

As part of our mission and vision, Hospice Palliative Care Ontario (HPCO) places a high value on working effectively and cooperatively with our members and stakeholders. This policy and procedure document defines HPCO's complaints process.

*The Definition of a Complaint:* A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the actions, or lack of action by HPCO or its staff (and for the purpose of this policy, the term "staff" includes volunteers), specific to the programs and services provided by HPCO.

Note: This policy does not apply to complaints about services provided about a hospice organization. For information on complaints about a hospice, please contact [hospiceservices@hpcpo.ca](mailto:hospiceservices@hpcpo.ca)

Examples include but are not limited to; perceived failure to do something agreed upon; failure to observe policy or procedures; errors made by a staff member; or unfair or discourteous actions/statements by a staff member.

*Who Can Make a Complaint?* Anyone personally affected can complain, and their complaint will be reviewed in accordance with this procedure.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. Complaint Receipt and Handling:

- A complaint may be received verbally (by phone or in person) or in writing (by mail or email).
- The HPCO representative who receives a complaint shall first determine the proper person to whom the complaint should be directed. This will generally be the person who has the primary relationship with the complainant, that individual's supervisor, or the staff person who has the specific knowledge that is needed to resolve the complaint.
- It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either resolve it or transfer it to the appropriate staff member for resolution.
  - The person who initially receives the complaint shall acknowledge receipt to the complainant and advise whether the complaint will be acted on by themselves or another staff member.
  - If the complaint is transferred, the recipient shall acknowledge to the complainant that they have received the complaint and that the issue is being sent to a specific person (name the individual and state their title) who will act on it.
- If a timeframe for action can be determined, that should be included in the acknowledgement.
- The contact information of the complainant including name, phone number and email address should immediately be recorded.
- If the complainant refuses to provide their name and either a phone number or email address, they are to be advised that the complaint will not proceed.

### 2. Resolving the Complaint

- Every effort should be made to resolve complaints received in a timely fashion.
- When receiving a verbal complaint, staff shall listen and seek to understand the complaint and may attempt to resolve it immediately.
- Complaints received in writing should be acknowledged to the complainant within two business days of opening the complaint, and staff should attempt to resolve the matter within +30 business days.

- The CEO of HPCO makes the final determination on all complaints related to the operations and services of HPCO.
- Complaints about the CEO should be directed to the Chair of the Board (via the Board Administrator at 416-736-7975). The Chair of the Board will handle the complaint in consultation with the Executive Committee.
- Complainants should be kept informed of the status of their complaint.
- Every attempt should be made to resolve escalated complaints within an additional 30 business days so that all complaints are resolved within a month of having been received.

### **3. Documenting the Complaint**

- A record of all complaints will be kept.
- Information about complaints shall be recorded on a tracking form.
- A summary of the complaints received, including number and type, will be reported to HPCO's Board of Directors through the President and CEO's Quarterly Compliance Report.

### **Confidentiality**

All complaints are treated confidentially. In fairness to all involved, anonymous complaints will not be accepted.