

Complaints

Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014

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Policy Statement

ENS accepts the rights of our client's and service users to make complaints and to register comments and concerns about the services received. We further accept that they should find it easy to do so. We welcome complaints, seeing them as opportunities to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services.

The Policy

This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by our clients, service users and their relatives, carers and advocates are taken seriously. It is not designed to apportion blame, to consider the possibility of negligence or to provide compensation. We have a separate Disciplinary Policy which may be utilised following a complaint. This organisation believes that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints leads to an aggravation of problems, service user dissatisfaction and possible litigation. The organisation supports the idea that most complaints if dealt with early, openly and honestly can be sorted at a local level between just the complainant and the organisation.

The complaints procedure is available to all clients. For individual service users and families that we support a version of this is contained in the Service User Guide.

Aim of the Complaints Procedure

We aim to ensure that the complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented, and that clients and service users feel confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

We accept that some individuals may require assistance to make a complaint if they lack capacity or confidence, and we are supportive of the use of external advocates in this case. We can accept complaints made by a service user's family, friends or carers on their behalf.

Specifically we aim to ensure that:

- ▶ Our clients, service users, carers and their representatives are aware of how to complain and that the company provides easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints
- ▶ Every complaint is acknowledged within 48 hours
- ▶ Complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively, with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause.

Responsibilities

ENS has a designated Human Resources department who take responsibility for coordinating the response to all complaints, and for recording and following through on outcomes.

For our CQC registered Community Support division, communication between the HR Team and the Registered Manager should be clear and transparent in order that the Registered Manager can demonstrate and evidence compliance.

Complaints Procedure

- ▶ The organisation accepts that all complaints, no matter how seemingly unimportant, must be taken seriously.

Complaints

- ▶ Front-line care staff or ENS office staff who receive a complaint are expected to seek to solve the problem immediately. They are required to make the Registered Manager or HR Team aware of the complaint so that it can be logged.
- ▶ If they cannot solve the problem immediately, they should offer to get their line manager to deal with the problem.
- ▶ Staff are expected to remain polite, courteous, sympathetic and professional to the complainant.
- ▶ If the complaint is being made on behalf of the service user by an advocate, it must first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the service user, especially if confidential information is involved. (It is very easy to assume that the advocate has the right or power to act for the service user when they may not). If in doubt it should be assumed that the service user's explicit permission is needed prior to discussing the complaint with the advocate.
- ▶ After discussing the problem, the manager or member of staff dealing with the complaint will suggest a means of resolving it. If this course of action is acceptable then the member of staff should clarify the agreement with the complainant and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (i.e. through another meeting or by letter).

Serious or written complaints

- ▶ Preliminary steps:
 - When we receive a complaint it is passed to the HR Department who records it on the complaints log and sends an acknowledgment letter within 48 hours to the complainant.
 - Any notifications to statutory bodies required will be dealt with by the HR team depending on the type and severity of the complaint.
 - If necessary, further details are obtained from the complainant.
- ▶ Investigation of the complaint by the organisation:
 - Immediately on receipt of the complaint, the HR Team will undertake an investigation.
 - The complainant will be kept informed throughout the process, and once an outcome is decided.
- ▶ Follow-up action:
 - The outcome will be confirmed in writing and discussed with the complainant at a meeting if desired. Details will be given of how to appeal to outcome, if applicable.
 - The outcomes of the investigation and any meeting are recorded on the complaints log, and any shortcomings in company procedures will be identified and acted upon.
 - The company management formally reviews all complaints at least every six months as part of its quality monitoring and improvement procedures to identify the lessons learned.

Relevant Contacts

In the first instance, please call ENS on 01702 361400 and raise your complaint with the person who you normally deal with, or alternatively the manager of that department.

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You may also use that number to speak to a member of the HR Team, or email hr@ensrg.co.uk.

If you are unhappy with the way a complaint has been dealt with please contact our Managing Director, Allyson Abel, on aabel@ensrg.co.uk.

Other Contacts

The Care Quality Commission

Citygate

Gallowgate

Newcastle Upon Tyne

NE1 4PA

Tel. 03000 616161

They will take details of concerns and respond appropriately and proportionately to the information divulged.

Training Statement

All staff receive mandatory training, which includes Safeguarding, Whistleblowing and dealing with complaints. In addition, they are encouraged to read the full policy and procedures and refer to their staff handbook.

Related Policies
Adult Safeguarding Consent Dignity and Respect Duty of Candour Good Governance Quality Assurance