

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This good practice checklist is based on the 2009 regulations that currently apply to local authorities and the NHS

General Arrangements

1. Our identified complaint manager is Andrew Phillips, Chief Executive.
2. Andrew Phillips will investigate each complaint and should be able to resolve the issues raised.
3. The arrangements in place to communicate with complainants are both by letter and email. The dedicated email address for receiving complaints is **andrew.phillips@parchment-trust.org.uk**
4. Our complaint procedure is clearly visible on our website, in the main office at each site and also sent out with all contracts for care.

Complaint Procedure

1. A complaint may be made by telephone, in person, in writing or by email.
2. Full contact details for complainants are available on our website or in the main office at each site.
3. Where a complaint is made in person or on the telephone, a written record of the complaint will be made and a copy of this written record will be provided within three working days.
4. An acknowledgement letter will be sent within three working days and will give the name of the person who will investigate.
5. A complaint must be made no later than 12 months after the date the event occurred or, if later, the date the event came to the notice of the complainant. The time limit will not apply if Parchment Trust is satisfied that the complainant can give a good reason for not making the complaint within that time limit and, despite the delay, it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly.
6. Any anonymous complaints will be investigated by Andrew Phillips.

7. Complainants will receive, so far as reasonably practical, assistance to enable them to understand the complaint procedure and advice on where they may obtain such assistance.
8. Parchment Trust will only accept complaints from a representative where we know that the service user has consented either verbally or in writing or, where the service user cannot complain unaided and cannot give consent within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and the representative is acting in the service user's best interests – for example, where the matter complained about, if true, would be detrimental to the service user.
9. The procedure can be made available on request in other languages and formats.
10. Complainants will be kept informed about the progress of the Investigation and be given an expected turnaround time. This would normally be 28 working days. However, we would hope to have all complaints concluded within six months unless a different deadline is agreed with the complainant and there is good reason for this.
11. Once your complaint has been fully dealt with by Parchment Trust if you are not fully satisfied with the outcome complainants have the right to refer their complaint to:

The Duty Officer
Community Learning Disability Team
East Sussex Adult Social Care
Cavendish House
Breeds Place
Hastings TN34 3AA
Tel. 01424 724900

Monitoring

1. A complaints log is set up to record the following information:
 - Each complaint received
 - The subject matter and outcome of each complaint
 - Details of the reasons for delay where an investigation took longer than the agreed response period
 - The date the report of the outcome of the investigation was sent to the complainant

2. An annual report is produced each year specifying:
 - The number of complaints received
 - The number of complaints proved to be well-founded, partly or fully
 - The number of complaints referred to other bodies
 - The subject matter of complaints received
 - A summary of matters of importance in the complaints themselves or the way they were handled
 - A summary of what action has been or is to be taken to improve services as a consequence of the complaints
3. The annual report will be produced at the end of our financial year, 12 months ending 31 July
4. The annual report is available to anyone on request

Acknowledgement Letters

1. Acknowledgement letters will include an offer to discuss the complaint with the complainant at a mutually agreed time to go over the manner in which the complaint is to be handled and the period within which the investigation of the complaint is likely to be completed.
2. If the complainant does not accept the offer of a discussion Parchment Trust will determine the response period, which will always be within 6 months, and notify the complainant in writing of that period.
3. The acknowledgement will be sent by letter or email.
4. The complainant's preferences will be taken into account when communicating with them.

The Final Response Letter

1. The final response letter will include a detailed explanation of how the complaint has been considered; the conclusions reached, including any remedial action needed and confirmation that any action needed has either already been taken or the proposed timescale when such action will be completed.
2. The final response letter will also inform complainants of their right to take their complaint to the Community Learning Disability Team if they are not happy with the outcome.
3. The final response letter will be signed by Andrew Phillips or sent by email in their name.

4. If the response is not ready within six months, we will notify the complainant in writing and explain the reason why and, send the complainant in writing a response in accordance with the above as soon as reasonably practicable after six months.

General Information

A complaint may be made by:

- Someone who receives or has received a service
- Someone who is affected, or is likely to be affected, by the action, omission or decision of Parchment Trust
- A representative of either of these, under certain conditions

If Parchment Trust is not satisfied that the representative is acting with the service user's consent or in their best interests, Parchment Trust will notify the representative in writing, and state the reason for the decision.

Complaints that will not be investigated

Parchment Trust will not investigate the following complaints:

- A complaint by an employee relating to their employment (this will be handled through our grievance procedure)
- A complaint that was made in person or by telephone and is resolved to the complainant's satisfaction no later than the next working day after the day the complaint was made
- A complaint that has already been investigated and resolved.

In these circumstances Parchment Trust will, as soon as reasonably practicable, notify the complainant in writing of its decision not to investigate the complaint and the reasons why.

Duty to co-operate

If a complaint involves more than one provider/commissioner of service Parchment Trust will work with the other provider/commissioner to provide a single response to complainants.

Arrangements will be put in place to agree who should take the lead in:

- Co-ordinating the handling of the complaint
- Communicating with the complainant
- Providing information that is reasonably requested
- Attending any meeting reasonably required

Sometimes Parchment will take the lead and on other occasions it may be more appropriate for CLDT to do so.

If you have any queries concerning our complaints procedure please contact Andrew Phillips, Chief Executive, Parchment Trust Limited. Tel. 01424 755800 or email **andrew.phillips@parchment-trust.org.uk**