

Feedback (Comments, Complaints and Compliments) Policy

Purpose

Dorset Mind is committed to continuously improving our services and as such we welcome all feedback about the services we provide, whether positive or negative. We take feedback seriously as this feeds into the annual strategic planning and improvement of the organisation and its services.

This Policy (and its accompanying procedure) has been established to ensure that all comments, complaints, and compliments, from any source, are reported to a central point, monitored and recorded in a standard format. It also ensures that all complaints are investigated in accordance with the Complaints Procedure, in order that complaints are closely monitored and reviewed thoroughly to ensure a satisfactory conclusion is achieved.

The Business Support Manager is responsible for producing an annual analysis of comments, complaints and compliments received which is reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

Comments

Definition of a comment: a remark or observation that may require action but does not require a full investigation.

Comments can be made via the website (from the Contact page), social media, direct email, telephone, and via Comments boxes.

The Business Support Manager records the details of all comments received to a central Register and then pass them on to the relevant Department to take any appropriate action.

Complaints

Dorset Mind's complaints procedure is intended to be speedy, effective and easily understandable. To ensure fairness, any investigation required will be carried out by someone who was not directly involved with the incident relating to the complaint.

Dorset Mind recognises that making a complaint can be difficult and stressful for the person making the complaint. Appropriate assistance will be offered to the complainant. At any stage a complainant may seek the help of an independent advocate and Dorset Mind will provide information on this on request.

A complaint can also be stressful for a person against whom a complaint is made, and that person may also need assistance and support. Any member of staff, trustee or volunteer against whom a complaint is made will be given the fullest opportunity to answer any criticisms.

Every effort will be made to try and resolve any problem informally as soon as possible with the persons concerned. If it is necessary to take the matter further, a more formal procedure will be followed.

Some complaints have or may have financial or legal consequences for Dorset Mind. In such cases its insurers may require Dorset Mind to cease direct contact with the complainant. It may then be necessary in the interests of the complainant to refer them to another agency both for assistance with the complaint and to ensure that their service needs are met. If this is relevant, appropriate communication channels will be followed.

The confidentiality of any complaint will be given high priority in so far as this is consistent with the ability to investigate and resolve the complaint. Dorset Mind will respect the confidentiality of both the complainant and any person complained about, subject to the provisions of Dorset Mind's Confidentiality Policy. However, it may not always be possible to maintain confidentiality. The permission of the complainant will be sought for this but when the welfare of the complainant or other people is seriously at risk it may be necessary to breach confidentiality even if that permission is withheld. Dorset Mind will act in the best interest of all parties concerned.

The outcome of all complaints and investigations will be reported in confidence to the Risk and Quality Sub-Committee and in writing to the complainant. If appropriate, a report on Complaints will also be made available to funders of Dorset Mind services as part of the evaluation of these services.

Dorset Mind will make efforts to ensure that every user of its services is aware that this policy, and its accompanying **Complaints Procedure**, exists. Copies of this policy and the **Complaints Procedure** will be available on request.

There will be no adverse implications for anyone who makes a genuine complaint or allegation through this policy.

The Complaints Procedure applies to all parties except employees and details the procedure to be followed to make and manage a complaint.

Employees should make complaints via the established Grievance Procedure.

Compliments

Compliments can help us share good practice and improve services.

Any compliment received is shared with the relevant Department. If a specific comment or compliment is aimed at a particular individual, we encourage you to pass it directly to them or their Line Manager in the first instance. The Line Management will share this with the individual and a copy stored in their Personnel File.

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive is responsible for the efficient operation of the feedback policy and associated procedures. Responsibility for carrying out investigations of complaints may be delegated to appropriate managers in Dorset Mind, under the authority of the Chief Executive.

Associated Policies and Procedures

- Complaints Procedure
- Confidentiality Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Whistleblowing

The equality impact of this policy has been considered and Dorset Mind believes that it complies with its commitment to equality as stated in its Equality Policy

Policy Ownership

Policy Name	Version	Doc ref
Feedback Policy	5	23

Policy Owner	Risk and Quality Sub-Committee
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Latest Version Approval Status

Date adopted by Trustees	22 nd August 2023		
Date published	22 nd August 2023	Date for next review	August 2026

Document Control

Reviewers

Name	Position
Tia Thorp	
Anna Windett	Chair of Trustee Quality Sub-Group
Ken Heap	Chair of Trustees
Rachel Rous	Business Support Manager
Charles Alberts	Trustee

Change History

Issue	Date	Author	Reason
1.0	June 2015	Jackie Lillywhite	New policy
2.0	March 2016	Chris Price	Reviewed and updated
3.0	March 2018	Marianne Storey	Reviewed and no updates
4.0	January 2021	Karen Butcher	Reviewed and minor updates

5.0	August 2023	Karen Butcher/Charles Alberts	Added Comments and Compliments as per MQM. Change of name as per CA
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