

LYELL McEWIN REGIONAL VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION INC

POLICY & PROCEDURES DOCUMENT



POLICY TITLE: NRC & MEN'S OUTING PROGRAM
COMPLAINTS POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.2

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Northern Respite Care and Men's Outing Program are committed to resolving issues and conflicts involving carers, care recipients, volunteers and staff in a positive and sensitive manner

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- ✓ Carers, care recipients, volunteers and staff shall be encouraged to and feel safe about raising concerns in relation to the service(s) being provided
- ✓ A clear and transparent process for dealing with complaints shall be established
- ✓ Complainants shall have a choice of using either an 'internal' or an 'external' process to have their complaints resolved
- ✓ Complaints will be dealt with in a fair, prompt and confidential manner without the discontinuation of the service

DEFINITION OF COMPLAINT:

A complaint is defined as any experience where a person is dissatisfied with any aspect of the services being provided by the Northern Respite Care or Men's Outing Program

PROCEDURES (To implement Policy)

Carers, care recipients, staff and volunteers shall have a choice of using either the 'internal' or 'external' complaint process outlined below and shall be encouraged to use an advocate of their choice. As a part of this process, information shall be provided to the complainant that they can choose to have their complaint dealt with externally, using an independent advocate.

INTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE OVERVIEW

1. To lodge a complaint using the 'internal system', a complaint should be made either verbally or in writing to the Manager of the Northern Respite Care Service, the Director of Volunteers or the Executive Officer of the Lyell McEwin Regional Volunteer Association.
2. Where the complaint relates to the operation of the program, the issue shall be directed to the Manager of the NRC/Men's outing programs in the first instance, who shall seek the support of senior staff to resolve the issue as required.
3. Where the complaint is against the Manager or management of the NRC/Men's Outing programs, the complaint should be made to the Director of Volunteer Services, the Executive Officer or directly to the President of the Board as is appropriate.
4. Where paid staff are not able to satisfactorily resolve a complaint to the satisfaction of all parties it shall be referred by the Executive Officer onto the Board of Governance.

USING THE 'INFORMAL' INTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. The complainant's confidentiality shall be maintained throughout the process through involving only those immediately concerned and whom the complainant approves of
2. All complaints shall be investigated
3. Any informal complaint that is raised shall be responded to, where possible, on the same day that the complaint is made, but definitely within three working days.
4. The Manager or a delegated staff member shall coordinate the resolution of the complaint in close consultation with the complainant. This may occur in a number of ways including:
 - ~ A visit to the complainant to listen to their issues and assess the situation
 - ~ Consultation with other parties as appropriate
 - ~ Convening a mediation meeting between the various parties is appropriate
 - ~ Informing the complainant that they have the right to an advocate to speak on their behalf if they wish to do so
5. Once a resolution has been reached, the Manager shall reassess the situation to ensure that the complainant is satisfied with the results. Reassure the carer throughout the process of their rights to services.
6. Should the outcome be unsatisfactory the complainant can appeal in writing to the Executive Officer or the President of the Board of Governance and ask for a 'formal' process to be started.

USING THE 'FORMAL' INTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Any staff member on receiving a request to have a complaint dealt with via the 'formal' system should clearly document the nature of the complaint.
2. All complaints shall be documented clearly and investigated fully.
3. The rights of all parties will be respected as a part of any action that may be deemed to be necessary to resolve the complaint
4. The complainant shall be informed that the matter will be investigated and that they will receive a report within seven (7) working days from the time the complaint is lodged.
5. Complainants shall be informed of their right to use a person to speak on their behalf.
6. Records shall be kept for seven (7) years and then destroyed
7. A complaints committee comprising the Executive Officer, the Director of Volunteer Services and one member from the Board of Governance shall oversee the process. A member of this committee shall be responsible for contacting the complainant to ensure that they are satisfied with the outcome of their complaint.

USING THE EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If concerns are not addressed to the complainant's satisfaction using the 'internal' systems described above, they may choose to use an external and independent Advocate Service, or take the complaint to the key funding body of the Northern Respite Care program. Should this be the desire of the complainant, the Director of Volunteers or Executive Officer shall assist by providing the appropriate contact details.

PUBLICITY

Carers will be provided with access to the Complaints Policy. A copy of this policy will be available from the Manager of Northern Respite Care Services or the Director of Volunteer Services in their absence. Information packs for carers shall also contain information about the policy.

REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed annually or earlier if proven to be necessary

TRAINING

All volunteers and staff who begin work with the Northern Respite Care Program shall be made aware of the complaints policy

CONSULTATION

- Policy Sub-committee
- Director of Volunteer Services
- Manager Northern Respite Care Services
- Northern Carers Network
- National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) Service Standards and Guidelines

Approved by Board of Governance on 15.2.07

Last reviewed Sept 2010