



## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

St Cuthbert's Hospice is committed to providing an excellent service to patients, their carers, our donors and our supporters. When we do not meet their expectations, we want to know so that we can make amends, if possible, and improve what we do.

### POLICY STATEMENT

St Cuthbert's Hospice will:

- Ensure that it is easy to find out how to make a complaint by publishing a complaints procedure
- Make submitting a complaint as easy as possible
- Take complaints seriously
- Treat complaints confidentially and fairly
- Try to resolve complaints quickly and appropriately
- Act fairly and supportively to staff who are complained about
- Attempt to co-ordinate a response to a complaint where the complaint concerns a service that has been delivered in partnership or association with another service provider
- Use the outcomes of complaints to improve policy and practice by ensuring that the Board of Directors is informed of all complaints and the outcomes of those complaints
- Ensure that no-one is discriminated against because they make a complaint
- Make sure that complainants about clinical services know how to inform the Care Quality Commission of their concerns and/or use the NHS complaints process
- Publish information about the number and types of complaints it receives

### SCOPE

This policy covers external complaints from the general public relating to all aspects of the Hospice's service delivery, fundraising and trading activities.

This policy does not cover complaints or concerns by partner agencies, including referrers, contractors or commissioners of our services.

This policy does not cover staff and volunteer complaints.

### DEFINITION

Complaints may be verbal or written.

A complaint may not necessarily appear serious. It may be someone simply bringing to our attention something that has not met their expectations.

A comment should be treated as a complaint if:

- The word “complaint” is used verbally or in writing
- Any form of response to a concern is required
- Someone indicates that the service they have received has been sub-standard or has failed to meet their expectations

## **ROLES AND COMPETENCIES**

The Board of Directors will take responsibility for ensuring compliance with regulations concerning complaints and their handling and for ensuring that action is taken in the light of the outcome of any investigations.

The Chief Executive will be accountable for establishing, publishing and implementing a complaints procedure that meets the aims of this policy.

The Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring that complaints and their outcomes are considered by the Board and its Committees.

The Senior Management Team will be responsible for developing a culture that values and welcomes complaints as a way of putting things right and improving service.

The Head of HR will be responsible for ensuring that all staff and volunteers are made aware of this policy and the Complaints Procedure as part of their induction.

All staff and volunteers will be responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy and the Complaints Procedure and for ensuring that complaints are treated seriously and in accordance with this policy and the Complaints Procedure.

## **REVIEW AND AUDIT**

The Governance Review Committee will be responsible for reviewing this policy at least once every three years.

The Governance Review Committee will be responsible for auditing the Complaints Procedure allied to this policy.

Any Committee of the Board may instruct an audit of complaints received to verify whether the Complaints Procedure has been followed and whether the outcomes of any complaints have been implemented.

## **ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS AND PROCEDURES**

### External documents

Essential Standards of Quality and safety, Care Quality Commission, March 2010

NHS Constitution

### Hospice Policies

Information Governance

Raising Concerns at Work

Grievance

Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Incident Management

### Hospice Procedures

Complaints Procedure

### Hospice Documents

Complaints leaflet

Verbal Complaints form

Written Complaint Recording Proforma

Complaints Register

**Policy Name:** COMPLAINTS POLICY

**Date agreed/last reviewed:** 28 July 2015

**Date of next review:** July 2018