

Mental Health Matters Wales Complaints and Concerns Policy and Procedure

Our aim

Mental Health Matters Wales (hereafter referred to as MHM Wales) is committed to providing a quality service for individuals and organisations it delivers and provides services to, and works in an open and accountable way which builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders.

One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of individuals, organisations and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints and concerns, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore we aim to ensure:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint or concern as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken (excluding information and actions subject to the Data Protection Act);
- we learn from complaints and concerns, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints and concerns policy and procedures

We recognise some concerns will be raised informally, and we aim to ensure informal concerns are dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly;
- keep matters low-key;
- when required, enable mediation between the individual raising the concern and the individual to whom the concern is about

An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Preamble

Definition: MHM Wales defines a complaint as *“any expression of dissatisfaction relating to a member of staff, a service it provides or a Trustee of the charity which requires a formal response”*.

Limitations:

MHM Wales will not consider a complaint where the complaint is in regard to the following:

- Actions and Behaviours of beneficiaries who access services delivered by MHM Wales e.g. disputes between attendees not related to service provision or delivery
- Venues and facilities not owned by MHM Wales e.g. halls, rooms hired to provide services where it is outside of the control of MHM Wales to make changes

- Action and Behaviours of professionals not employed by MHM Wales but attending services delivered e.g. behaviours, actions undertaken by individuals from statutory or other third sector agencies in which staff members have not witnessed
- Where the complaint/concern has been received whilst there are ongoing court cases or litigation taking place involving the complainant and member of MHM Wales staff.

Purpose: The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Mental Health Matters Wales's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take action where appropriate

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to MHM Wales's attention within **TWENTY EIGHT DAYS** of the issue arising;
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in MHM Wales
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow MHM Wales a reasonable time to deal with the matter (depending on circumstances, this sometimes take longer than the fifteen days identified);
- recognise some circumstances may be beyond MHM Wales's control

MHM Wales reserves the right not to investigate or respond to complaints received outside of the twenty eight day timescale identified above.

Responsibility for Action: All Staff, and Trustees of MHM Wales.

Confidentiality: Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure both the complainant and MHM Wales maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (each complaint will be judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Monitoring and Reporting: Trustees of MHM Wales will receive at each Trustee meeting an anonymised report of complaints made and their resolution.

Informal Complaints

An informal complaint differs from a formal complaint in the way it is processed but both contribute to the overall complaints process. An informal complaint is done through discussion (verbally) and should always be attempted before moving to the formal complaint procedure.

Raise your complaint or concern with the staff member or volunteer present when you have felt actions or behaviours have not been acceptable. Where an informal complaint has been

raised, the staff member or volunteer will complete an “Incident Form” detailing the outcome and actions taken.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

If you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should complete the complaints form (attached) or write to the member of staff who dealt with you, or their coordinator, so he or she has a chance to put things right.

If your complaint concerns a Trustee of MHM Wales, rather than a member of staff, you should write formally to the individual concerned. In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within FOUR working days of receipt. Depending on the nature of the complaint, you should receive a response and an explanation within FIFTEEN working days. If you are unsure which member of MHM Wales staff to write to; your complaint should be sent to the Human Resource Manager.

Where a complaint requires extensive investigation or delays occur due to availability of possible witnesses, resulting in an outcome taking longer than fifteen days, you will be informed in writing of the delay.

Our contact details can be found on the [Contact Us](http://www.mhmwales.org.uk) page of MHM Wales’ Website www.mhmwales.org.uk

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the outcome response to your complaint, you can write to MHM Wales’ Chief Executive Officer explaining the reasons why you are not satisfied with the outcome and requesting for your complaint and the outcome response to be reviewed. Please use the following address: CEO, Mental Health Matters Wales, Union Offices, Quarella Road, Bridgend, CF31 1JW.

The request for the outcome to be reviewed must be received within FIVE working days from the date identified within the written outcome response from MHMWales’s Human Resource Manager. The CEO will acknowledge your request within FOUR working days of receipt and will provide their decision response within FIFTEEN workings days.

MHM Wales’s aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

Final Stage

If you are not satisfied with the subsequent outcome response from MHM Wales’ CEO then you have the option of writing to the Chair of the Executive Committee (Trustees), Mental Health Matters Wales, Union Offices, Quarella Road, Bridgend, CF31 1JW, **stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome response**. You must do this within FIVE working days from the date identified within the written outcome response from MHMWales’s CEO.

The Chair of the Executive Committee (or their nominee) will respond normally within TEN working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate your complaint, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation.

Contracted services

In certain circumstances, if you are still not satisfied with the outcome from the organisations Final Stage, a further final stage of appeal to the Commissioners of the service which the complaint is about can be undertaken. Contact details of the specific commissioners will be provided in writing to you at the organisations final stage response.

Mental Health Matters Wales Complaints and Concerns Form

Please write clearly in BLOCK CAPITALS.

Your details

Title:	
First Name:	
Last Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Daytime Telephone No:	
Email:	

Who/What do you want to complain about? (If the complaint is about an individual please include their name below, otherwise please go to the next section)

Name:	
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Details of the problem

Please give details of your complaint, explaining what you think the person has done wrong/what you are complaining about, and attaching extra sheets if necessary.

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Declaration

I understand any investigation undertaken may require the disclosure of details I have provided to the person I am complaining about to enable them to respond properly.

To the best of my knowledge I have given accurate information about this complaint.

This declaration **MUST** be signed by the person making the complaint. If this is not possible, please explain why.

Signature:		Date:	
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MHM Wales reserves the right not to investigate an unsigned or anonymous complaint