



Future Pathways Complaints Process



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Introduction

At Future Pathways, we want to give people high-quality support. But we know that sometimes people might not be happy with our service. We want to make sure that people can raise concerns about Future Pathways if they want to. This will help us to improve.

This booklet tells you about:

- how we will respond to concerns
- what a complaint is (and what it is not)
- our complaints process
- frequently asked questions

Concern or Complaint?

A **concern** is something you tell us about that worries you or does not feel right. We listen and act where we can.

A **complaint** is a concern that we review more carefully to make sure we respond fairly and the right action is taken.

Not every concern is a complaint, but both are important to us.

How we will respond to concerns

We will try to resolve concerns and complaints as quickly as we can.

When you raise a concern, we will:

- show respect
- show empathy towards your feelings – this means we will really try to understand your views and your emotions
- make sure we listen to you and understand your concern
- make sure we understand what you are wanting us to do
- make it clear if we need more information
- make sure you do not feel rushed
- be objective – this means we will not take sides
- let you know when we will contact you, who will contact you and how (for example by phone, email or letter)
- make sure you are supported to make a complaint, for example with reading or writing, or computer access
- apologise for any mistakes we have made
- offer solutions quickly, wherever we can

We know that sometimes it can be difficult for people to raise a concern or make a complaint. Sometimes people have had bad experiences. Other times, people might be scared that raising a concern or making a complaint will change the support they get. Or they might be worried that they will be treated differently by staff.

Telling us about your concerns can help us to learn and improve. We want to make sure that people feel confident and safe when they raise a concern or make a complaint. We want to make sure that we act fairly and let everyone involved know what is happening.

Anyone who raises a concern or makes a complaint has the right to be:

- heard and understood
- treated fairly and with respect
- supported

Our staff also have the right to be treated this way, even if a complaint is made about them.

We will take your concerns and complaints seriously.

We will follow our Complaints Process to make fair decisions about what should happen.

We will also aim for resolution.

This means that we will try to reach a decision that everyone is satisfied with.

What is a complaint?

A complaint might be about:

- something we have done
- something we have not done
- the standard of service we have given

The reason for a complaint might be:

- not providing a service that you expect from us
- providing a service which is not good enough
- the way a member of the team has behaved towards you
- breaching a code of practice (such as the SSSC Code of Practice)
- how a policy has been followed, or if you are unhappy with a policy
- not following our procedures properly
- not applying our standards of conduct
- making a decision you disagree with (that cannot be resolved through another process)

These are just some examples of why someone might make a complaint.

We know that there may be other reasons. We can discuss any concerns you have.

What is not a complaint?

Sometimes people raise concerns which are not treated as complaints. We still take those concerns seriously, but our response might look different.

A complaint is not:

- a first request for a service
- a claim that is only for compensation
- raising a previous complaint that we have already responded to
- a disagreement with a decision made by a court or other statutory body, for example a parole board or a mental health tribunal
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal
- a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation (where we are not involved in the issue)

You are allowed to request any personal information we have about you, and we must give you a copy within 30 days. This will not be treated as a complaint.

Any concerns raised about a child's safety or an adult's safety will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly and appropriately.



The complaints process

Our complaints process has four main steps to it:

- 1 Assurance and Exploration
- 2 Consideration
- 3 More Exploration
- 4 Reflection and Restoration

Not all complaints will require every step. For example, some complaints do not need more exploration. You can find out more about each step below.

1 Assurance and Exploration

This step involves understanding the concern. A concern is when someone tells us about a problem or issue, they are worried or unsure about. And they may be seeking reassurance or want us to take action.

We will:

- focus on understanding the concern
- check what you want to happen
- listen to everyone involved
- make sure everyone feels heard, understood and believed
- work out if the concern is a complaint
- decide on the best way to handle your concern

If we decide that the concern is not a complaint, we will record this and note down the actions we have taken.

If we decide that the concern **is** a complaint, then we move to the next step. The next step is called Consideration.

2 Consideration

During this step, we will:

- confirm what the complaint is about
- help you think about what you are seeking from us
- consider what we can do to resolve your complaint
- apologise (if that is what you want)

We must give you a response within 5 working days.

If we cannot resolve the complaint or if it needs more time, it moves to the next step. The next step is called More Exploration.

3 More Exploration

Sometimes we might need to explore a complaint more. We do this when:

- the complaint is complicated or about something very serious
- the complaint is about unacceptable behaviour from a member of staff
- the same issue has happened several times
- the issue cannot be resolved at Consideration
- the person making the complaint does not want to take part in Consideration

If more exploration is required, we must give you a response within 20 working days. If a complaint is very complicated or if important information is missing, we might need more time. If we do need more time, we will explain why and we will tell you how long it will take.

Complaint outcomes

When a complaint is **upheld**, this means that we **agree that we made a mistake which we need to work with you to fix**.

A complaint can also be **not upheld**. This can happen if there is **not enough information to make a fair decision** or **we do not agree that a mistake has been made**.

After we have looked into your complaint, we will tell you:

- if the complaint was upheld or not
- why we made the decision
- your rights and what to do next

If a complaint is upheld, the person who looked into it can make recommendations. This might include:

- Improvements to the service
- Changes to policy and procedure
- Staff training
- Mediation

Mediation is where a person from outside Future Pathways helps everyone to find a resolution that they are satisfied with.

Sometimes, complicated complaints might need a different approach to get resolved. We will discuss the options with you.

If a complaint is **not upheld**, we will let you know and tell you the reasons why.

4 Reflection and Restoration

After the complaint is resolved, we will:

- ask everybody to try to reflect on the experience
- restore trust and positive working relationships
- learn from concerns and complaints to see how we can improve our service

What happens if the complaint is not resolved?

If a complaint is not resolved, a senior manager at Future Pathways will review the complaint and give you a conclusion.

For complaints about the Mental Health Peer Support Professional Development Award, contact the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA):

Phone: 0345 279 1000

Website: www.sqa.org.uk

Address: The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street,
Glasgow, G2 8DQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can raise a concern?

Anyone affected by our service can raise a concern. For example:

- people supported by Future Pathways
- people registered with Future Pathways
- your friends, family or carers
- staff from other services that we work with
- the general public

Someone else can raise a concern or make a complaint on your behalf. If they do, they will need to show us written permission from you.

How do I raise a concern?

You can raise a concern:

- in person
- in writing (letter or email)
- over the phone

If you raise a concern through our social media channels, we will ask you to also report your concern in another way - in person, in writing (letter or email), or over the phone.

When can I raise a concern?

You can raise a concern within one year from when you first knew about an issue. This helps us to look into the concern. If more than a year has passed since you first knew about the issue, we would not usually look into it.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to make a complaint when something goes wrong?

No. You can choose whether or not you want to make a complaint. Sometimes people might tell us they are not happy with the service but do not want it to be treated as a complaint. It is up to you.

Can I make a complaint or raise a concern without giving my name?

Yes. You can make a complaint, or raise a concern, anonymously. This means you do not give your name.

But if we do not have your name or contact details, we will not be able to follow up with you. This means we:

- might not be able to find out what happened
- will not be able to let you know the outcome or any recommendations

If we have enough information, we will look into any anonymous complaints and concerns. But if there is not enough information then we might not be able to look into it.

We will still keep a record of any anonymous concerns and complaints, and any actions taken. This will help us to improve our service if we need to.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I get help to raise a concern or make a complaint?

Yes. Sometimes people might need support to raise a concern or make a complaint. For example, they may be nervous about raising a concern or making a complaint. They may need support with reading or writing, or they might have a disability.

We will support people as much as we can when they raise a concern or make a complaint. For example, we can:

- give you reassurance
- give you information on an advocacy service
- offer computer support

What if my concern or complaint is about more than one service?

Sometimes a concern or complaint might be about more than one service. We will work together with the other services to resolve the concern or complaint. We will tell you what information we need to share with them.

We will make sure everyone knows who must respond. And we will make sure that the other services know how to take part.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if my complaint is about a partner organisation or a service provider?

Lots of our support is through our Delivery Partners or service providers. These are organisations or people that we have contracts with. If you want to raise a concern or make a complaint about a partner organisation or service provider, we will tell you what information we need to share with them.

We will try to give you a joint response. This means a response that is from all the services that the complaint is about. If we cannot give a joint response, we will tell you why. Instead, you will get separate responses from each of the services.

Will my complaint be confidential?

Yes, we will make sure concerns and complaints are kept confidential. This means that we only share details with people who are directly involved or have been directly affected. If we report concerns and complaints to our Leadership Team, we will make sure no one knows who made the complaint or raised the concern.

All personal information is handled in line with our Privacy Policy and Record Retention Policy. If you would like a copy of these policies, we can send them to you.



Contact us

If you have any questions about raising a concern or making a complaint, you can:

- Email us at engagement@future-pathways.co.uk
- Phone us on 0808 164 2005 (our lines are open Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm)
- Write to us at Future Pathways, Suite G2, Links House, 15 Links Place, Edinburgh EH2 4RT



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