



Complaints Procedure

Introduction

Cholmondeley staff provide excellent service to children and families/whanau. Excellent service quality leads to increased child and family satisfaction, which builds strong loyalty and contributes to improved business outcomes.

This service includes:

- putting the child's wellbeing at the centre of everything we do
- applying knowledge to the child and family/whanau's situation
- being aware of child and family/whanau's needs
- keeping the family/whanau fully informed
- meeting the timeframes and keeping promises.

Complaints

Feedback on our services is fundamental to Cholmondeley's commitment to quality service and continual improvement of policy and practice.

In relation to the complaints procedure, 'client' includes children, young people and parents using Cholmondeley services, as well as caregivers, foster parents, referring agencies, donors and the general public.

Complaints are dealt with in a manner that:

- affirms the person's right to make a complaint
- endeavours to resolve the specific issue satisfactorily
- improves the future performance of the organisation.

Making the Complaints Procedure Known

The Cholmondeley Service Commitment and Complaints Form is displayed in all public areas of all offices and service delivery areas managed by Cholmondeley.

The complaints procedure is explained verbally to each new Cholmondeley client.

Staff promote awareness of the complaints procedure by:

- having copies of the Cholmondeley pamphlet, "Cholmondeley Service Commitment and Complaints Form" readily available
- including the complaints procedure in all staff induction.

All staff are open to complaints. Cholmondeley is interested in listening to and considering the views of others.

Receiving and Investigating Complaints

Complaints, grievances, serious misunderstandings or disagreements about Cholmondeley services are all considered carefully.



Staff encourage clients to:

- make complaints about service delivery directly to the staff member with whom they have regular contact, or to that staff member's supervisor
- put their complaint in writing, preferably using the Cholmondeley Complaint Form.

Complaints Investigation Form

The **Complaints Investigation Form** is used by staff when a complaint about Cholmondeley is received and investigated. All complaints investigated are adequately documented.

The information on the Complaints Form, and clear documentation of responses:

- reduces later confusion and misunderstanding
- shows whether the process has been 'procedurally fair'
- provides evidence for any external agency or person authorised to investigate
- shows that Cholmondeley has tried to resolve the complaint internally.

It is important to give clients or the complainant (or their representatives) the opportunity to record a complaint.

Internal Resolution

The primary objective is to investigate and resolve the complaint internally, and to the satisfaction of the complainant. Staff attempts to resolve a complaint directly and promptly with the relevant staff member and/or their immediate supervisor.

Clients or the complainant are told that they may have a support person present during face-to-face discussions at any time during a complaint investigation.

The complainant will be contacted within five working days of receiving their complaint when they will be advised about how it will be addressed.

The CEO is involved if the complaint is unresolved and/or the complainant remains dissatisfied.

Either:

- arrange for the client/ complainant to discuss the matter with the CEO and put the complaint in writing if they haven't already done so, or
- pass the complaint directly to the CEO.

Formal Investigation

Procedural steps are taken by the CEO to investigate any complaint received about Cholmondeley services.

The procedural steps required by the CEO are:

1. Acknowledge the complaint in writing within ten working days, unless the matter has been resolved in the interim to the satisfaction of the client
2. Arrange to meet the client/complainant to resolve the issue.
3. At the first meeting:
 - explain the procedure to be followed, and
 - advise the client of their right to contact external authorities for resolution (see **External Appeals**)
4. Write to the client within ten working days recording the outcome of the meeting.

Updated: October 2017

Review Date: March 2018



5. Document the outcome on the Cholmondeley Complaints Investigation Form
6. Within ten working days of writing to the client consider whether to accept the complaint as justified, or to accept the complaint is not justified
7. If the complaint needs more than ten extra days, decide how much more time, and advise the client in writing – both the new time frame and the reason(s) for it
8. As soon as possible after a final decision, write to the client stating whether or not the complaint is accepted as justified, the reason(s) for the decision, any action(s) Cholmondeley proposes, and appeal procedures available to challenge the decision.

External Appeal

Clients are entitled to take their complaint to any other person authorised to receive complaints, such as:

- MVC Oranga Tamariki
- The Ministry of Education
- The Health and Disability Commissioner
- The Children's Commissioner

Complaints and Staff Performance

Managers need to be aware of the rights of staff and employees, and follow appropriate disciplinary procedures where complaints allege poor performance or misconduct by staff.

Complaints relating to Child Protection

The child's wellbeing and safety is of paramount importance.

The CCC Child Protection Policy and Procedures apply to all complaints or allegations that a staff member or volunteer has allegedly abused a child.

The CCC Code of Conduct will apply.

A decision about making a report of concern and/or complaint to Oranga Tamariki and/or Police will be made in a timely manner by the Service Development Manager, informing the CEO.

An investigation will be carried out in a timely manner

Continuing service delivery to the child will be of paramount importance

Recording

Written documentation is kept throughout all stages of an investigation

Complainants receive copies of all relevant documents.

All documentation about a formal complaint is kept for twelve months