

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Neuro Gateway Support Network

1. Introduction and Statement of Commitment

Neuro Gateway Support Network is committed to delivering a high-quality, respectful, and responsive service to all individuals who engage with the organisation. This includes individuals affected by dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and other neurological conditions, as well as their families, carers, and wider support networks. The organisation recognises that, despite best intentions and professional standards, there may be occasions where individuals feel dissatisfied with the service they have received. In such instances, *Neuro Gateway Support Network* welcomes feedback and complaints as an essential part of maintaining accountability, improving services, and ensuring that individuals feel heard and respected.

The organisation is committed to ensuring that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently, and in a timely manner. Individuals raising concerns will be treated with dignity and respect, and the organisation will ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and structured framework for managing complaints in a way that is transparent, accessible, and consistent with good governance and regulatory expectations.

This policy ensures that individuals understand how to raise concerns, what they can expect from the process, and how the organisation will respond. It also establishes internal procedures for investigating complaints, resolving issues, and learning from feedback in order to improve service delivery.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all complaints relating to the activities and services provided by *Neuro Gateway Support Network*. This includes concerns about the quality or nature of guidance and support provided, the conduct or behaviour of individuals representing the organisation, delays in communication or response, and any aspect of service delivery that has caused dissatisfaction.

The policy applies to complaints raised by individuals who have accessed the organisation's services, as well as those acting on their behalf, such as family members or carers.

This policy does not apply to complaints about external organisations, such as health services or local authorities, although the organisation may provide guidance and support to individuals in raising such concerns through appropriate channels. Safeguarding concerns are managed under the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and may take precedence over the complaints process where there is a risk of harm.

4. Definition of a Complaint

For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about the actions, decisions, or service provided by *Neuro Gateway Support Network* or individuals acting on its behalf.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing and may arise from a single incident or a series of events.

5. Principles for Handling Complaints

Neuro Gateway Support Network is committed to handling complaints in a manner that reflects its core values of integrity, transparency, and respect.

All complaints will be treated seriously and handled impartially. The organisation will ensure that individuals raising concerns are listened to carefully and that their views are considered fully. Complaints will be addressed in a timely manner, and individuals will be kept informed of progress throughout the process.

Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible, and information will only be shared with those directly involved in investigating and resolving the complaint. The organisation will ensure that any conflicts of interest are appropriately managed and that complaints are handled by individuals who are independent of the issue where possible.

The organisation is committed to resolving complaints at the earliest opportunity and to ensuring that the process is accessible to all individuals, including those who may require additional support in communicating their concerns.

6. How to Make a Complaint

Individuals may raise a complaint through a range of communication channels, including email, telephone, or written correspondence. The organisation will ensure that individuals are provided with clear contact details and that support is available to assist those who may have difficulty in making a complaint.

When making a complaint, individuals are encouraged to provide as much information as possible, including details of the issue, relevant dates, and the outcome they are seeking. However, the organisation recognises that individuals may be experiencing distress or difficulty and will provide appropriate support to ensure that concerns can be raised effectively.

7. Complaints Procedure

Initial Concerns and Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, concerns may be raised informally in the first instance. The organisation will seek to resolve such concerns quickly through discussion, clarification, or explanation. This approach allows for prompt resolution and may prevent the need for a formal complaint.

Formal Complaints

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, or if the individual prefers to proceed formally, a complaint may be submitted to the organisation.

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the organisation will acknowledge the complaint within five working days. The complaint will then be reviewed and assigned to an appropriate individual for investigation.

The investigation process will involve gathering relevant information, reviewing records, and, where necessary, speaking with those involved. The organisation will aim to provide a full written response within twenty working days. Where this is not possible due to the

complexity of the complaint, the individual will be informed of the delay and provided with an updated timeframe.

Review and Escalation

If the individual is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they may request a review. The review will be conducted by a trustee or senior individual who has not been directly involved in the original investigation, ensuring independence and objectivity. The outcome of the review will be considered final within the organisation, and a written response will be provided within a reasonable timeframe.

8. Outcomes and Resolution

Following investigation, the organisation will provide a clear and reasoned response to the complaint. This may include an explanation of what occurred, an acknowledgment of any shortcomings, and an apology where appropriate.

Where issues are identified, the organisation will outline any actions taken to address the matter and prevent recurrence. This may include changes to procedures, additional training, or improvements to service delivery.

9. Record Keeping and Monitoring

All complaints will be recorded and retained securely in accordance with data protection requirements. Records will include details of the complaint, the investigation process, and the outcome.

The organisation will monitor complaints on an ongoing basis to identify patterns, trends, and areas for improvement. This information will be used to inform service development and ensure that lessons are learned.

10. Learning and Continuous Improvement

Neuro Gateway Support Network views complaints as an opportunity to improve. Feedback will be reviewed regularly, and appropriate actions will be taken to strengthen processes, enhance service quality, and ensure that the organisation continues to meet the needs of those it supports.

11. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled in accordance with the organisation's Data Protection Policy. Personal information will be treated confidentially and will only be shared where necessary for the purpose of investigating and resolving the complaint.

12. External Complaints and Further Action

If an individual remains dissatisfied after completing the organisation's complaints process, they may have the option to raise their concerns with relevant external bodies. This may include the Charity Commission in relation to governance issues, or the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to data protection concerns. The organisation will provide guidance on how to access these services where appropriate.

13. Accessibility and Support

The organisation is committed to ensuring that the complaints process is accessible to all individuals. Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to support individuals with communication needs, disabilities, or other barriers.

Support may be provided to help individuals understand the process, articulate their concerns, and engage with the investigation.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if required, to ensure that it remains effective, relevant, and aligned with best practice and legal requirements.

15. Final Statement

Neuro Gateway Support Network is committed to fostering a culture of openness, accountability, and continuous improvement. The organisation recognises the importance of listening to feedback and addressing concerns in a fair and transparent manner.

By responding constructively to complaints, the organisation aims to strengthen trust, improve services, and ensure that individuals feel supported, respected, and confident in the care and guidance they receive.