

## Compliments and Complaints Procedure

August 2022

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

1st Homecare strives to provide care that is of a first-class quality to its clients. Complaints and compliments are a valuable indicator of the quality of the service it provides, and an opportunity to improve that service. All compliments and complaints are welcomed, whether verbal or written, and are used as one of the means of monitoring the standards of care provided. No client will be victimised or treated less favourably as a result of making a complaint, and clients are encouraged to use the complaints procedure whenever they feel it is necessary, whether it is a complaint about a major issue or otherwise.

As well as asking clients to complete questionnaires twice a year, giving feedback on the service, we encourage clients to provide feedback whenever the Care Plan is being reviewed or when spot checks are carried out on carers, or otherwise to let us know whenever any matter is a problem, whether it is a matter of receiving cold food or being kept waiting without explanation, or being spoken to in a manner the client does not like. We are committed to taking all complaints seriously and acting upon them with fairness and impartiality.

## 2 THE COMPLIMENTS PROCEDURE

We welcome compliments received from clients, their representatives or family on the service provided as this lets us know we are getting things right and helps us with monitoring our service. All compliments received regarding our staff will be passed on to the relevant member of staff, and a record of the compliment - or copy of the compliment if written - will be kept on the employee's and client's files.

## 3 THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

As much as we strive to provide the best care to clients, we understand that there will be occasions when a client may be dissatisfied with the care provided by us. In that case, we have a complaints process for the client to follow to ensure that we can speedily address the issues he or she has. Our commitment is that all complaints will be taken seriously and will be acted upon with fairness and impartiality. The procedure is set out below.

### ***Resolution on the spot***

If possible, and if appropriate, we would encourage any client who has a complaint regarding his or her care to raise this with the relevant carer at the time the complaint arises, with the aim of resolving the matter on the spot. We hope that the relationship between client and carer will be sufficiently open, and that the client will have sufficient confidence in the carer, to feel able to let the carer know if they are unhappy with any element of the care provided. In this case, the carer will let the Office know that the client has made the complaint, and the Office and the carer will take action to ensure that the matter complained of is resolved.

In the case where the client does not wish to seek resolution on the spot, it is not something that can be resolved on the spot, or if he or she does raise an issue and the situation does not improve, then the client should raise the matter with the Office directly.

### ***Raising a complaint***

Clients may raise a complaint either by telephoning the relevant Office or by writing to either the Branch Manager, to the Registered Manager or the CEO (John Rennison). If the client chooses to telephone the Office to discuss the complaint, he/she may also wish to record the issue in writing and forward it to the Office.

Rather than writing a letter, if the client so wishes he or she may use the Complaints Form, an example of which is attached to this Policy and Procedure. The client can obtain a copy of the form from the relevant Office by ringing and requesting it.

If the client needs help with making a complaint and does not have the possibility of getting assistance from a relative or friend, 1st Homecare can help by creating a statement of complaint for the client, or else the client can seek the help of an external independent organization such as Age UK to act on their behalf. If the client does get a friend or relative to write the complaint for them, the client should, if possible, sign the statement.

### ***The response to the complaint***

On receipt of a complaint, 1st Homecare will respond initially in writing to the client within 3 working days, to acknowledge receipt of the complaint.

The complaint will then be fully investigated, and the Company will respond substantively to the client in writing within 1 week (subject to all those involved being available to make a statement).

If the complaint is upheld, 1st Homecare will issue a written apology and the client will be informed of the action that will be taken to rectify the complaint.

Feedback from the client will be sought to check that the matter has been resolved to his or her satisfaction.

### ***Next steps if complaint not resolved to client's satisfaction***

If a matter is not resolved to a client's satisfaction, the client and/or their representative or family may always take their complaint to a body outside 1st Homecare.

For clients who are funded by a local authority or by the CHC, complaints may be directed in the first instance to the appropriate Customer Relations Team. 1st Homecare will help the client by providing the details of the relevant Team so that the matter can be referred to the correct Team and person. Ultimately the client can refer the matter to the Local Authority Ombudsman if the client is not satisfied with the response received.

In the case of privately funded clients, a range of advocacy services are available locally that can help a client to bring a complaint. The Office can provide a list of advocacy services if a client needs this information.

A client may always take their complaint to the Care Quality Commission at any stage.

**Co-operation with external agencies**

1st Homecare will cooperate fully in any investigation or subsequent action undertaken by a Customer Relations Team or higher authority to which a client refers a complaint, and any learnings that come out of a complaint will be adopted, in order to ensure that the service is improved.

**Addresses:**

<p><b>For Bedfordshire: Customer Relations Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, SHEFFORD SG17 5TQ Tel: 0300 300 4955 OR 6077 customer.relations@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</b></p>	<p><b>Care Quality Commission: Care Quality Commission, National Customer Service Centre Citygate Gallowgate Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA Tel: 03000 616161</b></p>
<p><b>For Hertfordshire: Hertfordshire Adult Care Services P.O Box 153, Stevenage, SG1 2GH Tel: 0300 123 4042  hertsdirect@hertscc.gov.uk</b></p>	<p><b>The Local Government Ombudsman Tel: 0300 061 0614</b></p>
<p><b>For Oxfordshire: Complaints Team FREEPOST RTLL-ECKS-GLUA Oxford OX1 1YA Tel: 01865 815906 complaints@oxfordshire.gov.uk</b></p>	

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#### 4. GENERAL

This Policy may be reviewed and amended at any time, as may be necessary. Staff shall be informed of the amended version.

Example of Complaints Form that client may wish to complete

<b>Client Name:</b>	
<b>Client Address:</b>	
<b>Client Telephone:</b>	

<b>Date Complaint Received:</b>	
<b>Complaint Taken By:</b>	

<b>Details of the complaint</b>	
Please give details of the incident (if required please continue on separate sheet)	
<b>Complaint form completed by:</b>	
Print Name _____ Signature _____	
Date _____	

<b>Short term action to be taken</b>		
<b>Actions to be taken by:</b>		
<b>Long term actions to be taken</b>		
<b>Actions to be completed by:</b>		

<b>Complaint follow up details (to be completed 6 weeks after initial date of complaint)</b>		
<b>Has the complaint been resolved?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

If no please give reasons why

How will the issue be avoided in the future?

To be signed off by the Registered/Branch Manager

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### CHANGE HISTORY

Issue	Date	Description of Change and Reason
1	November 2012	First Issue
2	October 2013	Second Issue - change of registered manager
3	February 2014	Third Issue – change of registered manager and update
4	April 2014	Fourth Issue – change of details for Customer Relations at CBC
5	September 2014	Fifth Issue – change of addressee for complaints: CEO only not Registered Manager
6	November 2014	Sixth issue – changes to formatting and insertion of review date
7	April 2016	Seventh issue – changes to address and minor amendments.
8	February 2017	Eighth Issue – inclusion of logo and address of Oxford office, minor changes to wording (grammatical) to cover both companies and inclusion of Oxfordshire Complaints Team
9	October 2018	Ninth Issue – amendment of Oxford office address, inclusion of wording to state that client can complain to the Branch Manager or to the CEO and Registered Manager, and amendment of time frame for response to complaints, to reflect the Company’s practice (the policy allowed for 3 weeks for investigation and response, now amended to 1 week subject to all those involved being available to make a statement).
10	January 2020	Tenth Issue – inclusion of KL address, amendment to section on complaints to make clear the client can take their complaint at any stage to the Care Quality Commission.
11	August 2021	Eleventh Issue – inclusion of contact details for Herts ACS, amendment to example of complaints form, amending typos.
12	August 2022	Twelfth Issue – inclusion of “General” section at end. No other changes needed.

### DOCUMENT CONTROL

Name of document	Compliments and Complaints Procedure
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Maintainer	1HC
Owner	1HC
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