

Foundation of Chatham-Kent Health Alliance

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Background

The Foundation of Chatham-Kent Health Alliance (CKHA) adheres to the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. There may however, from time to time be concerns or complaints about or related to the Foundation of CKHA. We believe that the right to express concerns and complaints is an inherent right of our donors and stakeholders and the Foundation of CKHA is committed to a process which is timely, fair and respectful.

Purpose

The purpose of this Complaints Procedure is to register, process and manage concerns about the Foundation of CKHA on its policies, programs or activities in a transparent and effective manner. An important objective of this procedure is to learn from experience and improve the manner in which the Foundation deals with its donors, community and other stakeholders.

The purpose of an effective complaints procedure is to ensure all complaints are resolved quickly and efficiently. The review of complaints shall be fair, impartial and respectful to all parties. The information gained from complaints shall be used to inform and improve policies, procedures and customer service within the Foundation of CKHA.

Policy

Definition

1. A Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction from the Foundation of CKHA's external stakeholders, including donors and volunteers, about the service, actions, or lack of action by the Foundation of CKHA as an organization or a staff member or volunteer acting on behalf of the Foundation of CKHA.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- a) Perceived failure to do something agreed upon;
 - b) Failure to observe policy or procedures;
 - c) Error made by a staff member/volunteer; or
 - d) Unfair or discourteous actions/statements by staff member/volunteer.
2. The Foundation of CKHA shall respond to all complaints and make every reasonable effort to investigate and respond as soon as possible. A complaint can only be taken into consideration when it includes the following:
 - a) Full name of complainant
 - b) Organization/affiliation (if any)
 - c) Appropriate detail of the concern/issue to demonstrate that the complaint is made in good faith
 - d) Recommendations to address concern/issue [optional]

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It is necessary to the complaints process that factual issues be distinguished from comment or opinion. Anonymously submitted concerns or complaints will not be submitted to the complaint process. Anonymous complaints or concerns shall nevertheless be followed up to determine whether further attention is required and/or the matter should be formally referred to the complaints process. Consideration shall be given to the likelihood of confirming alleged facts or circumstances from reliable sources.

3. All complaints are treated as confidential and communication regarding the complaint will remain between the appropriate Foundation of CKHA representative and the complainant(s).
4. Any complaints received in regards to Chatham Kent Health Alliance (CKHA) are considered a CKHA matter and will be referred to the appropriate department within the Hospital.

Complaint Receipt and Handling

1. A complaint may be received verbally (by phone or in person) or in writing (by mail, fax, email).
2. The staff member receiving the complaint should immediately acknowledge to the complainant that the complaint has been received and will be acted on either by him/herself or transferred to another person who can resolve it expeditiously. If a timeframe for action can be determined, that should be included in the acknowledgement. Basic contact information including: name, phone number, email address, date of receipt and a copy of the complaint should immediately be sent to the Executive Assistant for tracking purposes.
3. An employee or volunteer who receives a complaint which cannot or is not resolved immediately should determine the proper person to handle it. This will generally be the person who has the primary relationship with the complainant or has the specific knowledge that is needed to resolve the problem. It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either resolve it or transfer it to another person who can resolve it expeditiously. If the complaint is transferred, the recipient must acknowledge to the transferor that he/she has received it and will act on it. The Executive Assistant will be informed of any transfers, so that the complaint resolution status can be properly tracked and reported.

Resolving the Complaint

1. Every effort should be made to resolve complaints received in a timely fashion. When receiving a verbal complaint, staff should listen and seek to understand the complaint, and may attempt to resolve it expeditiously. Such complaints should be acknowledged in writing immediately and staff should attempt to resolve the matter within 15 business days. A summary of the verbal complaint and any resolution shall be sent to the Executive Assistant for tracking and recording purposes. Complaints received in writing that are not addressed to a specific staff member, and complaints not immediately resolved, should be referred to the Executive Director.

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2. Where a complaint cannot be or is not resolved as above, it should be escalated to the Executive Director who is then responsible for the complaint and resolution. The Executive Assistant shall serve as a resource to the Executive Director and the Foundation of CKHA in the investigation, resolution and reporting of all complaints. If the complaint is about the Executive Director, it shall be referred to the Chair of the Board.
3. A complainant shall be kept informed of the status of their complaint. Every attempt should be made to resolve escalated complaints within an additional 10 business days so that all complaints are resolved within 25 business days of having been received.

Documenting the Complaint

1. Information about complaints must be recorded including a description of the complaint, who handled it, what was done to resolve the complaint, timeframe, and a description of the resolution or transfer. It is the responsibility of the person resolving or transferring the complaint to submit this information to the Executive Assistant as soon as possible after the complaint has been resolved or transferred.
2. The Executive Assistant is responsible for compiling and maintaining a complaints tracking worksheet. The worksheet will be reviewed, not less than annually, by the Executive Assistant and the Executive Director to determine whether there are recurring or patterns of complaints. If necessary, further action shall be taken to determine whether there are systemic or process issues with a view to addressing and eliminating such recurring complaints.

Reports to Executive Committee and Board

A summary of the complaints received, including number and type, will be reported to the Foundation of CKHA's Executive Committee and Board not less than annually.