

## **COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK**

### 1. Purpose

Lutheran Community Care Centre (LCCC) is committed to providing quality support that is responsive to people's needs. We believe that a complaints and feedback procedure is an important part of continuous improvement in providing quality support and good customer service. The information received from feedback and complaints will be used to assist LCCC to better support people and/or improve our customer service practices.

### 2. Definitions

- a) "Complaint" is an expression of dissatisfaction related to the services and/or supports that are provided by an agency. A complaint may be expressed by a person who is receiving services and supports from the agency, or a person acting on their behalf, or by the general public, regarding the services and supports that are provided by the agency. A complaint may be made formally, such as a letter written to the agency, or informally, such as a verbal complaint expressed to a staff person.
- b) "Conflict of Interest" is a situation where the other personal or business interests of a party are in conflict with the best interests of the LCCC and the services and supports that it provides. A conflict of interest may occur when a direct or indirect personal gain or benefit is given to or received by a party or a family member of a party. A conflict of interest may also occur when a direct or indirect advantage or privilege is given to or received by a party or a family member of a party.
- c) "Family member" includes a parent, father-in-law, mother-in-law, spouse or partner, child, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, sibling, brother-in-law or sister-in-law.
- d) "Feedback" is information about reactions to a product or service, how a person performed in delivering a service or doing a task, and is used as a basis for improvement. Feedback may be positive or negative. Feedback may be solicited, such as information and comments collected through a satisfaction survey or a comment box, or unsolicited, such as a letter from a person or family member about the services and supports that the agency provides. Feedback may be formal like in a survey or letter or informal such as a verbal compliment expressed to a staff person.
- e) "Party" is a person or business entity that has entered into a verbal or written relationship, contract or agreement with the LCCC.

3. LCCC encourages people receiving services, guardians and/or advocates, staff and members of the community to bring their feedback and complaints forward so that services can be improved and concerns can be addressed.
4. Individuals have the right to bring forward complaints or provide feedback about services and supports they receive without fear of reprisal.
5. LCCC may choose not to address anonymous complaints or complaints that are so vague that the particulars of the situation or the people and parties involved is unclear.
6. LCCC shall receive, document, and review all complaints. The discussions and actions to resolve complaints will be documented as follows:
  - a) Complaints brought to the staff person most directly involved and resolved at that level shall be recorded in the case notes of the client or the staff person's service records.
  - b) Complaints that proceed to Step Two and higher or the resolution of the complaint involves a change in policy or procedure shall be documented in a central Complaints file in the Management directory of the agency's computer network.
7. LCCC shall receive, document and review all feedback. The discussions and actions related to the feedback will be centrally documented and reviewed by the Management Team on an annual basis to inform improvements to service methods and service standards.
8. Complaint process
  - a) Step One
    - i. The person providing the complaint informs the staff person most directly involved in the service provision about the complaint.
    - ii. The staff person shall make every effort to resolve the concern by such methods as:
      - Meeting with the individual and/or family member/advocate to discuss all details pertaining to the complaint and to explore potential solutions.
      - Conducting a thorough review and investigation of all aspects of the complaint with other parties who may have been involved.
      - Calling upon the assistance of other staff to brainstorm potential solutions.
      - Meeting with their supervisor to explore the feasibility of other solutions.

b) Step Two

- i. If a satisfactory solution still cannot be achieved, the individual and/or his or her family member/advocate shall contact the supervisor of the service/staff person by telephone or in writing and may request a personal meeting.
- ii. The supervisor either meets with the individual and/or family member/advocate or responds in writing within 10 working days.

c) Step Three

- i. If a satisfactory solution cannot be achieved with the supervisor, the individual and/or his or her family member/advocate shall contact the Executive Director of LCCC by telephone or in writing and may request a personal meeting.
- ii. The Executive Director either meets with the individual and/or family member/advocate or responds in writing within 10 working days.

d) Step Four

- i. If a satisfactory solution cannot be achieved with the Executive Director, the individual and/or his or her family member/advocate shall contact the President of the Board of Directors.
- ii. The President may refuse to deal with the issue if the previous steps have not been followed.
- iii. A meeting may be held with the President, the Executive Director and the individual and/or family member/advocate.
- iv. The decision rendered by the President on behalf of the Board will be final.

e) Depending on the position of the staff person most directly involved in the service provision that is being complained about, there may not be four steps. The complaint may be first registered with a supervisor or the Executive Director.

f) At all stages of the Complaint process the goal is to bring a resolution to the complaint. LCCC shall make reasonable efforts to resolve or address the matter to the mutual satisfaction of both the person who has made the complaint and the agency.

9. Conflict of Interest

a) In specific situations where a conflict of interest exists or the complaint is about a conflict of interest occurring, it may not be appropriate to bring the complaint to the staff person most directly involved. In such situations the

person can bring the complaint to that staff person's supervisor. The supervisor and complainant must mutually agree that bypassing the staff person is appropriate. Principles of natural justice however must be maintained including the staff person being informed of the complaint and given the opportunity to explain his or her version of the events.

- b) The Conflict of Interest Policy as found in the LCCC Governance Manual (GP3.3.2) shall have primacy in the treatment and resolution of the complaint.

10. LCCC will provide information on the complaints and feedback procedure in plain language and in alternate formats to all individuals who request service or come into service with the agency, and/or a person acting on their behalf (where applicable).

#### 11. Additional Reporting

For complaints and feedback on services of the LCCC that are funded under the *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008* the agency and its staff will comply with reporting requirements of the Act and its regulations.

This reporting includes:

- a) Reporting to police in cases of alleged, suspected or witnessed abuse that may constitute a criminal offence.
- b) Reporting serious occurrences to the Ministry of Community and Social Services in accordance with their Serious and Enhanced Serious Occurrence Reporting Guidelines.

#### 12. Annual Review

LCCC shall conduct an annual review of the complaints documented in the central Complaints file to analyze trends and consider the need to revise any policies and procedures of the agency.