Heel & Toe

Complaints Procedure

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1. Introduction

The role of staff in driving improvements within our Charity is critical. Complaints, compliments and comments received from our service users ensure that we can promote good practice and create a second chance to provide service and satisfaction to dissatisfied customers. They identify areas that need attention and provide opportunities to strengthen public support for our organisation.

This document is intended to provide guidance to Trustee's, Managers and Staff in dealing with any complaints, compliments or comments received within our Charity

2. Complaints

2.1 What is a complaint?

"A complaint is the expression of dissatisfaction with the organisation's procedures, charges, employees or quality of service. Complaints should be valued. Having an effective process for managing complaints not only benefits the complaint, it can have real benefits for the organisation"

Complaints may relate to the following (this is not an exhaustive list).

- An unwelcome or disputed decision;
- Concern about the quality or appropriateness of service;
- Delay in decision making or provision of services;
- Delivery or non-delivery of services;
- Attitude or behaviour of staff.
- Assessment, care management and review processes.

2.2

One type of complaint is no more important that the other and all complaints are treated with equal importance, the Trustees have responsibility for the management of complaints handling, to inform relevant persons about complaints regarding safety issues and to ensure that a joined-up response is given to service users.

3. Who may complain?

- A child or young person who has received, is currently receiving sessions from the Charity.
- Any person who has responsibility for child or young person who has received, is currently receiving sessions from the Charity.
- Persons acting on behalf of someone meeting the criteria above.
- Any member of the public who is attending a Heel and Toe event.
- Any member of the public who is working with the fundraising team

The Trustees and Chief Executive will make a decision about the validity of each complaint on a case by case basis.

4. How complaints can be made

A child or young person, Carer, Parent or member of the public can use any of the following ways to make a complaint:

- In person;
- By telephone;
- By e-mail or text message;
- Via the website
- Through a staff member
- Through a representative, e.g. a parent or guardian, an advocate or solicitor

5. The complaints procedure

All complaints should be taken seriously, and should be viewed as an opportunity to learn lessons for the future. The procedure shown below is followed:

1. On receipt of a complaint, an acknowledgement is made and wherever possible, an immediate and local resolution is sought and the complainant is informed.

2. If this is not possible, or the complainant remains dissatisfied, the complaint will be formally investigated. The complainant will be informed that the complaint is to be taken through a formal procedure; and will be given an expected date for resolution/response.

3. The complaint will be investigated by the Chief Executive and a resolution should be reached within the specified timescale. The complainant is sent a written response.

4. If the complaint relates to therapy all further therapy will cease until case is resolved.

5. If the complainant is not happy with the response, they can ask for the complaint to be re-investigated by the Trustee's. If it is possible to mediate with the complainant and offer a further meeting, explanation or apology, all efforts should be made to explore this to enable the complaint to be resolved in as positive, timely and cost-effective a manner as possible

6. What to do if you receive a complaint

6.1

If you receive a complaint about therapy services at Heel and Toe or about any fundraising activities or public relations activities either on the phone or via a letter or e-mail, the following action should be taken:

- If it is over the phone, try to take as many details as possible
- Try to resolve the issue straight away. Keep a note of what you did/said. This is called an informal resolution. Complaints about a particular child's therapy should be documented in the child's cliniko file.
- If you or a colleague **can't resolve** the matter **within 24 hours** of receiving the complaint, or if the complaint is **complex**, or if the complaint has specified that s/he wants to make a **formal complaint,** please forward the complaint details on the Chief Executive so that the complaint can be acknowledged and actioned with the appropriate Policy and Procedure. (See complaint guidelines below for timescales)

6.2

Alternatives to making a complaint should be discussed with the complainant; these include the provision of an apology or explanation, conciliation, and mediation.

7. Compliments and Comments

7.1

Compliments play an essential role in the improvement of service and assist in the recognising, sharing and building upon best and good practice. Compliments acknowledge good service, praise staff for their support and commitment and indicate areas of the service which are greatly appreciated. Compliments are received via cards, email, letter, compliment slips and service user surveys.

7.2

If you receive a compliment or a comment about services provided, either therapy services or events the following procedure should be followed:

- If it is on a card or letter – give to Chief Executive to place in file.
- If it is in an email – forward a copy to the Chief Executive – amanda@heelandtoe.org.uk

- If it is received via a ‘phone call, Send an email to the CEO outlining what has been said.

7.3

We work in a very person centered way and all suggestions will be considered in order to improve the outcomes, quality and experiences for everyone involved in all Heel and Toe activities.

It is the responsibility of the manager to inform senior management of all compliments so that this can be communicated to the Trustees.

A record of complaints and positive feedback will be kept in the management folder.

Complaint Resolution timescale			
Stage 1	**<u>Informal Resolution (Early Stage):</u>** 1.1 Tell the person with whom you have most contact (e.g.Therapist or fundraiser or manager) about your complaint. The sooner we know about this the quicker we can resolve your complaint. If you are acting on behalf of a child/young person you will need to inform us of your role/relationship to the child/young person. Where staff members have been informed of a complaint they must inform their manager immediately (or within 24 hours) and make a written record outlining the facts (*Appendix 2*). If the manager is not available staff must inform the Senior Management within 24 hours. If the complaint involves a safeguarding issue, staff must follow the Safeguarding Procedures in the first instance. 1.2 If the complaint is about the manager then you can get in touch with the Clinical Manager. We will ensure that no person who is subject of a complaint takes any part in its investigation or consideration of its outcome. 1.3 Whoever you speak to will listen to what you have to say, and do all they can to help you. We want to work with you to find a solution to the problem. 1.4 You will receive a written record of the informal complaint (*Appendix 2*) with the action taken and outcome.	▪ Manager Complaints Officers: ▪ Jo parsons – Clinical Manager ▪ Douglas Long – Chief Executive ▪ Amanda Tweedy – Deputy CEO	24 Hours 10 days
Stage 2	**<u>Formal</u>** 2.1 If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, then you can formally ask for an investigation by phoning or writing to the Complaints Officer at: Heel & Toe children's Charity 40 Front Street Pelton Durham DH2 1DE 2. 2 You will need to make it known in your complaint, which service area this applies to. E.g: ▪ Therapy ▪ Office/Fundraising 2. 3 You will get a letter acknowledging your complaint (*Appendix 1*).	▪ Manager <u>Complaints Officers:</u> ▪ Jo Parsons – Clinical Manager ▪ Douglas Long – Chief Executive ▪ Amanda Tweedy – Deputy CEO	2 Days

	2.4 The Manager will then investigate on your behalf. If the complaint is about the Manager then the Complaints Officer (Senior Manager) will discuss this with you and either appoint another manager or conduct the investigation themselves. We will send you a written reply (*Appendix 2*). If we can't reply within that time, then we will tell you why, and let you know when you can expect a reply. 2.5 We will finally ask that you complete a Complaints Resolution form (*Appendix 3*). 2.6 We will ensure that all parties who have been involved in the complaint have been informed of the outcome (unless you express otherwise).	<u>Complaints Officers:</u> ▪ Jo Parsons – Clinical Manager ▪ Douglas Long – Chief Executive	28 Days
Stage 3	**<u>Appeals Panel</u>** 3.1 If, after receiving the reply, you are still unhappy, then you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by a panel of independent people who have not previously been involved in the complaint. This would usually be the trustees. 3.2 Just contact the Complaints Officer who investigated your complaint either in writing or by telephone within 20 working days of the reply. 3.3 The panel will consider whether or not reasonable efforts have been made to resolve your complaint and what, if anything could still be done. 3.4 The panel will write to you with their findings. <u>The formal complaints process including appeal will be no longer than 60 days unless timescales have been agreed with you.</u>	Independent Panel <u>Complaints Officers:</u> ▪ Jo Parsons – Clinical Manager ▪ Douglas Long – Chief Executive	20 days 10 days

Appendix 1

Our Ref:

Date:

Address

Dear

RE: Letter Acknowledging your Formal Complaint

I am writing to acknowledge your complaint which was received and made to _____ on the _____ regarding the following:

Overview of the complaint to be recorded here

The person who will investigate your complaint is _____ and their direct number is _____. The investigating officer will be in touch with you as soon as possible and will endeavour to resolve your complaint within 28 days of the initial complaint being made.

We will ensure that you are supported at all times throughout this complaint and if you wish to be represented at meetings we will support this decision.

The Charity very much hope that we can resolve this matter to your satisfaction and we have enclosed a copy of the Complaints Policy and Procedure for your attention.

Yours faithfully,

Appendix 2

Record of Complaint

☐ Formal complaint (Ensure complainant receives a copy of policy & procedure if not already given)

☐ Informal complaint (only to be offered at an early stage of the complaint)

Complaint made by (including role/relationship):		Date:	Time:
Complaint made to:		Designation:	
Name of child/young person (if applicable):		Service:	

Acknowledgement letter sent on: _____ (Only for formal complaints)

By whom: _____

Details of the complaint: (please include full names of any individuals involved in this complaint)

Action Taken:
Outcome:
Continuation sheet:

Conclusion letter sent to complainant on: _____

Signatures:

Signed:	Print Name:	Complainant	Date:
Signed:	Print Name:	Manager	Date:

Appendix 3

Complaints Resolution

Date of Complaint: _____ Complaint made by:_____

Complaint made to: _____

I (print name) _____ *have received a full account of the complaint in which I have made to the Heel and Toe Children's Charity. I am fully satisfied with the actions taken and the outcome of my complaint.*

I also understand that a copy of this complaint will be held centrally at the Charity's Head Office and where applicable on the childs'/your, and/or staff records along with the complaints book.

Signed by complainant: _____Date resolution agreed: _____

Dissatisfaction of Complaint Outcome

Please tick relevant box:

☐ *I* (print name) _____ *am not satisfied with the conclusion of my complaint and I would like to formally request a person who is independent of this complaint to conduct an investigation.*

NOTE: The following request for an independent appeal panel must be completed and sent back within 20 days of complaint investigation response.

☐ *I* (print name) _____ *wish to request that an independent review of my complaint be heard by the Complaints Appeal Panel.*

Signed by complainant: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 4

Record of Compliment/Suggestion

Compliment/Suggestion from (including role/relationship):	Date of Compliment/Suggestion:
Compliment/Suggestion to(including role/relationship):	Service:

Name of Child/Young Person (if applicable): _____

☐ Compliment ☐ Suggestion

Overview of Comments:

Manager Comments (if this is a suggestion what action is required):			
Senior Manager Comments:			
Signed:	Print Name:	Manager	Date:
Signed:	Print Name:	Senior Manager	Date: