

Client Complaints Resolution Policy			 <b>Canadian Mental Health Association</b> Prince George
Policy #	Clinical	Date Created	March 3 2016
Authority	Executive Director	Date of Last Review	December 17, 2018

At CMHA Prince George we value our clients and what they have to say about the service they receive. We take all complaints seriously. We are committed to consistent, fair and confidential complaint handling and to resolving complaints as quickly as possible. We aim to make it easy for people to make a complaint if they are dissatisfied and we will treat all clients making a complaint equally.

## Guidelines

### Recording Procedure

- All complaints made, whether verbal or written, will be recorded at the time the complaint is made, or as soon as possible afterwards. The complaint should be recorded by the staff member who took the details. When taking a complaint, staff will record the name and contact details of the client, as well as full details of the complaint including the date. Details of all communication with the client and any actions to resolve the complaint will be recorded in the same place. Reassure clients that we will follow up with them as soon as is reasonably practicable, and provide them with a date and time to expect a response, where possible.
- Recorded complaints will also be monitored for any ongoing trends by Management and efforts will be made to resolve any ongoing issues.
- Clients' personal details or details of their complaint will not be divulged to third parties including other staff not directly involved unless prior written consent of the client has been received.

### Informing Clients of Progress

- Written complaints will be acknowledged promptly. We strive to resolve all complaints within fourteen days; however, clients will be given an approximate timeframe of resolution at the time they make their complaint. They will also be informed of the progress of their complaint on a regular basis, especially if there are any delays or changes to what has been agreed.
- We will ensure that clients are informed of any changes as a result of their complaint. Where appropriate, clients who have had a complaint resolved will be contacted at a later date to see if they are happy with how their complaint was handled.

### Responding to Complaints

- All clients making a complaint will be treated with courtesy. Where possible, complaints will be resolved at the first point of contact within a natural, informal problem solving effort and is the preferred route for addressing concerns. Complaints that are solved immediately will still be recorded, as outlined above.
- If the complaint can't be resolved immediately, the client will be given a timeframe, a contact person and details of our complaint handling process and will be informed of their right to file a complaint under this policy. Where possible, the staff member taking the complaint details will be the contact person.

- Management will resolve a complaint by communicating directly with all parties in determining an acceptable resolution to the situation.

#### Escalation of Complaints

- If a complaint cannot be resolved by the usual complaint process, it should be referred to the Executive Director and the client will be informed and given an amended timeframe for resolution.
- If we are unable to resolve the client's complaint to their satisfaction, we will inform them about where they can take further action to the Board of Directors.

Complaints covered by this policy are:

- Conduct of CMHA Prince George employees
- Decisions about the nature or amount of service provided to an individual involved with CMHA.
- Handling of an individual's personal information
- Concern about respect for the rights of an individual
- Concern about CMHA's policies or procedures.

Complaints not covered by this policy are:

- Complaints about decisions that are bound by legislation or regulation and outside CMHA mandate
- Allegations of abuse or neglect of an individual receiving CMHA services will be directed to one of the agencies enacting the Adult Guardianship Policy
- Allegations of fraud, theft, corruption or other irregularities will be directed to the appropriate authority for investigation – eg. RCMP
- Issues related to funders will be directed to the funding source
- Report of privacy breach or request to change personal information held by CMHA will be directed to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy organization.

At any stage the individual making a complaint can choose to take their concerns to any of the following external provincial agencies or services. CMHA Prince George will work cooperatively with these services to resolve issues.

**Information and Privacy Commissioner** – investigates concerns related to handling or and access to personal information

**Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee** – assists adults and families with adult guardianship issues or managing personal or financial affairs

**Human Rights Tribunal** – mediates and adjudicates complaints about discrimination under the BC Human Rights Code.

**Representative for Children and Youth** – upholds rights of children and youth and also for young adults 19-23 receiving CLBC funded services

**Advocate for Service Quality** – assists with complaints resolution and provides advocacy and support for those with complaints about CLBC delivered services.

CMHA Prince George records, track and follows up on all complaints – reports and analyzes this information and uses it as part of the overall quality assurance process to improve services and performance.

*Breach of this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination for volunteers, employees, or management.*