/providers will be made.

Complaints against Other Agencies

- Staff receiving complaints from clients about other agencies will note such complaints and direct the client back to that agency to follow their complaint process or to discuss and try to resolve the complaint with that agency's appropriate supervisor/manager.
- If the client is unable to do so for fear of reprisal, Stonegate CHC staff may advocate on their behalf.

Compliant Against Partner Agencies

- Staff receiving complaints from clients about partner agencies will note such complaints and direct the client back to that partner agency to follow their complaint process or to discuss and try to resolve the complaint with that partner agency's appropriate supervisor/manager.
- If the client is unable to do so for fear of reprisal, Stonegate CHC staff may advocate on their behalf.
- If the problem is systemic in nature, then the issues should be raised with the Health Centre Executive Director and followed up between the partners at the executive/management level.

Reviewed December 2002

Revised March 2004, March 2007, February 2010

Next review: February 2013

Reviewed by: Management Team

Approved by: Executive Director