

## SERVICE SATISFACTION AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

The aim of Tŷ Elis is to assist persons who are disturbed or distressed and to educate and train persons in counselling so that they may assist in the therapeutic treatment of persons suffering from emotional disorders or problems.

We aim to do this by giving the best possible service to all our clients and students in all of the counselling and training services we provide and also by giving appropriate support to our staff.

### Service Standards

Our Associate Counsellors, Counsellors and Supervisors work to and our practice and procedures follow the standards set out in the **British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling**. (A copy is available to download from the BACP website and also available from the Tŷ Elis office). Students undertaking our Accredited Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling are taught in accordance with the published training standards of The National Counselling Society (which are available to download from the NCS website and also available from the Tŷ Elis office).

Tŷ Elis counselling staff are routinely supervised and trained to deliver a high level of client and customer service in order to create a professional and positive client and customer experience.

At Tŷ Elis, we are committed at all times to:

- being courteous and professional
- observing privacy and confidentiality in all matters
- providing a high quality service

We are also committed to ensuring accessibility for all and are responsive to a diverse range of needs.

### Complaints and Compliments

If someone is dissatisfied either with our service or any aspect of our operation they are entitled to complain.

Clients can also let us know if they think there is something we have done well. They are given a satisfaction form to complete anonymously. Feedback and comments are collated and reviewed by management on a monthly basis and submitted to the Board of Trustees for each meeting.

### Complaints Process

Complaints may be made orally or in writing.

A formal complaint is one which is:

- i) made in writing; or

- ii) made orally and determined at any time by the appropriate Complaints Officer to be a formal complaint.

A formal complaint shall in the case of a written complaint be deemed to have been received on the date on which it is actually delivered to Tŷ Elis if delivery occurs before 2pm or on the next working day if delivery occurs after 2pm.

A formal complaint shall in the case of an oral complaint be deemed to be made on the date on which it is determined to be a formal complaint if such determination occurs before 2pm or on the next working day if such determination occurs after 2pm.

A 'working day' means any day which is not a Saturday, Sunday or statutory holiday.

The following procedure shall apply in relation to a formal complaint:

1. A written acknowledgment of the complaint will be sent to the complainant within 14 days of the complaint having been received.
2. The nature and seriousness of the complaint will be evaluated by the Clinical Director (or their deputy) as soon as practicable.
3. The appropriate Complaints Officer (see below) will consider the complaint and carry out such investigations as he/she considers appropriate.
4. The appropriate Complaints Officer will determine the complaint and notify the complainant of such determination within 56 days of the complaint having been received.
5. If the appropriate Complaints Officer concludes that further investigations are required the appropriate Complaints Officer may extend the period stated in paragraph 4 above and shall notify the complainant in writing of the period of any such extension.
6. The appropriate Complaints Officer may at any time during the course of investigating the matter decide that the complaint should be referred to the Complaints Committee for determination. Where this occurs the complainant shall be notified in writing as soon as practicable.
7. The complaint may be determined in either of the following ways:
  - a. the complaint may be upheld or
  - b. the complaint may be rejected
8. Where a complaint is upheld the appropriate Complaints Officer (or, if applicable, the Complaints Committee) will take such further action as they may deem appropriate. This may include an apology to the complainant. Tŷ Elis may but shall not be obliged to notify the complainant of any internal action taken (e.g. in relation to any disciplinary action to be taken against a member of staff) as a result of a complaint being upheld.
9. Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint the complainant may within 28 days of receiving notification of such decision write to the Chair of the Ethics Committee to request that the determination be reviewed by the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee shall within 56 days thereafter undertake a review of the determination. The Ethics Committee may within that period:
  - a. request further information with regard to the complaint and notify the complainant of the revised timescale for the determination of its review
  - b. uphold the determination of the appropriate Complaints Officer (or, if applicable, the Complaints Committee)

- c. overturn or vary the determination of appropriate Complaints Officer (or, if applicable, the Complaints Committee) in such manner as the Ethics Committee thinks fit.

The Ethics Committee will confirm its decision in writing to the complainant.

10. The decision of the Ethics Committee shall be final.

Where applicable the Ethics Committee will inform the complainant that the complainant is entitled to refer his or her complaint to the relevant professional body.

### The Relevant Person

There are five categories of complaint:

1. **Where the complaint is of a therapeutic nature or is made against a staff member who is an Associate Counsellor, Counsellor or Clinical Supervisor or a trainer of therapeutic staff members**

For this type of complaint the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the Clinical Director. If the complaint relates to the conduct of the Clinical Director the Relevant Person will be the Chair of the Management Committee.

2. **Where the complaint is of a non-therapeutic nature and is made against staff members who are not Associate Counsellors, Counsellors or Clinical Supervisors**

For this type of complaint the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the Manager but if the complaint relates to the conduct of the Manager the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the Chair of the Management Committee.

3. **Where the complaint is from a student undertaking our Accredited Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling and is made against a tutor or Diploma manager**

For this type of complaint the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the Course Leader but, if the complaint relates to the conduct of the Course Leader, the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the Clinical Director.

As a training provider we take complaints seriously and, as such, in this instance we have an Independent Complaints Reviewer (ICR) to assess any appeal should there be dissatisfaction with the handling or outcome of a complaint. Their decision will be communicated in writing within a stated time frame. This decision will be considered final.

In the case of a student still being dissatisfied, depending on the nature of the complaint, they may be able to utilise the National Counselling Society's accredited training provider complaints process which is available on their website. The National Counselling Society can only hear complaints about training providers on receipt of evidence that Tŷ Elis's internal complaints process has been completed, including the ICR appeal process.

4. **Where the complaint is received against a Trustee**

For this type of complaint the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the Chair of the Management Committee but, if the complaint relates to the conduct of the Chair of the Management Committee, the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the President.

5. **Any other form of complaint e.g. relating to customer service, finance or processes.**

For this type of complaint the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the Manager but if the complaint relates to the conduct of the Manager the appropriate Complaints Officer will be the Chair of the Management Committee.

End of policy-----