

Headway Hertfordshire



Complaints Policy and Procedure

1. Policy Statement

Headway Hertfordshire believes that all service users and their carers have a right to expect that robust policies and procedures are in place for dealing with their concerns or complaints. All concerns and complaints will be dealt with professionally and taken seriously. We look upon them as opportunities to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services.

Headway Hertfordshire believes that service users should always be given the opportunity to make a concern or complaint formal, especially if they feel that a concern or complaint made informally has not been taken seriously or has not been dealt with to a satisfactory conclusion.

Headway Hertfordshire believes that a failure to listen to or acknowledge concerns or complaints might lead to an aggravation of problems, service user dissatisfaction and possible litigation. Most concerns and complaints if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be dealt with and resolved to the satisfaction of all.

2. Related policies and procedures:

Staff Code of Conduct
Equality and Diversity
Confidentiality Policy
Whistle blowing Policy
Grievance Policy – relating to staff and volunteers

3. Staff Responsibilities

3.1 Manager/ Senior Person assuming everyday responsibility.

To ensure that all staff, volunteers and service users have access to and are aware of this policy

To ensure that safeguards are in place to protect the rights the service user.

To ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of how to take a complaint forward.

3.2 Headway Staff and volunteers

To be aware of and adhere to this policy.

4. Audit Plan

The Manager/ senior person will monitor adherence of the policy and report findings to the Trustees.

5. Scope

This policy applies to all service users, carers, staff, volunteers, and trustees.

6. Staff training

All trustees, staff and volunteers to be made aware of and read this policy

7. Procedure

How to Complain

The complainant may need the assistance of an *independent advocate in order to take the complaint forward on their behalf.

[*Independent – if the complaint is concerning the conduct of a member or members of Headway Hertfordshire Staff or volunteers, they should not take on the role of independent advocate.]

Headway Hertfordshire would encourage a complaint to be dealt with informally in the first instance, as discussing the problem with the people themselves or speaking with a senior staff member may resolve the issue.

Unfortunately dealing with a complaint informally may not always resolve the problem and a more formal approach is required.

Depending on who or what the complaint is about will determine who should receive the complaint.

In order for the complaint to be dealt with effectively, the complaint should be put in writing in the first instance to:

Headway Hertfordshire , CEO, Suite 4, 34 Bancroft, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1LA

If the complaint is about a Headway Hertfordshire CEO, the letter should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees and marked as 'CONFIDENTIAL'.

If the complaint is about a Trustee this should be addressed in the first instance to the Chair of the Trustees or if this is not possible because the complaint is about the

Chair it should be addressed to the Chief Executive of Headway UK – the brain injury association.

The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days.

Following this, a formal investigation by the CEO, or a Trustee if the complaint is about the CEO, into the complaint will take place within 10 working days of the date of acknowledgement. The formal investigation might involve interviewing the staff involved and the complainant [and advocate] or other witnesses if more information is required. If the timescale set out does not allow for the investigation to be undertaken in a thorough manner then a firm date will be given to the complainant for completion of the investigation.

On completion of the investigation a meeting will be held with the CEO and the appointed Trustee or the Chair of Trustees if the complaint is about the CEO where you will be asked to explain your complaint and what action you feel should be taken to resolve the matter. If appropriate the meeting will be adjourned to allow further investigation to take place.

Headway Hertfordshire will endeavour to resolve the complaint within 7 working days of the meeting and you will be informed of the outcome in writing.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they can appeal by clearly stating their grounds for appeal. This should be done within 7 working days of the written notification of the outcome of the initial complaint investigation and decision.

The appeal meeting will be held by the CEO, or the Chair of Trustees if the complaint is about the CEO, and a nominated trustee who has not been involved in the issue already.

Following the appeal meeting you will be informed of the outcome within 5 working days. The outcome of this meeting will be final.