



Suicide Prevention Bristol

Complaints Policy

2022

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Introduction

We sincerely hope that there should never be the need to complain about our service, but in the unlikely event then any complaints will be dealt with in a friendly, warm, and professional manner.

Beyond complaints, we welcome all feedback on what we are doing, whether related to what we are good at, who in the organisation is adding value, what our stakeholders would like to see more or less of, or general feedback on how we can improve.

This policy aims to provide all stakeholders of Suicide Prevention Bristol with a means to make a complaint, give a compliment, or provide other feedback, and outlines how we manage such information.

Principles

- We believe that our stakeholders (anyone who is affected by Suicide Prevention Bristol's work) have a right to tell us what they think about what we do and how we do it.
- We are committed to using this feedback as it helps us to improve.
- We will always try to resolve difficulties informally, but in some circumstances, we will escalate the issue and deal with it as a formal complaint.
- We aim to resolve all complaints promptly and sensitively.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff including employees, volunteers, agency workers, self-employed contractors, and management.

This policy is not designed to be used as a means for staff to raise grievances about their working terms or conditions and we redirect staff to the Manager if this is the case.

Safeguarding concerns should be raised with the Safeguarding Officer: Marianne at safeguarding@spbristol.org and not under the policy.

This policy is made available to all stakeholders on request in order for them to provide feedback and/or make a complaint.

Definitions

A **complaint** is any expression of dissatisfaction, which requires a response.

A **complainant** is a person making the complaint, whether on behalf of themselves or another.

The person about whom the complaint is made is referred to as the **subject**.

Complaints, Our Objectives

Our objective is simply not to have any complaints and maintain complete stakeholder satisfaction, however, in the unlikely event of any issues - we have outlined our complaints procedure below. We will endeavour to resolve all complaints promptly at no additional cost to the complainant.

There are some areas however that we cannot control or be held responsible for:

- Any failures from third parties when due diligence in using their services has already been undertaken.
- Conflict between parties that we have no influence over.
- Complaints outside of the scope of members of the organisation to resolve.

If a serious allegation is made, Suicide Prevention Bristol will self-refer to any appropriate bodies/authorities to ensure that such complaints are dealt with, escalated, and investigated transparently and appropriately.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and subcontractors are responsible for:

- Responding to complaints and feedback warmly and professionally.
- Providing first-line assistance in the event of harm.
- Recording the details of complaints, compliments or general feedback made in person or over the telephone.
- Passing complaints, compliments, and other feedback to the Manager promptly.

The Manager and other senior staff responsible for:

- Reviewing all complaints, compliments, and general feedback in a timely manner.
- Using feedback to shape the service where appropriate.

- Passing on compliments to the recognised parties.
- Feeding back where comments, complaints, or suggestions warrant it.
- Managing more serious complaints within the procedure below.
- Provide further support in the event of harm.
- Seek and obtain mediation and/or specialist assistance where necessary.
- Self-referring Suicide Prevention Bristol to the relevant professional and/or governing body as required.
- Conducting reviews of the issues raised in complaints and where necessary, implementing an action plan to prevent a recurrence.

Where to Complain, leave a Comment or Compliment Us

Name/Position: The Manager, Clare Kemp

Address: Suite 601, 179 Whiteladies Rd, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2AG

Telephone: 0800 689 5652

Email: info@spbristol.org

Online Form: <https://www.spbristol.org/contact-us>

A copy of this policy must be made available to all persons requesting a copy in person, via post, or via email.

Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

Complaints may be made in person, over the telephone, by email or in writing.

Notification of a complaint may be made to any member of staff and will be passed onto the Manager in a timely manner for review.

The receiving staff member must, where appropriate offer an apology and provide immediate support to the complainant.

The complaint will be logged and securely filed for record-keeping and future reference.

The Manager will then proceed to investigate the complaint and consider options for a resolution of the complaint should the complainant not be satisfied with the initial apology.

Complaints relating to a subject in our employment or providing services on our behalf in a volunteering or contracting capacity will in most circumstances require a fact-finding interview to ascertain the details surrounding the incident(s).

The objective at this stage is a speedy informal resolution of the issue and any proposed resolutions will be considered carefully.

When the investigation has concluded any necessary corrective and/or preventative actions will be detailed to ensure that lessons are learnt.

A letter of conclusion will then be sent to the complainant outlining the findings and proposing a resolution. At this stage the complaint will be considered closed.

Our goal is to reply with a resolution within 7 working days of a complaint being received.

Stage 2

If we cannot resolve the issue to the complainant's satisfaction within Stage 1, this issue will be escalated to a formal resolution stage. We may request the complaint be served formally in writing.

If required, we will complete a more thorough investigation to find the root cause of the issue by collecting further witness statements, evidence, and conducting further interviews.

At this stage, a meeting should be arranged with the complainant by the Manager or other senior member of the management team at the earliest mutual convenience.

During this meeting, we will seek to explore the resolution proposed by the complainant and disclose any further evidence found during any subsequent investigations.

At this stage we will again seek to agree on a satisfactory resolution with the complainant however resolutions must be fair, measured, and appropriate. Therefore, any proposed resolutions we consider to be excessive and unbalanced will not be considered.

We may seek the guidance of professional bodies and other 3rd party arbitration to reach a satisfactory resolution in a stalemate situation.

Our goal is to reply with a formal resolution within 10 working days of moving from Stage 1 to Stage 2 however this may be longer.

The facility to agree on a timeframe with the complainant will not be seen as a means of unduly extending the process of responding to complaints, but rather as a means of setting a realistic timescale given any circumstances which may arise, the timescale of the investigation, time required to seek third party guidance, and the arranging of a mutually suitable time to conduct the meeting.

Stage 3 – Local Resolution Exhausted

If neither Stage 1 nor 2 reached a resolution, Suicide Prevention Bristol will consider the complaint to be closed as all local resolution has been exhausted.

At this stage, the complainant may wish to explore other routes of making a complaint against the business or its staff through regulatory or governing bodies.

Our regulatory body is the Charity Commission, who's contact details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission#org-contacts>

Providing Other Feedback

To make a comment about our service or to complement our team or recognise an individual, simply contact any member of Suicide Prevention Bristol staff or write to the Manager using the contact details above.

Comments and compliments given in person or over the telephone will be recorded by our staff and passed to the Manager.

If we feel that a comment should be raised as a complaint or handled under another policy, we will write to the complainant and inform them of the alternative route in which their feedback is being dealt with.

All comments and compliments will be reviewed and used to shape our service in the future.

We aim to respond to the individual providing feedback within 30 working days where a response is required.

Monitoring and Reviewing

This policy should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains compliant with current legislation, meets best practices, and is not discriminatory.

Suicide Prevention Bristol will monitor the number of complaints and the type of complaints received.

The results of monitoring will be reviewed by the Manager and senior management at regular meetings.

Where evidence or trends indicate that our culture, policy, procedures, or workforce require intervention, an action plan will be initiated.

Policy Date: March 2022

Review Date: March 2023

Dated and Signed by the CEO of Suicide Prevention Bristol:
