

National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH)

Comments, Complaints, & Compliments Policy & Procedure



Registered Charity No. 1190515
Policy Adopted February 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

The National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) is committed to providing its partners, stakeholders, working groups, and the wider public with the best possible information and services which meet their needs and ensure that they are treated fairly and with respect.

NCCH views third party comments and complaints (comments/complaints from outside the organisation) as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the comment or complaint. Our policy is:

- to provide a fair external comment or complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a comment or complaint;
- to publicise the existence of our external Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a comment or complaint;
- to make sure everyone at the NCCH knows what to do if an external comment or complaint is received;
- to make sure all external complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way;

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- to make sure that external complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired; and
- to gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

This Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure is for people not employed by or working voluntarily with NCCH. NCCH's Grievance, Whistleblowing, and Disciplinary Policies should be followed by any employee, Trustee, or volunteer who wishes to raise a grievance.

2. COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK

A comment or feedback is defined as being an idea, suggestion or opinion on how NCCH could improve its services. If an individual wants to make a comment on NCCH's work, this may be done either verbally or in writing (in person, by phone, email, or post). If an individual wants a verbal comment to be dealt with in accordance with this Policy, rather than being seen as an informal matter, this must be made clear at the time the comment is being made.

When a formal comment (where it is clear the commenter requires feedback) is received, it will be recorded by the General Manager or Director, to ensure it is tracked and responded to within ten working days by the General Manager or Director. The reply will include details of any action NCCH will take as a result of the comment.

3. COMPLIMENTS

A compliment is defined as being feedback which informs NCCH that it has provided a service well. If an individual wants to offer a compliment about NCCH's work, this may be done either verbally or in writing (in person, by phone, email, or post).

When a compliment is received, if appropriate, it will be recorded by the General Manager or Director, to ensure it is tracked and responded to. The member of staff will pass the compliment to the appropriate member of staff or Trustee, who will reply to the person making the compliment, if appropriate, within ten working days.

4. COMPLAINTS

A complaint is defined as being any expression of dissatisfaction with the service that NCCH provides, whether it is justified or not. This procedure is designed to enable appropriate consideration to be given to any complaint, in a way that is fair and as impartial as possible. NCCH aims to treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction which requires an immediate response.

External complaints may come from donors/funders and other individuals who we contact about our work, or any other person or organisation with an interest in the charity and its activities. If an individual wants to make a complaint, this may be done either verbally or in writing (in person, by phone, email, or post). If an individual wants a verbal complaint to be dealt with in accordance with this Policy, rather than

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being seen as an informal matter, this must be made clear at the time the complaint is being made.

Operational issues should be dealt with in the first instance informally by the relevant member of staff or Trustees wherever possible. If an individual has an issue that is not resolved informally, they may make a formal complaint within 8 weeks of the issue arising.

Where necessary we will carry out internal investigations, and if necessary, this will be carried out by an individual outside of the NCCH's employment. We aim to respond appropriately to all complaints, which may result in the complainant receiving an apology (where there has been wrongdoing), an explanation, or details of any investigation outcomes and action taken as appropriate (see section 7 for further information)

Complainants will be made aware that not all situations/issues are in the control of NCCH.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

All comments and complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements. In exceptional circumstances, there may be cases where it is not possible to maintain confidentiality (for example due to the need to involve the Charity Commission or other public agency). Should this be the case the situation will be explained to all parties involved or affected.

6. COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS PROCEDURE

Written Comments, Complaints, and Compliments can be sent to the charity at:

FAO: NCCH Director OR Chair of Board of Trustees

National Centre for Creative Health

PO Box 948

Oxford

OX1 9TY

or e-mail info@ncch.org.uk

Verbal comments, complaints, and compliments may be made by phone to **NCCH's General Manager on 07837685986** or in person to any of the NCCH's staff, Trustees or volunteers.

Complaints can also be made directly to the Charity Commission or, if the complaint relates to the use of the complainant's personal information by the Charity, to

the Information Commissioner's Office (the ICO) (see NCCH's Data Protection Policy for more information).

7. RECEIVING COMPLAINTS

If an individual wants to make a complaint about NCCH, this must be sent and addressed to the Director in person, or by email (info@ncch.org.uk) or post. The envelope or subject line should be marked 'Private and Confidential.' If the complaint is about the Director, it should be made in person, or email or post and addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. When a complaint is received, it will be recorded by the Director or Chair to ensure it is tracked and responded to within the specified timescales.

External complaints may arrive through other channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have. However, the complainant will be directed to use NCCH's Complaints Procedure as laid out in this Policy.

If a person is unable to put their concerns in writing, complaints can be received by telephone or in person. These complaints need to be recorded, and the complainant should explain the issue/complaint as clearly and fully as possible, naming any staff involved and providing details of action taken to date. They should also provide details of the consequences of any problem arising and details of any remedy sought as appropriate. The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should also ask for contact details, and this together with the complaint should be sent to the Director or Chair.

The process for dealing with complaints is:

- 7.1. The Director or Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within ten working days of receiving the email/phone call information or longer for post* and advise the complainant of the date by which they will be sent a written response.
- 7.2. The timescale for responding to the complainant will depend on the nature of the complaint and scale of the resultant investigation into the circumstances which led to the complaint being made. Whilst the NCCH will always attempt to resolve a complaint as quickly as possible, there may be circumstances where a situation requires thorough investigation. Should this be the case the complainant will receive an interim explanation in writing updating them on how the complaint is being dealt with and when a full response may be expected.
- 7.3. The Director or Chair will arrange for an investigation into the circumstances which led to the complaint being made. Once the investigation is complete the Director or the Chair will write to the complainant. This response will, when appropriate, offer an apology and/ or a solution to resolve the

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complaint. This letter or email will also advise the complainant of their right to appeal against any decision made, and who they should contact to escalate the complaint to the next stage in the procedure.

- 7.4. An appeal may be made to the Chair or another Trustee/s if the Chair was involved in the original investigation. The Chair or Trustee will review whether the complaint has been handled in a fair and reasonable manner and if so, the original decision will be upheld. If the Chair or Trustee Board deems that the complaint was not handled in a fair and reasonable manner they may, with the assistance of another Trustee or member of staff not involved in the original investigation, reinvestigate the complaint. The response will, when appropriate, offer an apology (where there has been wrongdoing), an explanation, or action/solution to rectify the situation where possible and appropriate.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Any significant Complaints, Comments, and Compliments received will be presented to the Board of Trustees as part of the Director's report at Board Meetings. Any new legislation or developments in existing legislation will be considered as and when required and the policy will be updated to reflect these developments.

The NCCH Director in conjunction with the named Trustee on this policy will review this policy every two years and will make any changes necessary. All NCCH employees, Trustees, and associated Personnel are required to familiarise themselves with this policy upon their appointment to NCCH, and the Policy Owner will provide additional advice and support on this policy if requested by an employee, Trustee, or associated personnel.

This policy was approved and adopted by the Board of Directors on the date shown below.

Policy Adopted: 16th February 2024

Next Review Date: February 2026

Policy Owner: NCCH Director; Named Trustee: David Clayton-Smith