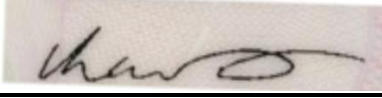


Document Title:	Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy
Document Purpose:	To ensure that we take account of the views and wishes of our service users and others that we come into contact with and that we are responsive, adopting a culture of continuous improvement.
Document Statement:	SEND The Right Message (STRM) aims to provide a high-quality, responsive, service user-led service. In order to ensure this we need to take account of the views and wishes of those we are here to support. We welcome every opportunity to monitor and improve our service and having a “compliments, comments and complaints” policy and a clear procedure for resolving complaints is one way of doing this.
Document Application:	Organisation wide
Responsible for Implementation:	Trustees, CEO and All Staff and Volunteers
Author: Driver:	Tricia Cowdrey
Effective date:	1st November 2024
Review/Expiry date:	3 yearly 31st October 2027
Associated Document: Staff Handbook; Disciplinary procedure, Data Protection Policy, Equity and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding Policies, Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy	
Signed 	
Chair of Trustees: Vicki Lamb	

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 SEND The Right Message (STRM) aims to provide a high-quality, responsive, service-user-led service. In order to ensure this, we need to take account of the

views and wishes of those we are here to support. We welcome every opportunity to monitor and improve our service and having a “complements, comments and complaints” policy and a clear procedure for resolving complaints is one way of doing this.

2. Commenting on and Complimenting Our Service

2.1 Your comments and compliments are valuable, welcome and important and when they are received, either verbally or in writing, they will be recorded. Comments and compliments enable STRM to:-

- ☐ understand whether our service is being provided to the carers’ satisfaction
- ☐ provide positive feedback to our staff
- ☐ influence our organisational and service development
- ☐ inform our quality assurance programme

3. Complaining About Our Service

3.1 STRM recognises that there will be times when our trustees, staff and volunteers make mistakes or get things wrong. In order to learn from such mistakes, we need to know about them and encourage people to comment or complain. Such comments or complaints will always be taken seriously, recorded and responded to as detailed in the procedure for resolving complaints which accompanies this policy statement.

3.2 If a complaint is made which involves a Safeguarding issue, then the STRM Safeguarding Policy takes precedence

4. PROCEDURE FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

4.1 Who Can Use This Procedure?

This procedure is for anyone who comes into contact with trustees, staff and volunteers from STRM. By anyone we mean service users – carers, practitioners, other voluntary groups, statutory agencies and any other member of the public.

You may have the assistance of a friend or someone else to help you with any or all of the stages of this complaint’s procedure. If you wish to follow this procedure and complain about an aspect of our service, this will NOT affect any services you receive, or wish to receive, from STRM.

5. The Procedure

Stage 1

1.1 We hope that most complaints can be resolved informally by speaking directly to the person or persons involved. This can be done either by telephone or in a face-to-face meeting. All complaints will be recorded at this stage on our feedback form. If the complaint is resolved at this stage, you will receive a letter outlining the issue and the decisions reached and agreed. If, however, informal resolution is not possible.

1.2 To help us investigate and address all complaints, we ask you to provide us with as much information as possible. This should cover:

- The reason for your complaint

- Where and when what you are complaining about happened
- The name(s) of anyone involved (if known)
- What outcome you are hoping for (but we are not obliged to resolve the complaint in that way).
- Your contact details (name, address, daytime telephone number and/or email address)

1.3 Stages 2 and 3 are available to support complainants. If it has not been possible to resolve your complaint at Stage 1 you should move to:

Stage 2

2.1 If your complaint relates to the governance of STRM by the Board of Trustees

You should write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, at
Ground Floor
320D High Road
Benfleet
Essex
SS7 5HB

2.2 If your complaint relates to an operational policy, you should write to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the address above.

2.3 If your complaint is about a member of the STRM staff or a volunteer you should write to the Chief executive Officer as above. This request will be treated in confidence.

2.4. If your complaint is about a member of the STRM Board of Trustees or the CEO you must write to The Chair of the Board who has been designated to handle complaints at this level. If the complaint involves The Chair, you should write to the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees at the address above.

2.5 In 2.1- 2.4 above your letter will be acknowledged by the addressee within 3 working days of the date of receipt. If the addressee is on holiday or sick leave, he or she will have ensured that arrangements are in place for complaints to be acknowledged. The Complaint will be recorded on our formal complaint log.

Once the complaint has been acknowledged it will be fully investigated, by discussion with all individuals involved and a written response provided within 20 working days. If this timeframe is delayed because of holiday or sick leave you will be informed when your complaint is acknowledged.

2.6 If you are not satisfied by the response at Stage 2 you should move to Stage 3.

Stage 3

At all times during this stage, you will be informed of the name of the person you should contact at STRM

3.1 If your complaint has related to the governance of STRM by the Board of Trustees of you should write to the Chair of Trustees at:

Ground Floor
320D High Road
Benfleet
Essex
SS7 5HB

3.2 If your complaint has related to an operational policy you should write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees at the address above.

3.3 If your complaint has been about a member of STRM staff or a volunteer your complaint will be heard by the CEO. If the complaint is about the CEO you should write the Chair of the Board of Trustees at the address above.

3.4 If your complaint has been about a member of the Board of Trustees or the CEO your complaint will be heard by a small panel of 3 members of the Board (not including the designated trustee identified in 3.1-3.3 above). You should write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees at the address above. The Chair of the Board will appoint the panel members and the panel will normally meet within 20 working days of your request. You will be notified in writing about the time and place of the meeting at least 10 days beforehand so that you may attend if you wish. A representative may accompany you.

The Review Panel will let you know its decisions and the reasons for those decisions in writing within 7 days.

3.5 In 3.1- 3.4 above your letter will be acknowledged by the addressee within 3 working days of the date of the receipt. If the addressee is on holiday or sick leave they will have ensured arrangements are in place for complaints to be acknowledged.

In 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 once the complaint has been acknowledged it will be investigated, by discussion with all involved and a written response provided within 20 working days.

If this timeframe is delayed because of holiday or sick leave you will be informed when your complaint is acknowledged.

4. Taking your complaint outside of STRM

4.1 If your complaint is about our fundraising work or activities and you are not satisfied with our response, you are entitled to take it to the Fundraising Standards Board. This is the self-regulatory scheme that works to ensure that organisations raising money from the public do so honestly and properly. As a member of the Fundraising Standards Board, we are committed to abiding by any decision they reach on complaints that are escalated to them. Their contact details are: Fundraising Standards Board, 65 Brushfield Street, London, E1 6AA Tel: 0333 321 8803 Email: info@frsb.org.uk Website: www.frsb.org.uk/complaints/make-a-complaint.

4.2 If your complaint is about any other aspect of our charitable work [other than our fundraising work or activities], you may wish to contact the Charity Commission. However, we suggest that, before you do so, you consider whether it is appropriate

to contact the Commission in the first instance rather than ourselves. The Commission has guidance on its website as to when to direct complaints to a charity and not to the Commission.

Their contact details are: Charity Commission Direct, PO Box 1227, Liverpool, L69 3UG Tel: 0845 300 0218 Website:

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/contact-us/generalenquiries/report-a-concern-about-a-charity