

Core Module Manual

Full Care Lifetime

DISPUTES AND GRIEVANCES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to set out the steps Full Care Lifetime staff are required to take in regard to disputes and grievances. This policy and procedure apply to all staff and meets relevant legislation, regulations and standards.

POLICY

Full Care Lifetime is committed to maintaining positive working relationships between its staff and management. Disputes and grievances should be addressed within the organisation in a timely and confidential manner.

Definition

Dispute – a disagreement or argument that can arise from discrimination, harassment or any other behaviour between staff members or between the organisation and a staff member.

Grievance - a formal complaint lodged by one staff member against another or against the organisation.

Sexual harassment - any form of unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited sexual behaviour that is offensive, humiliating or embarrassing.

Workplace harassment - repeated behaviour, other than behaviour amounting to sexual harassment, of one staff member or group of staff members that is unwelcome, unsolicited and considered to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening by another staff member.

PROCEDURES

- Disputes and grievances must be treated by Full Care Lifetime with the utmost confidentiality, and the complainant must not be victimised.
- All grievances must be taken seriously and investigated in an impartial manner.
- Staff should attempt to resolve disputes with the other person before lodging a grievance. If attempts to resolve the dispute fail, staff must discuss the matter with Operations Manager.
- The Operations Manager will mediate and seek an acceptable compromise for both parties. If the dispute involves the Operations Manager, the staff member must discuss the matter with the Director.
- Issues of sexual harassment or discrimination should be brought to the notice of the Operations Manager.
- If a dispute cannot be resolved, the staff member should lodge a grievance in writing to the Director.
- Once a formal grievance is lodged, the Director will investigate the matter within five working days. If the Director has a conflict of interest in the matter, an independent party will conduct the investigation.
- Where necessary, the Director will appoint an independent mediator to help resolve disputes; and encourage support person, union or professional association representation and involvement in dispute resolution procedures.

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- If the investigation reveals that the grievance is valid and depending on the nature of the complaint and its seriousness, the staff member against whom the grievance was lodged may be required to apologise to the staff member who lodged the grievance; given a written warning, counselling, transfer or demotion; or dismissed.
- If the grievance is found to be a frivolous claim, and depending on the seriousness of the allegations, the staff member making the complaint may be asked to undertake counselling; make a written apology to the staff member complained about; given a written warning, transfer or demotion; or dismissed.
- Staff have the right to appeal decisions relating to disputes. Appeals should be directed in writing to the Director and a final decision will be made by the Management Team. Staff who successfully appeal will have the outcome and actions reassessed for appropriateness. Staff who are not successful in their appeal will have the original decision reconfirmed.

Monitoring and Review

Full Care Lifetime Management Team will review this policy and procedure at least annually. This process will include a review and evaluation of current practices and service delivery types, contemporary policy and practice in this clinical area, the Incident Register and will incorporate staff, participant and another stakeholder feedback. Feedback from service users, suggestions from staff and best practice developments will be used to update this policy.

Full Care Lifetime Continuous Improvement Plan will be used to record and monitor progress of any improvements identified and where relevant feed into Full Care Lifetime service planning and delivery processes.