

Policy 1.7

Complaints Policy

Introduction

Epilepsy Action Australia is committed to being open and responsive to any complaints offered by our clients, supporters, our people or by members of the community. Epilepsy Action Australia will at all times seek an outcome to a complaint which is satisfactory to all parties.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure the existence of a procedure through which clients, supporters, members of the community and our people can communicate any complaints regarding Epilepsy Action Australia's services, functioning or operations
- Enable Epilepsy Action Australia to benefit from all complaints through ensuring that they are recorded, considered, resolved and monitored
- Establish the principles that are to govern Epilepsy Action Australia's response to complaints
- Ensure that our people and our clients are aware of the content of this policy and relevant procedure

Policy

1. Epilepsy Action Australia will maintain a formal complaints procedure to ensure that all complaints are responded to in a timely and impartial fashion.
2. Epilepsy Action Australia will ensure that all suggestions for improvement and complaints are recorded, considered and retained for process improvement purposes.
3. Epilepsy Action Australia encourages clients, supporters, their advocates, members of the community and any of our people who have a complaint in relation to services or to the actions of one of its staff members or volunteers to express this through the formal complaints procedure.
4. Epilepsy Action Australia will ensure that the complainant is informed of his or her right to have a support person or advocate present to assist or represent them during the formal complaints procedure. Formal complaints can be written or verbal. If verbal, the assisting staff member will document the complaint and either the complainant or assisting staff member must sign the document.

5. Epilepsy Action Australia will address all complaints in a confidential manner. Action to resolve the complaint will commence within 2 working days of the complaint being made (this includes contacting the complainant). Only the people directly involved in making, investigating or resolving a complaint will have access to information about it. Where the complainant is a client, no information will be documented in the individual's client file without his/her consent.
6. Epilepsy Action Australia will ensure that the complaint investigation process is impartial. No assumptions will be made nor any action taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered.
7. Epilepsy Action Australia will ensure that any complaint is free of repercussions for the complainant. Management will take all necessary steps to ensure that no victimisation occurs against anyone who makes a complaint.
8. The Executive Assistant (EA) to the Chief Executive Officer is the main point to which complaints should be directed. The Executive Assistant is then responsible for completing the complaints form and forwarding this to the Chief Executive Officer for action. Epilepsy Action Australia will ensure that our people and our clients are aware of how to contact the Executive Assistant.
9. Epilepsy Action Australia management will ensure that all our people are aware of this policy and relevant procedure.
10. Epilepsy Action Australia will ensure that all clients are informed of the existence of this policy and procedure at the commencement of receiving services as well as providing relevant information on the Epilepsy Action Australia website.
11. Epilepsy Action Australia recognises the right of individuals to approach an external agency if the formal complaints procedure has not resolved the issue to their satisfaction.
12. The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for this policy.

Definitions

Clients:

Any person with epilepsy or family member/guardian receiving a service from Epilepsy Action Australia

Supporters:

Any person who provides financial or 'in kind' support to Epilepsy Action Australia e.g. donor, lottery buyer, volunteer

Complaint:

An issue or concern which is formally brought to the notice of Epilepsy Action Australia in order to bring about change or resolution (This may include any act, omission, situation or decision that is considered unfair, discriminatory or unjustified)

Our People:

All paid and unpaid staff, including volunteers, individuals on work experience, student placements, and secondments.

Cross References

- Vision, Mission and Values statements
- Code of Professional Conduct
- Complaints Procedure external
- Complaints Procedure internal

Document Control and record of changes

Version	Effective Date	Prepared By	Approved By	Summary of Change
V.1	October 2006	Carol Ireland	Carol Ireland	Introduction of new policy
V.2	April 2011	Jodie Trowell	Board (21 Feb 12)	Minor word changes by Governance Committee