

3.3. Administration Procedures

3.3.1. Complaints Procedures

1. Principles:

- a) All team members of Confide aim to provide a service of high quality so that there will be no cause for complaint. To support this aim, we review our work regularly and the supervisors have some time with an external supervisor. An internal system of annual review of counsellors' work supplements fortnightly clinical supervision in accordance with the Ethical Framework of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).
- b) Confide recognise that clients may feel that a complaint is justified and therefore an appropriate procedure has been implemented to deal with such occasions.
- c) The cost to Confide of the process of complaint shall be borne by the service. The cost of independent advice to the complainant will be borne by the complainant.
- d) Confide will only hear or accept complaints from clients and not from any third parties.
- e) The priority of aims in answering complaints shall be to:
 - (i) Satisfy any legitimate complaint
 - (ii) Ensure that both the complainant(s) and the person(s) complained of are aware of the nature, process and implications of the complaint and receive appropriate help
 - (iii) Ensure that any untoward situation is not repeated
 - (iv) Advise the Management Committee
 - (v) Preserve the good name of Confide
 - (vi) Preserve the good name of the Profession

2. Procedure:

- a) We are aware that, because of human limitations, mistakes may occasionally occur. If there is cause for complaint, informal means of resolution should be attempted in the first instance with the team member concerned.
- b) If informal means of resolution are not successful and a client feels that they need to seek resolution elsewhere, a formal complaint will need to be raised, and the procedure outlined below will commence. If you have such a complaint, please let us have full details as quickly as possible. The complaint does not have to be written but a written complaint may be easier to resolve.

- c) Once a complaint has been made, you will be told within five working days, in writing, the name of the Director/Chair of the Management Committee who will handle the complaint (“the Complaints Director”). That letter will be accompanied by a copy of this procedure.
- d) Your complaint will then be investigated. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our Complaints Director who will, with the supervisor and counselling co-ordinator, review your file and speak to your counsellor.
- e) The Complaints Director will then invite you to a meeting (“the Initial Meeting”) to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. He/she will do this as soon as possible and generally within 10 working days of sending you an acknowledgement letter.
- f) Within five working days of the Initial Meeting, the Complaints Director will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions he/she has agreed with you.
- g) If it has not been possible to resolve your complaint at the Initial Meeting, within 15 working days of the Initial Meeting, the Complaints Director will convene a Complaints Committee consisting of the Complaints Director, the Counselling Co-ordinator and a supervisor, with the possible addition of any other person deemed necessary for the task, including a person to minute all meetings. The Complaints Committee will then review all relevant documentation and ask for future written/oral submissions from you or the team member as may be thought necessary. On completion of considering all the necessary evidence, the Complaints Director will confirm the Complaints Committee’s conclusion to you within 10 working days.

All members of the Complaints Committee will specifically declare that they have no material conflict of interest arising in respect of a relevant complaint. Such declarations are to be recorded in the minutes of any relevant meeting.

- h) If you do not want to attend the Initial Meeting or it is not possible, the Complaints Director will, within 20 working days of sending you an acknowledgement letter, send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including his/her suggestions for resolving the matter.
- i) If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.
- j) If you are not satisfied with Confide’s treatment of your complaint, you can contact the BACP, which will review your complaint and respond in accordance with its framework.