Care Alliance Ireland

'Guiding support for family carers'

Compliments and Complaints Policy

Care Alliance Ireland (CAI) works to enhance the wellbeing of family carers so that they are better able to care for their loved ones. We provide direct support to family carers as well as indirectly supporting them by working with researchers, statutory actors and other not-for-profits. This Compliments and Complaints Policy ('the Policy') has been developed to primarily address complaints from CAI member organisations, family carers or other stakeholders as well as to document compliments Complaints are not in themselves proof of error or wrongdoing and they can be a useful source of learning for the organisation and the individuals involved. CAI invites any person or organisation that has a complaint, concern or compliment to put to CAI, to do so.

Complaints often arise from a breakdown in communications. Usually these complaints are quickly resolved when the facts have been established. CAI has a transparent and accessible Complaints Policy and seeks to ensure that complaints are dealt with promptly and effectively. It is considered preferable that all reasonable measures are taken to resolve matters informally where possible.

This policy also incorporates how we receive, document and utilise compliments received in the course of our work. Compliments are an important way of getting feedback from those we seek to support and can track impact in a qualitative way. Compliments are recorded by our staff team, and with permission, may be used in our annual reports or in our reports to funders.

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The primary purpose of this policy is to enable CAI members, family carers and/or other stakeholders to express concerns or issues they may have with any aspect of the service delivered to them by CAI staff and/or volunteers. The Complaints Policy enables the issues raised to be dealt with fairly, without delay and in a confidential manner.

We will endevour to ensure that this policy is in keeping with the spirit and the principles of the Health Services Executive ('HSE')'s '**Your Say Your Service'** policy, (2017); namely

- Enabling feedback
- Listening and Responding to feedback
- Supporting service users
- Supporting staff
- Learning, improvement and accountability

The implementation of these five principles will create a culture where feedback is encouraged and allows for service users to make positive comments as well as complaints.

(Seehttps://www2.hse.ie/complaints-feedback/)

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Care Alliance Ireland

A Coleraine House
Coleraine Street
Dublin 7, Ireland
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Registered Company No 461315
Charity Registration No 20048303
CHY No 14644

Directors; R. Conboy, S Donnelly, D Elen Gebremedhin, V McDonagh, L O'Philbin, M Perrill, A Spillane, E Teague

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SECTION 1 - COMPLAINTS

DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT:

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction which requires a prompt and appropriate response.

It is important to be aware that people have a ***statutory right*** to make a complaint and to have it dealt with in accordance with fair procedures. Complaints about Health and Social Care are deemed to be of such importance that there is a section of the Health Act 2004 (Part 9) devoted to complaints.

In the Health Act:

- A 'complaint' means *;'A complaint made about any action that, it is claimed, does not accord with fair or sound administrative practice, and adversely affects the person by whom, or on whose behalf, the complaint is made.'*
- An 'Action' is defined as *'Anything done or omitted to be done in connection with the provision of a health or personal social service that is the subject of an arrangement under Section 38 of the Act, or a service in respect of which assistance is given under Section 39 of the Act.'*
- A Complainant is defined as '*any person who is or was provided with a health or personal social service by the organisation or who is seeking or has sought provision of such service*.'

WHO CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT

Any person who is being or was provided with a service by CAI or who is seeking or has sought provision of such service may complain about any action of CAI that**,** it is claimed, does not accord with fair and sound administrative practice, and adversely affects or affected that person.

HOW A COMPLAINT CAN BE MADE

A complaint can be made by completing the CAI Complaints Form. This form can be found as Appendix I and hard copies are available on request. A complaints form can also be downloaded from our website See (Insert Link)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Upon a complaint being received by the CAI Complaints Officer, he or she shall notify, within 5 working days, the complainant, in writing, that the complaint has been so received.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A COMPLAINT

The CAI Complaint Form should include written information regarding :

- who was involved?
- what happened and when?
- what are you concerned about?
- have you done anything else to resolve this matter?

- what do you want to happen now?

It will also assist the Complaints Officer if any extra information and/or copies of other relevant documents are attached with the written complaint.

ADVOCACY

All complainants have the right to appoint an advocate. An advocate helps by supporting you to put forward your views, represent you and negotiate on your behalf. A full list of health-related advocacy organisations is available at https://www.hse.ie/complaints-feedback/advocacy-services/

Any person who wants to make a complaint can appoint an advocate to assist them in making their complaint and support them in managing that complaint. A staff member or a trusted person may also act as advocates for people wishing to make a complaint. Anyone who is an advocate must, however, uphold the principles of advocacy listed below.

- empowerment of the person where possible
- respect for the person and their wishes
- act in the person's best interest
- act independently
- maintain confidentiality
- act with diligence and competence

PROCUDURE AFTER A COMPLAINT IS RECEIVED

CAI will take every complaint seriously. CAI's escalation process for managing complaints is as follows:

- Stage 1 - Informal local resolution of complaint.
- Stage 2 - Formal internal investigation of complaint.
- Stage 3 - Independent review conducted by the Ombudsman.

Stage 1 – Informal local resolution:

CAI aims to first try to resolve the complainant's issue informally, at local level with the appropriate person.

Stage 2 – Formal internal investigation:

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or not appropriate a complaint may move to Stage 2 – Formal internal investigation. The Complaints Officer will outline the steps that he or she proposes to take in investigating the complaint and the time limits for the completion of the investigation. Our goal is to ensure the matter is dealt with as soon as practicable, fairly and that confidentiality will be upheld at all times.

Stage 3 – Independent review conducted by the Ombudsman:

If a complainant is not happy with the outcome of the review carried out internally by the organisation, they have a right to request an independent review of the complaint by the Ombudsman or the Ombudsman for Children. The Ombudsman is responsible for ensuring that the public receive good customer care and fair treatment from the Government and public bodies.
To make a complaint to the Ombudsman, you can contact them as follows:

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Office of the Ombudsman, 6 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, D02 W773
Email: complaints@ombudsman.ie
Phone: 01 639 5600 Lo-call 1890 223030
Website: https://www.ombudsman.ie/

LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

The Chairperson and the Board of Directors will review the Complaints Policy bi-annually to ensure that all reasonable systems are in place to maintain and improve services, with the view to reduce instances of complaints.

MANAGING COMPLAINTS AND TIMEFRAMES INVOLVED ONCE A COMPLAINT IS RECEIVED

Where the complaint will not be investigated the Complaints Officer will inform the complainant in writing, within 5 working days of same and the reasons for it.

Where the complaint will be investigated, the Complaints Officer will endeavour to investigate and conclude the investigation of a complaint within 30 working days of it being acknowledged.

If the investigation cannot be investigated and concluded within 30 working days then the Complaints Officer will communicate this to the complainant and give an indication of the time it will take to complete the investigation (maximum time period of six months).

If this timeframe cannot be met, the Complaints Officer must inform the complainant that the investigation is taking longer than 6 months, give an explanation why and outline the options open to the complainant.

TIME LIMITS FOR MAKING A COMPLAINT

The Complaints Officer must determine if the complaint meets the time frames as set out in Section 47, Part 9 of the Health Act 2004 which requires that: a complaint must be made within 12 months of the date of the action giving rise to the complaint or within 12 months of the complainant becoming aware of the action giving rise to the complaint.

The Complaints Officer may extend the time limit for making a complaint if in the opinion of the Complaints Officer special circumstances make it appropriate to do so. These special circumstances include but are not exclusive to the following:

- If the complainant is ill or bereaved
- If the new relevant, significant and verifiable information relating to the action becomes available to the complainant
- If it is considered in the public interest to investigate the complaint
- If the complaint concerns an issue of such seriousness that it cannot be ignored
- Diminished capacity of the service user at the time of the experience e.g., mental health, critical/ long-term illness
- Where extensive support was required to make the complaint and this took longer than 12 months

- The Complaints Officer will notify the complainant of decision to extend / not extend time limits within 5 working days

REDRESS

Redress should be consistent and fair for both the complainant and the service against which the complaint was made. CAI offers forms of redress or responses that are appropriate and reasonable where it has been established that a measurable loss, detriment or disadvantage was suffered or sustained by the claimant personally. This redress could include:

- Apology
- An explanation
- Refund
- Admission of fault
- Change of decision
- Replacement
- Repair /rework
- Correction of misleading or incorrect records
- Technical or financial assistance
- Recommendation to make a change to a relevant policy or law
- A waiver of debt

The Complaints Officer may not, following the investigation of a complaint, make a recommendation the implementation of which would require or cause CAI to make a material amendment to its approved service plan or to an arrangement under section 39.

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE HSE

CAI has established a Complaints Policy by agreement with the HSE and thus will provide the HSE with a general report on the complaints received by CAI during the previous year indicating:

- The total number of complaints received
- The nature of the complaints
- The number of complaints resolved by informal means
- The outcome of any investigations into the complaints

CONTACT DETAILS:

Liam O'Sullivan, CAI Complaints Officer
Care Alliance Ireland, Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7.
Telephone: 01 874 7776:

Email: info@carealliance.ie

Should the complaint relate to the Complaints Officer, the Chairperson will manage the complaint.
E-mail chair@carealliance.ie

T +353 1 874 7776
E info@carealliance.ie
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SECTION 2 - COMPLIMENTS

In Care Alliance Ireland we believe that we deliver high quality services to our service users. In Section 1 we have outlined the process for dealing with complaints about our services. It is also important to recognise when we do things well and to acknowledge the high quality services delivered by our staff and volunteers.

Many people acknowledge verbally and in writing the good supports received by them or a member of their family. These expressions of satisfaction must also be recorded, collated and analysed.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

We learn from compliments that are documented and reported. This organisational learning begins with evaluating the care which initiated the compliment through to embedding good practice into services. See Appendix 2 – Compliments Form. A compliments form can also be downloaded from our website See (Insert Link)

CAI is committed to using information from complaints and compliments to make improvements to the organisation and will identify and communicate such improvements to service users, their families and staff.

Our Complaints Officer will collate compliments management information and data and report to the board of directors at least annually, and the HSE twice yearly, and will feed positive information back to the organisation for educational and improvement purposes and to ensure that staff know that they are valued by the people they serve.

The quality improvement approach promotes safety and quality improvement by recognising the systemic nature of most adverse events and by open communication with clients when things go wrong. Promoting a quality improvement approach also requires information about good practice to be integrated into quality information systems. It also requires the creation of an organisational culture and associated systems that ensures consumer feedback generates opportunities for learning.

We actively encourage and promote client feedback and will link with clients on a regular basis to ensure that our feedback handling processes are effective, are being communicated and are achieving outcomes that are satisfactory to our clients.

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Appendix I - Complaints Form

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PLEASE FILL THIS FORM AND FORWARD TO THE COMPLAINTS OFFICER

Please complete and post to: Private and Confidential, Complaints Officer, Care Alliance Ireland, Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7 email to: info@carealliance.ie.

Date of Complaint: _____

Complaint made by: _____

Complaint made about: _____

These questions below might help you explain your complaint.

- Who was involved ?
- What happened and when ?
- What are you concerned about ?
- Have you done anything else to resolve this matter ?
- What do you want to happen now ?
- Include any extra information and/or copies of other relevant documents

Brief Description of the Complaint : _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Your details

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Name:

Appendix II - Compliments Form

_____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

E-mail: (If you wish)_____

Phone Number to Contact You:_____

Your address: _____

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Please complete and post to: Private and Confidential, Complaints Officer, Care Alliance Ireland, Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7 email to: info@carealliance.ie.

Date of Compliment: _____

Compliment made by: _____

Compliment made about: _____

Brief Description of the Compliment : _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Your details

Name: _____

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Signature: _____

Date: _____

E-mail: (If you wish)_____

Phone Number to Contact You:_____

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