



Background

Clevedon Care is a voluntary organisation staffed entirely by part-time volunteers. In recent years the number of clients has increased, and the volume of jobs undertaken has also grown significantly. Although the vast majority of interactions are completed successfully with clients and volunteers acting responsibly, there will inevitably be incidents that occur from time to time. This policy is designed to ensure that any complaint is dealt with appropriately, quickly and efficiently, that the individuals involved are treated with understanding and respect and that any lessons are learnt.

Complaints against Individuals

Complaints can be made by clients, volunteers or members of the public against clients or volunteers.

The Nature of Complaints

We are all human and therefore liable to commit mistakes. All Clevedon Care staff are volunteers giving freely of their time and trying to do the best for clients. Many clients are elderly and may be confused or in pain. In most cases, complaints can and should be resolved on the spot by the individual's concerned using common sense and mutual understanding.

Resolution involves a shared recognition of the issue and the action which led to it, an apology to the individual affected and a commitment to avoid a repetition by modifying behaviour. If a resolution is not immediately possible then the matter should be referred to the driver or DO coordinator in the first instance or the Chairman or Secretary if they are not available.

All complaints should be recorded as they happen on a Complaints Record Sheet (Appendix A). Printed copies are available in the office, a pdf version is saved on the website, a Word version can be requested from the driver coordinator or DO coordinator.

Complaints relating to safety of clients or volunteers only.

The safety of clients and volunteers is paramount in Clevedon Care and requires a specific procedure. Any complaint relating to safety must be made in writing and addressed to the chairman at Clevedon Care office.

Once a safety complaint has been received relating to a driver then the driver in question should not be allocated any further jobs until the complaint has been resolved. The driver shall be informed that a safety complaint has been made against them and will be investigated. The driver will be kept informed of the nature of the complaint and the state of the process. The driver will be advised not to contact the complainant.

Two committee members should interview the complainant, normally the chairman and secretary, to clarify the nature of the complaint, establish the client's level of concern and the outcome they are seeking. If the basis of the complaint is deemed to be insubstantial or vexatious then no further action will be taken, and the driver will be restored to duty.

One or more committee members should interview the driver concerned. At least one of the members should be an experienced Clevedon Care driver. The purpose of the interview should be



exploring the driver's perspective on events, gaining their reaction to the written complaint and examining any other relevant evidence (e.g. relevant medical details.)

A report should be made to the committee with the findings and suggestions for further action. The report should also describe the background of the driver and their driving history with Clevedon Care, listing any previous issues.

Outcomes

In the event that the complaint is substantiated, then the driver should be required to remedy their behaviour. This could entail re-training, pausing whilst medical treatment is undergone or, if no remedy is feasible, withdrawing from driving for Clevedon Care.

In the event that the complaint is found to be not substantiated then the driver can resume driving. The driver coordinator may choose to caution the driver.

In the event that the complaint is not substantiated but there is some element of doubt, the committee may require that the driver carry out a trial run with the driver coordinator to demonstrate driving proficiency. Once the driver coordinator is satisfied then the driver can resume driving.

Complaints relating to any other non-safety aspect of Clevedon Care Operations.

Guidance to drivers on expected conduct is included in the Drivers Good Practice Guide. Expectations of client behaviour are covered in the Charter of Expectations issued to all new clients.

Complaints that relate to issues covered in these documents like timing, state of cars, interactions between clients and volunteers, offensive language, routes to destination or any other similar issue if they cannot be resolved immediately should be investigated as soon as possible by the Driver or DO coordinator. They should establish the facts, interview the individuals concerned and affect a resolution which should be recorded.

Repeated transgressions

In the event that the behaviour which gave rise to the complaint occurs again or if the individual against whom the complaint is made fails to acknowledge their actions, then a written warning will be sent to the individual, laying out the rationale for the warning and requiring a commitment in writing to adjust their behaviour and comply with CC policy.

In the event that the individual concerned persists in their actions despite a verbal and written warning, then the coordinator responsible will submit the facts to the committee with a request to exclude the individual concerned from Clevedon Care. The committee may choose to remove the individual from the client list or duty roster pending final resolution. The individual shall have the right to make representations to the committee in their defence before the final decision is taken.

Reviewing Complaints

The driver and DO coordinator shall summarise any complaints dealt with during the previous quarter as part of their report to the committee, indicating what actions were taken. The committee will discuss what lessons could be learnt from the complaints.



CLEVEDON CARE

Complaints Procedure



Timing

Formal complaints should be made as soon as possible after the incident concerned and normally within 10 working days.

Acknowledgement of a written complaint should occur within 48 hours usually from the Secretary or Chairman.

Any investigation should take place as soon as possible and should normally be completed and a report circulated within 10 working days

The decision of the committee will be communicated to the individuals concerned in writing as soon as possible after the meeting.

Appendices

Appendix A – Complaints Record Sheet to be completed in all instances.

**COMPLAINTS RECORD SHEET**

DATE OF COMPLAINT	JOB NO.	DATE OF JOB	NAME OF VOLUNTEER/CLIENT (complaint is about)	CLIENT NAME/ VOLUNTEER NAME	COMPLAINT RECEIVED BY (volunteer name)

DETAILS OF COMPLAINT (please include as much information as possible)**DRIVER COORDINATOR NOTIFIED**

Y/N

Date:

DUTY OFFICER COORDINATOR NOTIFIED

Y/N

Date:

DRIVER AND/OR DUTY OFFICER COORDINATOR COMMENTS

Please complete & place in envelope marked Private & Confidential for Tom or Julie & advise that form is in the office.

If completing Word version, please email to Tom or Julie.