

1. Statement

Enfield Disability Action (EDA) is committed to delivering high quality services. If a user of one of the services is unhappy about the service they are receiving he / she should tell the organisation what is wrong so that the situation can be put right. No one should be afraid to comment or complain as EDA needs to know what our service users are thinking. Making a complaint will not affect any of the services being received.

2. What is a complaint?

A complaint could be:

- ✓ A service promised that has not been provided or has taken too long to deliver.
- ✓ A person has been treated unfairly by an employee / volunteer / trustee of EDA.
- ✓ A service has been refused and a service user thinks they are entitled to that service.

3. How to complain

A complaint can be made, in writing, to the Manager of the service involved. If the complaint is about the Service Manager, the complaint should be made to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). If the complaint is about the CEO it should be made to a member of the Board of Trustees. It is essential that the person making the complaint states, from the start, that they are making a complaint and wishes it to be treated as such.

A complaint can also be made in writing, on CD, memory stick, by telephone, fax, or email.

4. Process of a complaint

Stage One

It is EDA's intention to resolve as many complaints as possible at this stage by responding promptly and effectively.

Upon receiving a complaint the person dealing with the complaint will acknowledge receipt within three working days and send the person making the complaint a copy of this complaint procedure.

The person dealing with the complaint will then investigate the complaint and will respond, in appropriate manner, within two working weeks, to the person making the complaint.

If this is not possible the person dealing with the complaint will write to the person making the complaint explaining that there will be a delay in dealing with the complaint and giving the reason for the delay and giving another date, within a maximum of a further two working weeks, by when a response will be made. If this is not acceptable to the person making the complaint they should contact the person dealing with the complaint who will then make arrangements for another Manager to deal with the complaint.

Stage Two

If Stage One of this procedure has not resolved the situation the person making the complaint may ask that the complaint is taken up by the CEO and / or the Chair of the Board. If neither of these is available the person making the complaint will be contacted by one of the Honorary Officers.

The CEO / the Chair of the Board of Directors or the Honorary Officer will:

1. Acknowledge the complaint within five working days.
2. Arrange to hold a meeting with the person making the complaint and the Manager of the person against who the complaint has been made in an attempt to resolve the issue. However, if the person being complained about wishes, they may be involved.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Board of Trustees / the CEO or the Honorary Officer to check that the person making the complaint is satisfied. If they are not the Chair of the Board of Trustees / CEO / Honorary Officer will implement Stage Three of this procedure.

Stage Three

If the matter cannot be resolved at Stage Two the Chair of the Board of Trustees / CEO / Honorary Officer will refer the matter to the Board of Trustees who will set up a Review Panel. This panel will be restricted to members of the EDA Board of Trustees who have had no previous involvement in the matter. The Review Panel will investigate the complaint and report back to the next EDA Board meeting where a decision will be made. This decision will then be conveyed as soon as possible and in writing, to the person making the complaint. This decision of the Board of Trustees is final.

It will be the responsibility of the EDA Chief Executive Officer and Project Managers to implement any action agreed following a complaint.

The outcome of any complaint will be evaluated to ensure that any improvements to services identified can be implemented.

Guidance for EDA staff:

It is essential that whoever receives a complaint responds to the person making the complaint in the correct manner.

- ✓ Listens to the complainant.
- ✓ Is open and conciliatory.
- ✓ Treats the complaint as confidential.
- ✓ Notes and summarises the information given.
- ✓ Provides advice and support.
- ✓ Explains what will happen next.
- ✓ Provides a clear response in a format the complainant can access.

It is always helpful if the person taking / dealing with the complaint can ascertain, at the beginning, exactly what it is that the complainant wants as an outcome.

For example:

- (a) An apology
- (b) Assurance that they will be responded to
- (c) The situation about which they are complaining will be rectified.
- (d) Assurances that things will not go wrong again – procedures changed etc.
- (e) More information (especially about how our systems and procedures work).
- (f) To be taken seriously.

Neither of these lists is exhaustive and are included purely for guidance.

This Policy will be reviewed every financial year.