

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Mind Ystradgynlais is committed to providing high quality services for people.
- 1.1.2 Mind Ystradgynlais appreciates that one of the ways in which the organisation can continue to improve services is by listening and responding to the feedback from people that use its services, supporters and stakeholders, and in particular by learning from complaints.
- 1.1.3 Mind Ystradgynlais recognises that effective communication is a vital part of the process in dealing with comments, compliments and complaints as people are more likely to forgive errors when they feel listened to and respected.
- 1.1.4 Mind Ystradgynlais recognises that sometimes the organisation can put things right and make improvements where required. Sometimes it can only explain its actions, apologise and learn from feedback.

1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 This policy can be used by people using Mind Ystradgynlais’ services, volunteers, and the general public..
- 1.2.2 This policy does not apply to employees. Employees should use Mind Ystradgynlais’ grievance or whistleblowing policies where appropriate.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Purposes and aims of this Policy

- 2.1.1 To provide a framework for raising and addressing comments, compliments and complaints.
- 2.2.2 Explain what steps Mind Ystradgynlais will take if it receives a comment, compliment or complaint.
- 2.2.3 Mind Ystradgynlais is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, transparency, and accountability. It encourages people using services, volunteers and the general public to use this policy to provide feedback.
- 2.2.4 Ensure consistent, equitable and fair treatment in line with Mind Ystradgynlais’ values.

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3. Comments and Compliments

- 3.1 Mind Ystradgynlais welcomes compliments about its services. Any written compliments received will be shared with the member of staff, volunteer, and/or relevant department.
- 3.2 Compliments allow Mind Ystradgynlais to know when something is working well and continue to deliver suitable services.
- 3.3 Mind Ystradgynlais recognises that comments are helpful for reviewing the services on offer, and welcome suggestions of solutions.
- 3.4 Mind Ystradgynlais will advise of any changes made as a result of a comment.

4. Complaints

- 4.1 Mind Ystradgynlais aims to ensure that:
 - 4.1.1 Making a complaint is as easy as possible.
 - 4.1.2 All complaints are taken seriously as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with a service which calls for an immediate response.
 - 4.1.3 Complainants are always treated with courtesy and fairness.
 - 4.1.4 The organisation deals with any complaints promptly, politely and in confidence.
 - 4.1.5 Complaints are responded to in the right way – for example, with an explanation or an apology where things have gone wrong, and information on any action taken etc.
 - 4.1.6 Learning is shared from complaints, and they are used to improve services.
 - 4.1.7 To regularly review this policy and procedures.
- 4.2 It is likely that the organisation may need to share details with relevant employees in order to investigate complaints fully.
- 4.3 Mind Ystradgynlais recognises that many concerns will be raised informally and will ensure they are dealt with as quickly and efficiently as formal complaints.
- 4.4 Mind Ystradgynlais aims are to:
 - 4.4.1 Resolve informal concerns quickly within ten working days.
 - 4.4.2 Keep process as straightforward and accessible as possible.
 - 4.4.3 Enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred if appropriate.
- 4.5 Mind Ystradgynlais encourages and supports people using services and other stakeholders, including supporters, to communicate openly and assertively to try to resolve the complaint

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at an informal level. Dealing with issues directly in this way maximises the likelihood of a positive outcome.

- 4.6 Persistent/vexatious complainants may have a genuine complaint, but take inappropriate steps to complain. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and appropriately while ensuring that other people using services, staff and volunteers do not suffer detriment and that the resources of Mind Ystradgynlais are used effectively.
- 4.7 An informal approach is recommended when it can be achieved. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.
- 4.8 If any employee receives a complaint either verbally or in writing, they should pass the complaint to the relevant manager. If the complaint is about the employee’s manager, they should pass it onto an appropriate member of the Senior Management Team. If the complaint is about the Chief Executive, the Board of Trustees should be notified.
- 4.9 The manager/trustee dealing with the complaint will arrange a conversation with the complainant to resolve the complaint informally (where possible) within ten working days. They will discuss available options, which include one-to-one meetings, meetings with other senior manager (s) or with an external mediator and agree how they wish to proceed. When conducting this conversation, it will be made clear that this is not part of the formal complaints procedure.
- 4.10 If a complaint has not been resolved informally to the satisfaction of the complainant, then the complaints procedure should be followed.

5. Monitoring of Compliments, Comments and Complaints

- 5.1 A log of all compliments, comments and complaints is kept and a quarterly report is prepared for the Senior Management and Board of Trustees. These reports are compiled into an Annual Report for the Board of Trustees to review.
- 5.2 Complaints are monitored to identify ways to improve practice and maintain high quality services.
- 5.3 Support and training is offered to staff to enable them to conduct investigations.

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6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Board of Trustees

- 6.1.1 The Board of Trustees is responsible for reviewing and approving this policy, as well as ensuring Mind Ystradgynlais is properly resourced to fulfil the obligations of this policy.
- 6.1.2 To ensure all aspects of this policy are fairly, equitably consistently and sensitively applied, in line with Mind Ystradgynlais' values.

6.2 Senior Management

- 6.2.1 To ensure all employees are aware of this policy and procedure.
- 6.2.2 To ensure all aspects of this policy are fairly, equitably consistently and sensitively applied, in line with Mind Ystradgynlais' values.
- 6.2.3 To treat any concerns seriously and deal with them in a timely manner.
- 6.2.4 To offer reasonable adjustments and wellbeing support to the person raising concerns.
- 6.2.5 To offer reasonable adjustments or extra support to employees who need it, including to individuals named in a complaint, where the process is causing distress or affecting the mental health of anyone involved.
- 6.2.6 To ensure everyone involved is treated with dignity and respect.

6.3 Employees

- 6.3.1 To familiarise themselves with this policy.
- 6.3.2 To communicate openly and honestly during complaints investigation meetings.

7. Policies Referenced

- 7.1 Grievance Policy.
- 7.2 Whistleblowing Policy.

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8. Procedural Guidelines

8.1 Stage 1 – Submitting a complaint.

- 8.1.1.** If you wish to submit your complaint in writing you can request a Complaints Form (Appendix A), giving as much detail as possible. Please contact us if you need details of where help / support can be obtained with filling in the form or making a complaint, if necessary. Complaints can also be made verbally to a member staff. In this instance you will be directed to the most appropriate member of staff / trustee to take the details of your complaint. You can access the form through the ‘Contact Us’ button on our website.
- 8.1.2.** The complaint form should be submitted **by email** to info@mindtv.org.uk, **in writing** to Mind Ystradgynlais, 66 Pen-Y-Bryn, Ystradgynlais, Swansea SA9 1JB, **in person** or **telephone** or **text** [07946 664227](tel:07946664227). You will be sent an acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint within 5 working days.
- 8.1.3.** Your complaint will be forwarded to the relevant member of management or Board of Trustees who will forward the complaint to the person who will be investigating your complaint.
- If the complaint is against a non-management employee, a manager will investigate the complaint unless there would be a conflict.
 - If the complaint is against a manager the relevant member of the Senior Management team will investigate the complaint.
 - If the complaint is against a member of the Senior Management team, the Chief Executive will investigate the complaint.
 - If your complaint is against the Chief Executive a member of the Board of Trustees will investigate the complaint.
- 8.1.4** Mind Ystradgynlais reserves the right to appoint an independent investigator for complaints where this is appropriate.
- 8.1.5** In order to resolve issues as efficiently as possible, the complaint should be made as soon as possible after the incident.
- 8.1.6** When dealing with any complaints, the processes will be open to scrutiny, consistent with Mind Ystradgynlais’ core values and records will be kept.
- 8.1.7** People using services can choose to make a complaint via an advocate, relative or friend. If this is the case, it should be made clear that it is the person making the complaint supported by the third person, rather than the third person making the complaint. All communication will be sent to the complainant, and if the complainant requests copies can be sent to the third person.

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8.1.8. If a third person (such as a relative or other worker) makes a complaint, the person investigating the complaint will first inform the individual concerned about this complaint. A conversation or meeting will be set up between the investigator, the individual making the complaint and the person they are making the complaint for.

8.2 Stage 2 – Investigating a complaint

8.2.1. The investigator (as stated above) will first arrange a conversation or meeting to discuss the complaint with the complainant, to get full details of the complaint and find out how the complainant would like to see it resolved.

8.2.2. The investigation will be completed within 15 working days. If this is not possible, they will write to you to explain the reasons why.

8.2.3. The person investigating the complaint will inform the person or persons who the complaint has been made against, and their line manager(s), outlining the details of the complaint. As part of their investigation, they will interview this person or persons and any other witnesses.

8.2.4. All interviews throughout the complaints procedure will be conducted in a private space to minimise interruptions and to ensure confidentiality, and someone will be present to take notes where necessary. At any point, a meeting can be adjourned if further advice is required.

8.2.5. The person investigating will write to the complainant, outlining the facts they have ascertained and the decision they have come to. The complainant will be asked to give their response in writing either that they are happy with the outcome or that they wish to appeal the decision.

8.3 Stage 3 – Appealing against the decision.

8.3.1. If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of the investigation and wish to Appeal against the decision made, they must complete the Appeal form and email it to info@mindtv.org.uk within 10 working days of receiving the decision or send it in writing to Mind Ystradgynlais, 66 Pen-Y-Bryn, Ystradgynlais, Swansea SA9 1JB.

- If the complaint was investigated by a manager, a senior manager will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary
- If the complaint was investigated by a senior manager, the Chief Executive will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary
- If the complaint was investigated by the Chief Executive, a member of the Board of Trustees will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary

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- If the complaint was investigated by a member of the Board of Trustees, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary

8.3.2. You will be informed of the outcome of your appeal within 15 working days.

8.3.3. The response of the Appeal will be final and no further internal investigations will take place. If the complainant is still unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they can contact external agencies such as the Mental Health Advocacy Service, Representatives of Health / Social Service, relevant Ombudsman, the Citizens Advice Bureau, your local Councillor or your Member of Parliament.

Appendix A – COMPLAINTS FORM

Your name	
Telephone number	
Address	
Postcode	

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Name of person filling out this form (if differs to complainant)	
<p>Details of your complaint</p> <p><i>Please include any dates, places or other information relevant to this complaint, including any people involved in this complaint if applicable. Please give as much information as possible in order for us to investigate your complaint effectively.</i></p>	