



**Stand-by-me**  
Bereavement Support

# Complaints Policy

Approved by Stand-by-me Trustees: 14/11/22  
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## 1. General Principles

Stand-by-me Bereavement Support Service for Children aims to provide its children, young people, families, staff and volunteers with the best possible service. We positively welcome suggestions for how we can improve our service.

We recognise that sometimes there may be occasions when users of our services feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what they could reasonably expect. We also want to know about these occasions so that we can rectify any issues, learn from mistakes and ensure we avoid repeating these in the future.

We recognise that Trustees, Staff and Volunteers working within the charity may experience a situation where they feel the organisation falls short of what they expect of the charity. These concerns should be addressed via the complaints/concerns procedure.

## 2. Duty of Care for the Organisation (sometimes called 'whistle-blowing')

If an employee, volunteer or Trustee has a concern, rather than a complaint, about the conduct of someone within the organisation, a decision or a policy of the organisation, they should feel able to raise that concern.

If appropriate, the concern can be described to their immediate line manager or directly to the Chair of the Trustees. If the matter pertains to the Chair, then the matter should be brought to the attention of the Vice-Chair. If it is thought serious enough, anyone is at liberty to contact the Charity Commission.

No one will be discriminated against in any way for drawing attention to a concern, regardless of the outcome of any investigation into it.

### 3. Procedure

If you have a complaint, we would like you to tell us about it.

This is what you should do:

1. If you have a complaint to make, it should be made to the Clinical Service Manager who will try to resolve the issue informally.
2. If the issue is serious, or you are not satisfied after raising it with the Clinical Service Manager you should make a formal complaint.
3. Your complaint should be made in writing, marked "Private & Confidential", and sent to the **Clinical Trustee, Stand-by-me Bereavement Support, 111 Walsworth Road, Hitchin, SG4 9SP** who will acknowledge it in writing (normally within 7 days of receipt). If you need an interpreter or advocate to help you make your complaint, Stand-by-me can arrange this for you.
4. The Clinical Trustee shall - in consultation with the Chair of Trustees - investigate the complaint. (See Appendix 1).
5. If there is a complaint about the Chair of Trustees, it will be dealt with by the Vice-Chair in consultation with other Trustees as necessary.
6. The Clinical Trustee shall communicate the results of the investigation to you within a reasonable time - normally 21 days.
7. You have the right - if dissatisfied with the results of the inquiry - to put your case in writing or personally to a panel comprising at least three members from the Stand-by-me Trustee Board.
8. If attending personally, you have the right to be accompanied by a friend or advocate to help put your case. (The panel also has the right to have an advisor present).
9. The decision of the panel will be final.
10. Where appropriate, Stand-by-me will make a written apology to the complainant, and agree with any further action necessary to make good the cause of the complaint.
11. All formal complaints and the response made to them will be recorded and filed in a secure place.
12. The Trustee Board shall be informed by the Clinical Trustee at the first available meeting of the number and nature of any formal complaints and their outcome, and consideration will be given to the implications these have for the planning and management of future services annually, as part of Stand-by-me's self-evaluation.

# If a complaint relates to the Clinical Trustee, read Chair of Trustees for Clinical Trustee throughout this policy.

## Appendix 1

## Complaints Checklist

Use this checklist when investigating a complaint as part of the organisation's complaints policy and procedure.

Have you conveyed verbally to the complainant the investigation procedure and timescale?	YES/NO
Have you conducted an interview to establish the background and detail of the complaint?	YES/NO
Have you written a statement about the complaint which you have dated and signed?	YES/NO
Has the complainant countersigned as correct the statement you have taken?	YES/NO
Have you given a copy of the complaint to those associated with its contents?	YES/NO
Have you asked, in writing, for a statement from those associated with the complaint within an agreed period of time?	YES/NO
Have you received the statements within the agreed time period?	YES/NO
Have you advised those being interviewed that they can have a union representative or friend with them?	YES/NO
Have you interviewed all those associated with the complaint?	YES/NO
Have you written up, signed, and dated your notes from each of these interviews?	YES/NO
Have you reviewed all the evidence placed before you?	YES/NO
Have you assessed whether or not you feel there are grounds for complaint?	YES/NO
If so, have you considered all the options for action that could/should be taken as a result?	YES/NO
Are you clear in your own mind what will be the content of the discussion with the Chair about this investigation and its findings?	YES/NO
Have you discussed fully with the Chair the findings of your investigation and your recommendations for action?	YES/NO
Have you put these formally in writing to the Chair, together with the statements and notes taken during the course of the investigation?	YES/NO