



Complaints Policy Compliments & Suggestions Procedure

Policy No	HR 07	Version No:	1	Category	Care Management
Date effective from:	25th September 2025		Business Impact	Medium	
Review frequency:	36 months		Date of next review:	25th September 2028	

1 Introduction

- 1.0 This document applies to your employment with Alive Health Care Supported Living Ltd and to all other sites and houses that you may be asked to work at from time to time.
- 1.1 This policy primarily relates to employees of Alive Health Care supported Living Ltd, where a service user wishes to raise a Formal Compliment, Complaint or Suggestion, then staff are required to complete the documentation attached to the policy and follow the procedure.
- 1.2 All other internal matters will be considered in light of the Complaints policy.
- 1.3 It is vital to the well- being of and welfare of Service users and to the staff, that we recognise and respond to complaints and that we handle investigations in a sensitive, prompt and fair manner.
- 1.4 The first objective, in each instance, must be to establish with the complainant(s) the nature of their concerns and to explore the possibility of these being resolved directly. If this cannot be achieved, resort to the complaint’s procedure is a necessary step.
- 1.5 All concerns should not be trivialised, and all complaints must be viewed as worthy of consideration, however, they should seek to be resolved at the lowest possible level.
- 1.6 For the purposes of the Complaints policy and procedure, the term “Service Users” is used to apply to all groups who uses our services (Families, service users, anyone receiving a service from the Alive Health Care supported Living Ltd, applicants, and people acting on behalf of Service Users/referrals).

2.0 Policy statement

We believe that service users, their parents or carers are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes.

This policy is in place to provide the service users in our care, with a forum to air their grievances when they are dissatisfied with our service and when, for whatever reason, the complaint cannot be dealt with informally or through normal mechanisms for dealing with minor complaints.

We welcome suggestions on how to improve their service and will take all complaints seriously and will deal with each fairly, sensitively and as promptly as possible.

3.0 Principles

- Complaints and those complained about will be treated respectfully during and after the course of any complaint's investigation.
- The procedures will not supplant any of the following:
 - The disciplinary procedure;
 - The recruitment and selection procedures;
 - The grievance procedure;
 - Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions procedures;
 - Criminal proceedings;
- Individual or groups wishing to utilise the procedure are entitled to assistance and support from whomever they chose, both in the presentation of, and if appropriate, of their presentation of their complaint.
- Throughout the process communication will be in the complainant's primary language if they so wish. Any interpreter used will be independent.

We will be sensitive to issues relating to individual's ethnic origin, gender, sexuality and any disability present, during the process and ensure any specific measures appropriate are taken.
- All complaints will be treated as confidential so far as possible within the constraints of the investigation or action because of the investigation.
- All timescales within this procedure will be adhered to. Where they are extenuating circumstances preventing this, the complainant will be informed as soon as possible.
- Any correspondence will inform the complainant from whom they will next hear from about the progress of the investigation.
- The person will be informed of any complaints against them; will be shown the complaint (if in writing) and all subsequent correspondence.
- No staff member will investigate a complaint against her/himself.
- Once a complaint has been received and the need for an investigation ascertained, the investigating officer may apply to the Management Team, for a member(s) of staff to be

suspended if it is felt their presence would affect the course of the investigation. Any suspension would be for the shortest possible period and be without prejudice.

4.0 General Procedure

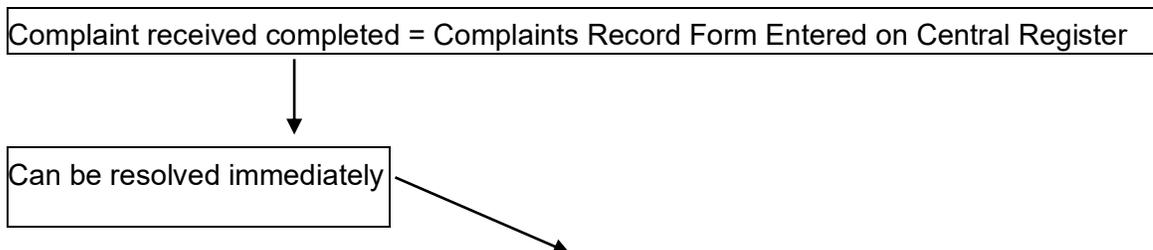
4.1 Receiving a complaint

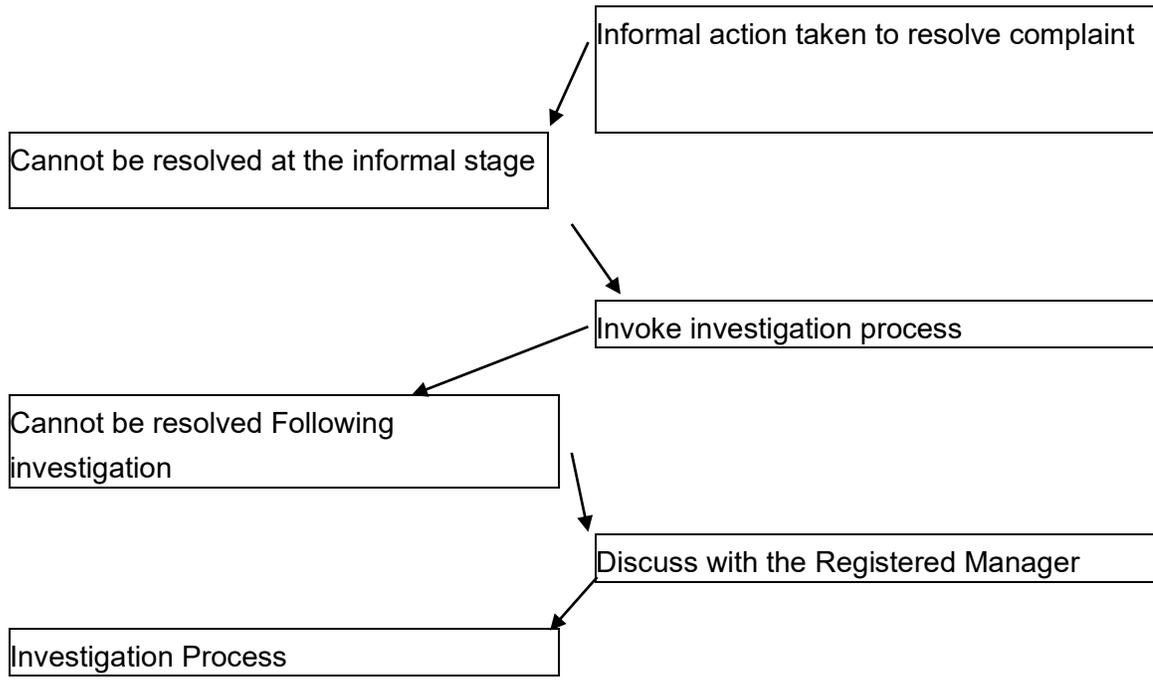
- All complaints whether verbal or in writing should be recorded and a copy of the 'complaints record form' sent to the Registered Manager and the complainant.
- The original should be stored in the house's complaint forms folder. A number will be allocated from our central register to the complainant (this number will be specific to the house and run consecutively from the last complaint).
- A summary of all complaints shall be compiled from the central register and shall be sent to the Registered Manager. Complaints will form part of quarterly reports.
- If the complaint is received, the Registered Manager will determine what action should be taken.

4.2 Informal Complaints / Concerns

- We have a Registered Manager who will deal with the complaint; He/she will initially endeavour to do so informally in the first instance.
- Any informal complaints/ concerns or issues will be recorded on a central log. Management Team will then investigate and provide a response directly to the individual who has raised the issue. The log will be updated on a monthly basis.
- A meeting should be held with the complainant as soon as possible on receiving a complaint/Concern the objective of which is to resolve the complaint promptly.

4.3 Determining Action





4.4 The Management Team shall appoint an investigation officer. The investigating officer will be the closest person to the situation without being involved or having conflict of interests.

The Management Team shall firstly consider the Line Manager and then in order, an alternative manager, a member of the Senior Management Team.

4.5 **Specific Task**

The Investigation Officer shall:

- Ensure that all timescales are adhered to.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained throughout the process.
- Liaise with the Management Team throughout the process.
- Consider the support needs of the complainant and the person complained against throughout the process.
- Have sufficient access to all records and witnesses to ensure a thorough investigation is carried out.
- Offer the complainant an appointment to discuss the complaint in more detail. Part of this interview will be concerned with establishing what action the complainant feels should be followed as a result of his/her complaint.
- A final report should include who was interviewed and what was considered in the investigation and should make a recommendation whether or not to uphold the complaint, together with possible solutions or other responses. It is not within the remit of the investigation officer to recommend disciplinary action.

This decision lies with the Management Team, in consultation.

4.6 **Determining the Outcome of the Situation**

The Management Team shall receive and consider the investigators report and, if necessary, discuss this with the investigation officer.

The Management Team will make a written response to the complainant which sets out:

- The allegation investigation.
- The scope of the investigation, for example, who or what was seen or considered.
- A decision as to if the complaint was upheld or not.
- Any resultant action, for example, change in procedure or practice, the intention to invoke the disciplinary procedure (but not the outcome of any disciplinary hearing).
- The right for a further review by the us, if requested, within 28 days of the letter.
- An offer to meet with the complainant and explain the outcome as outlined in the letter.

4.7 The Line Manager must also ensure that any member of staff implicated is informed of the outcome. It may be necessary to ask the staff member concerned if he/she wishes other people to be told, particularly if there is an issue about his/her conduct or integrity having been brought into question.

4.8 If the Management Team feels the complaints procedure has revealed a gap in resources, procedures or practices this will be addressed.

A 'Complaint – Summary of Action' form should be completed and kept on file at the Office. These forms will form an essential feature of the quarterly review of complaints carried out by Us.

4.9 **Timescale**

- Complaint Received = Formal response within 7 days
- Investigation Process = To commence as soon as possible.
To be completed within 28 days
- Further Review (Appeal against decision) = To be received by the Office within 28 days from the date of the final response letter.

5.0 **Service Users Complaints**

- The Complaints procedure should be followed by Service Users wishing to highlight a concern, issue or make suggestion on improving our service or wishing to compliment an element of our service.
- All staff, service user, their families and professionals will be given and have access to the Complaints document (appendix 1)

We aim to satisfy all people using our Complaint procedures which have the following goals:

- Complaints should be reported to the Registered Manager promptly.

- Assistance to be provided to a service user and notes taken if necessary.
- Complaints can be put in writing using the complaint forms attached to the policy document if the service user so wishes.
- To ensure that all complaints are handled in a consistent manner throughout.
- To use all complaints to improve all of our services.

5.1 Who can Complain / Compliment?

Anyone who is receiving a service from Us, our staff, people from agencies including the public.

5.2 How to Complain

- We would like to sort out any complaint as soon as possible. Many complaints can be sorted out informally. In the first instance, please contact the Registered Manager to discuss your complaint.
- You may wish to make a formal complaint, if you are able to, please write down your complaint and send it to:
The Management Team, Clockwise Mountbatten House, Southampton, SO15 2JU
Mobile Number: 07846 83 93 76 Email addresses: Info@alivehealthcare.co
- If you wish a member of staff, social worker, key worker, family member, advocate or friend can help you with your complaint or write it on your behalf.

5.3 What happens next?

- Your complaint will be recorded in the Complaints File. You will receive acknowledgement within 7 working days.
- You might be contacted to make sure that we have understood your complaint correctly.
- You may also be visited by the person investigating the complaint.
- Your complaint will be investigated, and you will receive a response within 28 working days of it being received.

5.4 Does this always happen?

- Yes, all cases will be given full consideration.
- If as a result of your complaint, disciplinary proceedings are taken against a member of staff, all internal procedures will apply.
- You will be informed that disciplinary proceedings have taken place but these proceedings are confidential.
- You will only be informed of the details or outcome of matters outside of this procedure.
- If a criminal offence is alleged then the police will be informed.

5.5 Can you have someone with you when your complaint is being discussed?

- Yes, you can, you can choose anybody to help you.

5.6 What happens if you are still not satisfied?

- If you are still not satisfied with the reply you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Nominated Individual, who will review the matter on your behalf.

5.7 Can you take your complaint elsewhere if not satisfied?

- Yes, you can, contact:
- Ofsted
- Care Quality Commission (CQC), you can ask your Support worker or the Registered Manager to signpost you to the appropriate body.

IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOU, WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT IT AND WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO PUT THINGS RIGHT.

Date: 25th September 2025

Signed: Grace Bogatsu
(Quality Assurance / Human Resources Manager)

Policy No: Q007 (Version 1)

Review Date: 25th September 2028

COMPLIMENTS, COMPLAINTS, SUGGESTIONS PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

- Complaints are important sources of information about service user's satisfaction. We welcome and encourage such feedback to continuously improve the quality of services provided.
- This procedure should be read in conjunction with;
 - the Complaints Policy,
 - the Guidance for Staff,
 - Guidance for Service Users
 - the Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions form.

2. Purpose of Complaints procedure

This procedure is intended to provide a means for:

- Resolving situations where a service user is dissatisfied with our services, our staff or our procedures (complaints).
- Looking at aspects of the services and identifying any necessary action, which may involve providing information to the service user or making changes to services/procedures (suggestions).
- Using positive feedback from the service user to inform the development of services and procedures (compliments).
- All information received will be recorded centrally and included as part of the Operations report to the Management Teams quarterly.

3. Identifying Complaints

- A complaint will generally be identified as such at the time the service user registers a complaint. However, in the event of a service user asking a question or making a comment about the services in the form of a suggestion or compliment, subsequent action may result in the need to treat the suggestion or compliment as a complaint, in which case the Complaints Policy applies.
- If a suggestion or compliment seems in fact to constitute a complaint, then the originator of the complaint will be contacted and asked whether they wish to submit a formal complaint.
- If they decide not to proceed, action may still be taken if service delivery appears to have been adversely affected.

4. Who are the Complaints, Suggestion and Compliments Procedure for?

- The Complaint Procedure relates to all services and all aspects of its business where Service Users have contact.
- The Complaint Procedure is for use by anyone receiving a service from us, applicants, and people acting on behalf of Service Users/referrals.
- For the purposes of the Complaint procedure and the Complaints Policy, the term “Service Users” is used to apply to all of these groups.
- A copy of the Complaint Procedure will be issued to all staff.
- A copy of the Complaint Procedure will be issued to all referrals and will be part of the induction pack given to all new Service Users.

5. Informal Resolution

- All Service Users have the choice whether to make a complaint, suggestion or compliment formally or informally.
- Encouraging and acting on feedback enables staff to focus on what the Service User is saying and to resolve the issues informally.
- Frontline staff receive and respond to complaints, compliments and suggestions on a day-to-day basis, and often are able to informally resolve a wide range of issues to the satisfaction of the Service User.
- In all cases where feedback is resolved informally, a log of the complaint should be placed in the service’s complaints log along with details of the action taken.
- If a Service User chooses to formalise their complaint, compliment or query, the formal Complaint procedure should be followed.
- Similarly, if it is not possible to resolve a complaint, compliment or respond to suggestions to the satisfaction of the Service User, or if the complaint, compliment or suggestion has implications for others, the formal procedure should be followed.

6. Formal Resolution

There are three stages to the internal Complaint procedure as follows:

Stage One

- Initially, all formal complaints, compliments and queries should be sent to the Registered Manager. The Complaint will be entered onto the central register. Complaints through advocates are acceptable as well.
- Where a complaint, compliment or query is made verbally the member of staff should complete complaints form with the Service User (complaints form attached at Appendix 1).
- On receipt of a compliment, letter of acknowledgement should be sent to the Service User (within 5 working days). This letter should thank them for their positive comments and advise that their comments have been referred to the relevant office/service /person.

- If the complaint/query is about services, procedures etc. Registered Manager will be responsible for investigating it, and for keeping the Service User informed of progress.
- If the complaint/query is about a service which is not managed by the Manager (e.g. Maintenance, Finance, etc.), the Registered Manager is responsible for liaising with the relevant manager to ensure that the complaint/query is dealt with, and for ensuring that the Service User is informed of who is dealing with it.
- Any investigations, or the seeking of additional information which, is required to resolve the complaint, should be carried out within 10 working days. If further time is required, the Service User should be contacted during the first 10 working day period and an explanation given for the continuing delay. A further deadline must be set and adhered to which is no later than 28 days from the date of the original complaint.
- Once the required information is collected and a decision is made, a letter detailing the outcome of the investigation and any action taken as a result should be sent to the Service User within 10 working days and copied to the Registered Manager who will oversee the complaint.
- This letter must inform the Service User of their right to appeal against the decision according to Stage 2 of the procedure.

Stage Two

- If the Service User is not satisfied with the outcome of **Stage 1** of the procedure, or feels that the procedure has not been followed, the next stage is to appeal to the Manager.
- This appeal can be made verbally or in writing.
- On receipt of an appeal, the Registered Manager should, within 5 working days, send a letter to the Service User acknowledging receipt and informing them who is dealing with their appeal, how they can be contacted, and when they will receive a written response.
- If the appeal is about services, procedures, etc. within the operational responsibility of the Registered Manager, an (independent of the process) will be identified who will be responsible for investigating the complaint/query and for keeping the Service User informed of progress.
- If the appeal is about one of staff which, is not managed by us, then then the Registered Manager is responsible for liaising with the relevant people to ensure that the appeal is dealt with, and for ensuring that the service user is informed of who is dealing with the appeal.
- Any investigations, or the seeking of additional information which, is required to investigate the appeal, should be carried out within 15 working days and responses sent to the Service User within this timescale.
- Once the required information is collected and a decision made, a letter detailing the outcome of the investigation and any action taken as a result should be sent to the

Service User within the 15 working days and copied to the person overseeing the complaint.

- This letter must inform the Service User of their right to appeal against the decision according to Stage 3 of the procedure.

Stage Three

- If the Service User is still dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation at **Stage 2** or feels that the procedure has not been followed, the next stage is to appeal in writing to the Nominated Individual.
- The member of staff responsible for the appeal at **Stage 2** is responsible for sending all relevant forms and paperwork to the Nominated individual.
- On receipt of an appeal, the Nominated individual should send a letter to the Service User acknowledging receipt within 5 working days, and informing them who to contact for further information, and when they will receive a written response.
- The Nominated Individual will seek any additional information required and conduct their investigation within 25 working days of the letter of acknowledgement being sent. In the event of the need for further investigations following the Appeal meeting, these will be completed within a further 10 working days.
- Once the investigation is completed and a decision is made, a letter detailing the outcome of the investigation and any action taken as a result should be sent to the Service User within 15 working days.
- The decision of the Nominated individual will be final, and no further right of appeal will exist internally. Similarly, closely related complaints from the same individual about the same issue should not be reconsidered.
- This letter should inform the Service User of their right to complain to CQC or other agencies they feel will support them.
- Contact details for both agencies should also be provided; these can be obtained from our Office.

Timescales

- The timescales outlined above are deadlines, not targets, and where possible a quicker response should be given.
- It is recognised that in exceptional circumstances it may not be possible to adhere to the timescales set out above. In this event, written notification must be sent to the Service User explaining the reason for the delay, and a revised date for completion of action.

Mediation

- In some circumstances the use of mediation may be identified as a useful means of trying to resolve a complaint.

- In this case, agreement from all parties concerned must be gained before bringing in a mediator.

7. Monitoring

- There are 2 standard forms, which are to be used in relation to the formal complaint procedure as follows:

Complaint Form

- This is the form which, the Service User completes to register a Compliment, Complaint or Suggestion.
- In the event of a Service User registering a Compliment, Complaint or Suggestion verbally, the staff member receiving the Compliment, Complaint or Suggestion should complete the Complaints form on their behalf.

Complaint Monitoring Form

- This form is to be completed by Service Users so that we monitor Complaints, Suggestions and Compliments in line with its equal opportunity policies.
- Monitoring informal resolution Complaints which are resolved informally, should be recorded in an appropriate manner, as agreed with the Registered Manager.
- This may include day/logbooks, Service User files, etc. These should then be copied to the Management Team to register it centrally. Registered Manager too, are required to feedback through their team meetings to promote wider learning, and through supervisions to raise issues and identify action where appropriate.

8. Feedback

- The Complaint Procedure should serve all Service Users, and not just those who formally register a Complaint/Suggestion/Compliment.
- Where policies, practices or procedures are changed, because of a Compliment, Complaint or Suggestion all Service Users who may be affected by this should be informed – not just those who have used the Complaint procedure.
- In addition, to demonstrate the benefits of using the Complaint Procedure to Service Users generally, regular reports/feedback should be compiled and publicised to Service Users, either via our newsletter, the Service User Blog page or any other forum of their choosing.

COMPLAINTS FORM

Name of Complainant:

Date:

Address:

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Telephone/ Mobile Number:.....

Nature of Complaint please be specific, giving names, dates, places and times. Please say why you are dissatisfied and what Alive Health Care supported Living Ltd could do to improve.

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Signed:

Dated:

(Please use a separate sheet of paper if necessary)

A completed form to be sent to: Clockwise Mountbatten House, Southampton, SO15 2JU

Mobile Number: 07846 83 93 76

Email addresses: Info@alivehealthcare.co

COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTION FORM

Name of Complainant:

Date:

Address:

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Telephone/ Mobile Number.....

Please provide details of your compliment below. Please remember to include dates, times and places etc.

Alive Health Care supported Living Ltd are committed to providing an excellent service on all our care. Any suggestion on how we can improve our service, Please express any thoughts in the box below

When you have completed this form, please send it to our office: Clockwise Mountbatten House, Southampton, SO15 2JU; Mobile Number: 07846 83 93 76

Email addresses: Info@alivehealthcare.co

(For service users notice board)

What is your Concern or Complaint

Talk to the support team on duty or ask them to help you make a call to:

***Talk to the Registered Manager,
Or
Talk to the Managing Director;***

You may choose to talk to your

**Social Worker,
Advocate,**

**Professional bodies or People in Authorities,
The Police**

CQC

Telephone:03000616161

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk.

Local Safeguarding Teams

Safeguarding Hub (MASH) during office hours:

Telephone: 023 8083 3336

Out of Hours: 023 8023 3344.

Email: MASH@southampton.gov.uk.

WE ARE ALL HERE TO HELP YOU!!