

Complaints Procedure

FENIKS sets high standards and aims to provide first class services. However, there may be times when you are unhappy about something. If this is the case it is important that you tell us.

We want to maintain high quality services and hearing your concerns, criticisms or complaints will help us to do this. If there are any problems we would like to sort them out as soon as possible.

These guidelines tell you what to do if you are not happy about any of our services. We cannot promise to resolve every complaint or agree with every suggestion. We do promise to take your concerns seriously, to carry out a full investigation of complaints and to tell you what we intend to do.

Who can make a complaint?

Any person who has any contact with our services may use this complaints procedure. The complaint may be made directly or by a third person representing the interests of the person using the service. Complaints may therefore come from service users, their carers, key workers, friends or family.

Counselling clients

If you are attending our Counselling Service we would like to assure you that we follow standards set by COSCA Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice. You were informed about it at the first session with your counsellor or therapist. You can access this Policy anytime. It is available in the counselling room as well as on our website in the *Documents* section.

Who should you speak to?

You can make a complaint to any member of the FENIKS team. If you are using a volunteer led service you should ask to speak to a member of staff.

Making your complaint

We understand that you may feel upset or angry if you have to make a complaint and we will do our best to deal with your concerns or complaints in a patient, understanding and sensitive manner. In return we would ask you please to be courteous and respectful when talking to our staff or volunteers. Most of the time, you will find that things can be sorted out in an informal way without using the complaints procedure or having to see the manager. However, if we are unable to resolve

issues at this stage any member of the team will be able to arrange for you to talk to the manager or register a formal complaint.

Making a formal complaint

It will not always be possible to resolve issues informally. If this happens you should make it clear that you wish to use the formal complaints procedure by informing the manager or a member of staff. You can make a formal complaint verbally to any member of staff or by using the complaints form attached. Verbal complaints will be recorded by the member of staff dealing with the complaint and a copy will be made available to the complainant. If you make your complaint by phone we can send out or e-mail a form for you to complete.

In this first stage your complaint will be dealt with by FENIKS staff, usually the manager, but in the manager's absence, another member of the team. We will let you know who will be looking into things within five days of receiving the complaint.

We aim to complete our investigations within four weeks of receiving your complaint. We will write to you and may meet with you to explain our findings. We will do everything we can to reach an acceptable resolution. You are welcome to bring along a representative to any meetings – this could be carer, professional support worker or advocacy worker, whoever you feel is best suited to provide you with the support you need.

Time limits for complaints

Complaints can be accepted up to three years from the time of the problem arising. If the complaint refers to specific client work the maximum is three years from the date the client ended counselling with the Feniks. However, it is much easier to sort out difficulties if the complaint is brought to our attention as quickly as possible.

Taking things further

If you are not happy with the response you receive in the first stage of the formal complaints procedure (from the manager or member of staff dealing with the complaint in the manager's absence), you can ask for a review. You should do this within the four weeks and in writing if possible, by letter or e-mail. The review will be carried out by a maximum of three members of the FENIKS Management Committee and may also include one Committee advisor. You will be informed within five days of our receiving your request for a review who will be dealing with it. This will give you and all parties an opportunity to declare a conflict of interest with them. We will try our best to keep the numbers of people involved to a minimum, but this will largely depend on the nature of the complaint.

The Review Panel will have access to relevant documents and policy papers within Feniks and to staff members, if appropriate. They may ask you and other involved individuals for evidence. This will be sought in person and will meet with each party separately. You, as well as other parties will

have the right to be accompanied, and/or represented, by a supportive person of your choice. Neither you, other parties and/ nor your representatives will be asked to attend the meetings together.

You will be informed in writing within four weeks of the outcome of the review; however we will try our best to keep your wait to a minimum and will make every effort to resolve issues speedily and efficiently. The result of this review will be final and following our response FENIKS will consider the matter closed.

If your complaint regarded Feniks's Counselling Service and you are still unsatisfied after the decision of the Review Panel or you are unhappy about the content of the Committee Advisor's report, you as well as other parties, will have a right to appeal to COSCA within the fourteen days from the decision. The report will be send to COSCA on completion of the procedure.

The procedure will be halted, at any stage, upon discovery that legal action is underway, pending or intended, until such time as any legal process is complete.

Complaints to COSCA

COSCA is the professional body for counselling and psychotherapy in Scotland. It provides formal professional Recognition for the Feniks Counselling Service and we are therefore also covered by the COSCA Complaints Procedure.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the decision of the appeals panel or remains dissatisfied about the content of the investigator's report he/she will be advised that they can submit a complaint to COSCA under their Complaints Procedure.

COSCA

16 Melville Terrace

Stirling

FK8 2NE

01786 475140

www.cosca.org.uk

Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated as confidential. We will only disclose information to others that is necessary to carry out the investigation. We will always try to be as open as we can with you in the process of managing your complaint, however, there may be times when we cannot disclose information because of other people's right to confidentiality.

Monitoring of complaints

FENIKS keeps a record of all complaints, formal and informal and this information is used for evaluation and to inform the planning and development of services.

Useful contacts

We appreciate that it can be difficult and distressing to make a complaint and that you may require information and/or support in order to help you define your feelings and concerns and communicate them to us. You may find the following resources helpful:

CAPS Independent Advocacy

5 Cadzow Place, Edinburgh. EH7 5SN

Tel: 0131 538 7177

E: contact@capsadvocacy.org

www.capsadvocacy.org/index.php

Advocard

332 Leith Walk, Edinburgh. EH6 5BR

Tel: 0131 554 5307

E: advocacy@advocard.org.uk

www.advocard.org.uk

Investigation Officers

OSCR (Office of Scottish Charities Regulator)

2nd Floor, Quadrant House,

9 Riverside Drive,

Dundee

DD1 4NY

Tel: 01382 220 446

E: info@oscr.org.uk (fao investigation officers)

www.oscr.org.uk



Formal Complaint Form

To be completed by person making complaint or member of staff receiving formal complaint verbally

Name of complainant.....

(for office use) Complaint ref. no.....

Address.....
.....

Tel.....

Anyone else to be involved/ informed of appointments etc.?

Name.....

Relationship to the complainant (friend, family, support worker etc)

.....

Address.....
.....

Tel.....

To be completed by complainant if other individual involved (please note we will not share any information regarding this complaint until this section is signed by the complainant)

I agree that..... may be included in correspondence and contacted or communicated with on my behalf/ in addition (please delete as appropriate) to me regarding the investigation and outcome of this complaint.

Complainants signature.....



FENIKS. Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd.

St. Margaret's House, 151 London Road, EH7 6AE, Edinburgh

+44 7510 122 425, e-mail: info@feniks.org.uk

www.feniks.org.uk

Details of complaint (please use continuation sheet if necessary)

Complaint ref no.....

Member of staff receiving complaint:

Name.....

Position.....

Date complaint received.....

Details of action taken and outcomes

Complaints Policy

FENIKS is committed to a process of continual improvement of its services and relies on hearing the views of clients, carers and colleagues, both positive and negative. Our aim is to listen to all suggestions and complaints and modify our practice accordingly. We also aim to provide counselling to the highest standards and therefore we follow COSCA Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the standard of service, action or lack of action by FENIKS's personnel or management that affects an individual or group of service users or their carers. This may include situations where someone believes that the organisation has: done something wrong; failed to do something that it should have done; provided services to a poor standard; acted unfairly, unethically or discourteously.

There are several ways of resolving complaints including: making an apology; giving an explanation; taking action which changes things for the better; taking action which restores things to the way they were; replacing goods; and arranging financial compensation. Resolution can involve one or a mix of these remedies.

The FENIKS Complaints Procedure will be made available to service users on request. Staff are requested to inform the Manager if requests for other languages or formats are made translations will then be ordered as a matter of priority and translators sought if required. A small flyer will be displayed with project publicity advising service users to talk to a member of staff if they are in any way unhappy with FENIKS services. This leaflet will include Polish translations.

All staff and volunteers will be made familiar with the Complaints policy and procedure on commencing employment.

Complaints will be dealt with in confidence. The only exception to this is when others could be put at risk by matters referred to in the complaint.

FENIKS wishes to promote an environment within which service users can be confident that they can make a genuine complaint without this having a negative impact on their use of the service or their general well being. We understand that making a complaint can be distressing and may be particularly difficult for the many people who use our service who experience mental ill health, lack of confidence etc. We therefore strive to maintain an open and non-defensive culture, which recognises the value of complaints and the opportunities for improvement which service users' criticisms/observations can bring.

All staff members are encouraged to receive complaints in an encouraging and reassuring manner and to provide support where necessary. Support may include: taking the time to listen to the person's story; explaining the complaints procedure; getting information for the complainant; helping them to decide whether they wish to make a formal complaint; helping them to identify an external agency to support them with a formal complaint if they require it.

Any member of staff may receive a complaint and this should not automatically be referred to the manager. Staffs are encouraged to deal with the matter as long as they feel comfortable and confident with the situation. If the situation is complex or unclear or the service user is threatening in their behaviour or manner staff should consult the manager, or if she is not available, advise the service user that the manager will call them to discuss the matter as soon as possible. If the manager is absent from work at the time (e.g. on annual or sick leave) the staff member should consult the Chairperson or another Board member.

There is much evidence to support the fact that complaints handled well in the early stages are less likely to reach a formal stage. Staffs are therefore encouraged to take the time to listen to the service user and to make a simple but clear apology if they feel that FENIKS is at fault or could have provided a better service. They should also reassure the service user that their complaint will be taken note of and will be used as part of our monitoring and evaluation process. All complaints and responses will be recorded and the manager informed in due course.

Anonymous complaints are not encouraged as they are difficult to investigate or resolve but if we do receive anonymous complaints they will be treated in the same manner as other complaints as far as is practicable.

Staff and Board members should be aware that we do have access to a legal advice service through our general insurance and are advised to use this accordingly.

Board Members appointed to deal with complaints:

1. Name.....

Position.....

Contact Details.....

FENIKS. Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd.

St. Margaret's House, 151 London Road, EH7 6AE, Edinburgh
+44 7510 122 425, e-mail: info@feniks.org.uk
www.feniks.org.uk

2. Name.....

Position.....

Contact Details.....

Policy review date: 04/04/2018