

## Introduction

**Our Values:** We work with shared values of Ambitious, Compassionate and Stronger Together. In the application of our policy, we will seek to ensure that we Live Our Values. In receiving feedback we will balance the needs of all those concerned with the organisation.



## Policy statement

People are at the heart of everything we do. By listening to feedback we will continuously improve our services to make them more effective and responsive. Our priority is to achieve a better quality of life for everyone affected by Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD).

We encourage everyone to provide feedback on the service they have received from us so that we can learn from this. We take all complaints seriously and will resolve them as soon as we can with courtesy and respect.

## Legal considerations

Crohn's and Colitis UK is subject to requirements by a number of regulators. This policy relates to "service complaints" which, if not resolved satisfactorily, may be suitable for referral to the Fundraising Regulator or the Information Commissioner's Office<sup>1</sup>.

This policy does not cover complaints about our policies and decisions. These complaints, if unresolved and appropriate, are referred to the Charity Commission (England and Wales), Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, Charity Commission for Northern Ireland or Companies House. Employment issues are also not covered, the Grievance Procedures should be followed.

If litigation regarding a complaint is used prior to the end of our complaints procedure, then the procedure will be halted and the legal action responded to.

## What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not. This policy covers service complaints i.e. those concerning:

- the standard of service you should expect from us; and/or
- the behaviour of our staff in delivering that service; and/or
- any action, or lack of action, by our staff, volunteers or others engaged in Crohn's and Colitis UK business.

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<sup>1</sup>See also our Data Protection Policy.

## Our standards for handling complaints and other feedback

- Receive complaints via the website, letter, telephone or email, or by other means if required by virtue of reasonable adjustments.
- Treat all complaints seriously.
- To treat everyone with courtesy, respect and fairness.
- Expect that our staff dealing with complaints will be treated with the same courtesy, respect and fairness.
- Treat complaints in confidence within Crohn's and Colitis UK unless we need to report on a safeguarding or criminal matter.
- All feedback received about our services will be documented at every stage.
- Deal with service complaints promptly:
  - acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within five working days;
  - provide a full reply within 20 working days;
  - if this is not possible, for example if a complaint is very complex, to tell the complainant why and when we will be able to reply in full, keeping them informed of progress.
- We will collate information from our feedback log about learning from mistakes and implement changes where needed to avoid repeating these.
- We will also record very serious complaints through our incident reporting.
- We will provide further information in our Annual Report and Accounts<sup>2</sup> on the number of service complaints, and the percentage of those upheld.
- If a complaint is not satisfactorily dealt with, it will be escalated to a Director.
- We retain the right where, after escalation, the complainant is not satisfied not to progress the complaint further if it is considered vexatious<sup>3</sup>.
- We will advise complainants of any rights to internal or external escalation.

## Implementation and review of policy

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for:

- implementation of the policy for all types of service complaint
- development and maintenance of full guidance and public notices
- the maintenance of accurate and up to date records of complaints and learning from them
- referral of issues to the Governance Committee as appropriate

The Governance Committee is responsible for:

- reviewing this policy every 3 years
- referring any substantial revisions of this policy to the Board for approval

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<sup>2</sup> This will be introduced from the 2018 report. Previous reports only refer to fundraising complaints.

<sup>3</sup> Where the complaint does not justify the level of disruption and/or distress caused.