

Our Aim

CARESCO is committed to providing a quality service and working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our service users and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken.
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review regularly our complaints policy and procedures

This formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction. The policy provides guidelines for dealing with complaints from members of the public about our services, facilities, staff and volunteers. However, should illegal activity, like terrorism or abuse, be suspected, the complainant must contact the police on 101.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly and with these we aim to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly
- keep matters low-key
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred

Definition

A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction; however, it is expressed. This would include complaints expressed face-to-face, via a phone call, in writing, via email or any other method. All staff and volunteers should have sufficient knowledge to be able to identify an "expression of dissatisfaction" even when the word "complain" or "complaint" is not used.

Responsibilities

CARESCO's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint; and
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to the General Manager's and/or the trustees' attention normally within 4 weeks of the issue arising.
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date.
- allow CARESCO a reasonable time to deal with the matter, and
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond CARESCO's control.

Confidentiality:

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and CARESCO maintain confidentiality. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own facts). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Complaints Procedure:

Written records must be made by CARESCO at each stage of the procedure.

Stage 1

In the first instance, on receipt of a complaint, the General Manager (or in the case of a complaint relating to the General Manager, a trustee other than the chairman) must establish the seriousness of the complaint. An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Stage 2

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should be advised that a formal complaint may be made, and the following procedure should be explained to them.

- a) A formal complaint can be made either verbally or in writing. If in writing the attached form should be used as appropriate. If verbally, a statement should be taken by a member of staff or a supervisor.
- b) In all cases, the complaint must be passed on to General Manager in the first instance for investigation. In the event of a complaint about the General Manager, the complaint must be passed on to a trustee, other than the chairman, for investigation.
- c) Depending on the nature of the complaint, CARESCO must acknowledge the complaint in writing within one week of receiving it.
- d) Any conclusions reached should be discussed with the staff member or volunteer involved and their line manager.
- e) The person making the complaint will receive a response based on the investigation within four weeks of the complaint being received. If this is not possible then a letter must be sent explaining why.

Stage 3

- a) If the complainant is not satisfied with the above decision, then the complaint will be referred to the chairman of trustees.
- b) the Chairman (or their nominee) will examine the complaint and may wish to carry out further interviews, examine files / notes. They will respond within four weeks in writing.

The chairman's decision will be final.

If the complainant is still not happy with how the charity dealt with their complaint, they should contact the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Complaints relating to fundraising should be referred to the Fundraising Regulator.

Monitoring and reporting

Trustees of CARESCO will receive periodic anonymised report of complaints made and their resolution.

The management board of CARESCO trustees should review this policy at 3 year intervals or as appropriate.

Approved by the CARESCO Trustees

Signed
(Chairman)

Date

CARESCO is committed to providing a quality service but sometimes we get it wrong. If you need to make a complaint about an aspect of our work, we will need the following information so that we can deal with your complaint in an appropriate and timely manner.

Your Details – please complete all boxes

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Title | First Name | Surname |
| Daytime Phone No | | Email Address |
| Postal Address (inc postcode) | | |

Details of your complaint

Please give as much information as possible so that we can investigate your complaint properly:
(continue on a separate page if necessary)

What you would like us to do to resolve your complaint:

| | |
|-----------|------|
| Signature | Date |
|-----------|------|

Data Protection: We will only use the personal information you provide on this form in relation to your complaint. For more details on how we use and protect data please see our privacy policy.

Our contact details: CARESCO Centre, Green End Road, Sawtry, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 5UX
01487 832105 office@caresco.org.uk www.caresco.org.uk

CARESCO Admin – for office use only

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Date received: | Date acknowledgement sent: | Date response sent |
| Received by: | Sent by: | Sent by: |
| Complaint investigated by: | Date referred on: Referred to: | Date final report concluded: |