

## **Complaints Procedure External**

### **Introduction**

This procedure provides guidelines for responding to any complaints originating from clients, supporters, volunteers or by members of the community. This procedure supports the Complaints Policy.

### **Applicability**

This procedure applies to all members of the community, including clients, supporters and volunteers of Epilepsy Action Australia.

### **Responsibilities**

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for this procedure. However, all staff are responsible for recording complaints when required, in accordance with this procedure.

### **Procedure**

#### **1. Recording and Responding to Complaints**

- 1.1 Epilepsy Action Australia invites individuals to submit complaints regarding any aspect of the organisation's operations.
- 1.2 It is anticipated that most complaints raised by clients will be resolved informally between the client and staff involved. If a satisfactory resolution fails to be reached, the following procedure applies.
- 1.3 The Chief Executive Officer is the main point to which complaints should be directed, however, complaints may be received by any staff member of Epilepsy Action Australia.
- 1.4 As soon as possible after the receipt of a complaint, the staff member who has been informed of the complaint should complete a Complaint Form.
- 1.5 This form should be forwarded electronically to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 1.6 The Administration Assistance will log the complaint on the Complaint Register and refer this to the Chief Executive Officer who will determine which department the complaint should be referred to. The complaint will then be passed on to the identified Department Manager for action.

- 1.7 The relevant Department Manager will nominate an appropriate person to address the complaint. Action to resolve the complaint will commence within 2 working days of the complaint being made (this includes contacting the complainant). A satisfactory course of action will be decided upon between the staff member and the complainant within 5 working days of the complaint being made.
- 1.8 The complainant should be informed of his or her right to have a support person, cultural liaison worker or advocate present to assist or represent them during this process.
- 1.9 Once action has been taken, the staff member responsible for the action will return the Complaint Form, electronically, to the Department Manager. This form should detail the action taken and its outcome. Once reviewed by the Department Manager, and if it is believed that the complaint has been resolved satisfactorily, the completed form will be returned to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 1.10 If a satisfactory course of action cannot be agreed upon between the staff member and the complainant within 5 working days, the staff member should refer back to their Department Manager. The Department Manager will convene a discussion between the relevant parties and will recommend a course of action.
- 1.11 If the issue remains unresolved, the complaint will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and resolution.
- 1.12 If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the Chief Executive Officer, the individual may wish to approach an external agency such as:
- Community Services Commission
  - Disability Complaints Service
  - Community Services Appeals Tribunal
  - Disability Discrimination Legal Centre
  - People with Disabilities Inc.
- The Chief Executive Officer will make available contact details of these agencies as required.
- 1.13 Following the resolution of the complaint, or agreement that the issue cannot be resolved, the complainant will be asked to provide feedback about his or her experience of the complaints process.

## **2. Monitoring Complaints for Process Improvement**

- 2.1 All Complaint Forms and Complainant Feedback Forms will be analysed quarterly. A report indicating the nature of the complaints received and suggestions for systemic change to minimise future complaints will be discussed with the Chief Executive Officer and Management Team for consideration.

### **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)

**Cross References**

- Vision, Mission and Values statements
- Complaints Policy
- Complaints Form
- Complaints Procedure Internal