

Making your views known policy

Complaints in Day-to-Day Care

A large number of complaints will be about day-to-day care, and can be dealt with informally within the home. In dealing with these concerns and complaints informally, AspireOne Care staff will need to make sure that they do not overlook any serious issues, and that they demonstrate that the complaint is being taken seriously. They should explain that the matter is being dealt with informally, that their complaint has been noted and indicate whether action will be taken. Where serious issues are raised, the formal complaint procedures established within each placing authority should be used.

The aim of the complaints procedure is to provide all Young People in the care of AspireOne Care with a known route through which they can raise matters of concern, which affect their wellbeing.

Introduction of Listen Box

The listen box has been introduced to support young people, staff and visitors within our service in getting their views / comments heard. It also provides a vehicle for those individuals who do not feel able to identify themselves, should they have any concerns to raise anonymously. This box which is shaped like an ear is situated in the main hallway near to the front door. At the side of the box are some leaflets that compliments, comments or concerns can be written onto and posted directly into the box. The box is checked daily by the managers who deal with the information appropriately in line with other policies and record its entry into the "Listen Box Bound Book" outlining any action taken.

If this is to be Effective

The individual person raising the concern or raising a complaint will need confidence that it is alright to raise matters, and that they will be listened to, and that they will be treated fairly. The knowledge that they have been listened to and dealt with fairly on previous occasions will give them the confidence to broach more serious issues.

AspireOne Care staff will need to understand this aspect of the guidance, and their role implementing their own residential home procedures. This will mean being a good listener on a day-to-day basis. They will also need to have the confidence to receive criticism and complaints, without feeling threatened or misunderstood.

Aspireone Care values all comments and is committed to listening to the views and feelings of individuals at the heart of its service. AspireOne Care will work proactively to shape the future of its services and learn from the comments and feedback.

AspireOne Care Staff:

1. Will support young people to make complaints and criticism in a positive way preparing them with lifelong skills;
2. Will strive to ensure that all complaints are dealt with the individual young person at the centre of all investigations;
3. Make it possible to deal with the majority of issues raised on a day to day basis within our homes, offering tools to the young person to deal with negative behaviour equipping them for moving onwards to contribute positively to the larger community;
4. Will make young people aware that they have rights and empower them to challenge negative behaviour in an acceptable manner;
5. Give opportunities for complaints to be raised about matters outside the residential home e.g. school or family;
6. Help them to raise complaints about difficult issues and matters that might have appeared all right to them within the context of their experience, but which are not generally acceptable in society;
7. Reduce the number of complaints that need to be dealt with formally;
8. Ensure any complaint will be addressed seriously and without delay. Complaints will be fully responded to within a maximum of 28 days. Young People will be continually kept informed of the progress;
9. Will keep written records of complaints, name of young person making complaint, date of complaint, nature of complaint, action taken and outcome.

Important Message

It is important for all young people to learn that in life we will not be able to change other people's attitude towards us but what we can learn as individuals is the way in which we let other people treat us. Individuals should always value your opinions and treat you with respect.

Encouraging an Open Culture

The culture of AspireOne Care is that all young people will be able to express their complaints through a properly organised procedure, and should be one in which comments and concerns are readily heard, and listened to carefully. Failure to hear or not to listen to Young People's views will create an atmosphere of suspicion will develop an unhelpful sub cultures.

In encouraging a culture where complaints are acceptable AspireOne Care staff will aim to avoid being defensive about their own and others practice. It is important to remember that the experience of care is individual to each young person, and what may be acceptable to one may give rise to a complaint from someone else.

Staff should avoid making spontaneous judgements about the validity of a complaint. It is essential that everyone should welcome any views and comments, no matter how critical, and always be ready to consider change.

People outside our home will be interested in the policy and procedure that Aspireone Care have established including representatives from the placing authority, Regulation 44 visitors, Care Standards Commission.

Suggested Checklist

- There should be clear written complaints procedures readily available to both staff and young people;
- Procedures for the handling of complaints against the manager should be available and easily accessible;
- Each young person should be aware of the complaints procedure from the time they first arrive. The procedures should be set out in a format appropriate to the ability and understanding of the resident group;
- On no account should complaints be treated lightly or dismissed as not important;
- Each young person should have choice of people in the home to which they could take a complaint;
- Alternatively they should be able to send their complaint to their placing authority Complaints and Representation officers, or have access to: Child Line, Care Standards Commission, Advocacy, and Children's Rights services. Telephone number and address will be on display around the home. Children should not have to ask staff for this information;
- AspireOne Care will hold details of the contact person in each placing authority for dealing with Complaints and Representation;
- All young people will have easy access to this information without having to resort to asking staff;
- There should be a record for monitoring purposes of all complaints received;
- Complaints and Representations procedures and practices in AspireOne Care will be in accordance with all legislative requirements.

Staff Training

Staff within our homes will receive training in the following areas:

- What constitutes a complaint?
- What the procedure is for dealing with an informal complaint in the home and how this is recorded?
- To whom a complaint is made outside the home;
- The procedure to be followed should a complaint not be resolved promptly by informal means, including who should be notified and the keeping of records;
- How the young person can be assisted in making a complaint, including situations where the child has communication impairment.

Useful Address

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD