

Mind in Harrow

COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, either written or spoken. A complaint can be made by an individual or a group. You may wish to complain if you are not satisfied with the way you have been treated or the service you have received from Mind in Harrow.

At Mind in Harrow, we welcome comments and compliments on our services from all those who use them and from carers. We also recognize that from time to time things may go wrong and we welcome expressions of concern or complaints so that we can rectify any difficulties and prevent the same problem happening again.

Comments and Compliments

Please address your comments on a service or compliment on an event, a staff member or volunteer to the person concerned and, if you would like, to their manager or the Chief Executive. We are delighted if you want to give us feedback.

Principles of Mind in Harrow's complaints procedure

Mind recognises that compliments and complaints are an important part of feedback to the organisation.

- All complaints will be investigated fully and fairly.
- Complaints will be dealt with in confidence. The only exception to this is when others could be put at risk by matters referred to in the complaint.
- If the complainant is not happy with the result of the response to the complaint, she or he will have the right to appeal.
- Mind is committed to ensuring that its services are of the highest quality. The complaints procedure enables Mind to respond clearly and properly to complaints and to know

when and why people are not satisfied with its services, so that it can improve them.

- Complaints must be made to Mind in Harrow within six months of the date of the incident or concern arising.

Who can make a complaint?

This procedure is for members of the public who have received a service from Mind in Harrow or staff from other organisations. This procedure does not cover complaints made by Mind staff, volunteers and trustees who need to follow agreed grievance, disciplinary or other internal procedures.

Mind in Harrow's funders and contractors need to follow the procedures for complaints or disputes laid out in our contracts, grants or other funding arrangements.

Complaints about Mind in Harrow:

If you have a complaint against Mind in Harrow, there are four stages that you can go through to try and resolve the problem. You may wish to involve an advocate, friend or someone else to support you at any stage. If you need a sign language or community language interpreter, please let the person dealing with the complaint know and we will make every reasonable effort to provide it.

The four stages are:

Stage one (Informal Discussion)

Most complaints will be dealt with at this stage. You will be encouraged to meet with the person(s) you have a complaint against and to talk through the issue with them. As an alternative, you could speak to their line manager. The individual concerned is required to tell you their name and who their line manager is, if you ask them.

We expect your complaint to be discussed informally to attempt to resolve the issue before progressing to stage two. This stage may be by-passed if:

- (a) you feel unable to talk with the person(s) you have a complaint against or
- (b) the person(s) you have a complaint against refuse to meet with you.

Stage two (Formally registering a complaint)

If you are not satisfied with the response you have received at stage one (informal) you should then use stage two of this procedure.

1) Please outline the details of your complaint by letter, fax or email and send it to the Chief Executive (CEO), Mind in Harrow, First Floor, 132-134 College Road, Harrow HA1 1BQ or m.gillham@mindinharrow.org.uk. If your complaint is about the CEO, you need to address it to the Chair of the Board of Trustees (marked private and confidential), which is ultimately responsible as trustees of the organisation.

Your complaint will normally be acknowledged by letter within seven working days from the date it is received. The letter will contain the following information:

- Name, address and telephone number of the person who will investigate the complaint.
- The date the investigation will start.
- What support you can receive during the process of the complaint, e.g. in terms of making information accessible, using interpreters etc.
- How long we expect the investigation to take.

2) You will receive a full response to your complaint within timeframe stated on the acknowledgement letter in writing from the person appointed to investigate the complaint. The response will include the following information:

- Details of the investigation.
- A decision about whether the complaint was upheld or not.
- The reason for the decision.
- The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you e.g. an apology, additional help or directing to other sources of advice or support.
- Any other action that may be taken in light of the complaint. Please note that some actions may only be provided in outline because of the right to confidentiality of other individuals.

If it is not possible to provide a full answer to your complaint within the stated timeframe, we will send you a letter outlining reasons why and giving a date by which a full answer is expected.

Stage three (Appeal)

1) If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint then outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction by letter, fax or email and send it to the Chief Executive (CEO), Mind in Harrow, First Floor, 132-134 College Road, Harrow HA1 1BQ or m.gillham@mindinharrow.org.uk. If your complaint is about the CEO, you need to address it to the Chair of the Board of Trustees (marked private and confidential), which is ultimately responsible as trustees of the organisation.

2) An Appeals Panel, normally of three members, including a trustee, will be convened to consider your appeal. The Chair of the Board of Trustees will be responsible for ensuring the panel is appropriately representative. Panel membership will be restricted to people who have had no previous involvement in the complaint

3) Members of the Appeals Panel:

- Will read through the necessary papers
- May speak to relevant individuals involved with the complaint if deemed necessary
- Will make a final decision.

4) The chair of the Appeals Panel will write to you within a reasonable timeframe from the date of receiving the appeal to confirm:

- the final decision about the complaint
- the reason for the decision
- the redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you e.g. an apology, additional help or directing to other sources of advice or support
- any action that may be taken in light of the complaint. Please note that some actions may only be provided in outline because of the right to confidentiality of other individuals.

Stage four (Review of the process)

1) If once you have been through stages one to three of the complaints procedure, you are not satisfied that Mind in Harrow has followed the process properly and dealt with your complaint fairly (e.g. by giving you insufficient opportunity to represent your view or ensuring all the relevant people are involved in the investigation), then you have the right to outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction to request a review of the complaints handling process, not a further investigation of the complaint.

Please provide your request for a review of the complaints handling process by letter, fax or email and send it to the Chief Executive (CEO), Mind in Harrow, First Floor, 132-134 College Road, Harrow HA1 1BQ or m.gillham@mindinharrow.org.uk or if your complaint is about the CEO, you need to address it to the Chair of the Board of Trustees (marked private and confidential).

2) The CEO or the Chair will make arrangements for a review of the complaint handling process by someone independent of the process, and will inform you of how the review will be carried out in writing within a reasonable timeframe from receipt of your request.

3) The decision of the process review will be final. The Chair or CEO will communicate in writing within a reasonable timeframe from receiving your request for review:

- whether or not the procedure has been followed properly and fairly
- the reason for the decision
- the redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you e.g. an apology,
- additional help or directing to other sources of advice or support
- what action may be taken in light of the review. Please note that some actions may only be provided in outline because of the right to confidentiality of other individuals.

Time limits

In circumstances where time limits cannot be met due to unforeseen circumstances, complainants will be notified in writing. The reasons for the delay with adjusted timescales will be supplied by the person responsible for handling the complaint.

Guidance -

Mind (National Association for Mental Health-NAMH) Complaints about local Minds

“If your complaint is about an individual local Mind, then as each local Mind is an independent registered charity you need to:

I. Contact the local Mind directly to explain that you wish to make a complaint and therefore would like to receive a copy of their complaints procedure.

II. Follow the local Mind's complaints procedure as outlined. If you have been through all the stages of the local Mind's complaints procedure, and you are still not happy, you may consider taking the following step:

III. If the local Mind has provision for an independent review of their complaints handling process then you should agree with them a mutually acceptable independent person to review the complaints handling procedure, where appropriate. A member of NAMH staff may act in this role with the agreement of all parties concerned. The role of the NAMH staff member will be confined to a review of the complaints handling process only.”

Complaints about Mind (NAMH)

Members of the public wishing to make a complaint about Mind (NAMH) should follow the Mind (NAMH) Complaints Policy, which available on Mind's website www.mind.org.uk

Accountability

The Mind in Harrow Chief Executive is responsible for the efficient operation of this complaints procedure. Responsibility for carrying out investigations of complaints may be delegated to appropriate managers in Mind in Harrow, under the authority of the Chief Executive.

Recording complaints

The Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring a record of all complaints is maintained in an agreed format and filed centrally and confidentially. Chief Executive will review complaints on a quarterly basis and will be responsible for collating information about complaints to provide a report to the Board of Trustees on an annual basis with details of the totality of complaints received, main reasons for complaints, outcomes and how any underlying problems have been resolved.

Name of Policy/Procedure	Comments Compliments And Complaints Policy And Procedure
Current status (draft, approved)	Approved
Last updated	February 2016
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Next review date	February 2019
Signed by:	Neil Smith
Position:	Chair
Date:	08/02/2016