

## Complaint Handling Policy – Cherished Minds

### **Purpose**

This policy has been developed to ensure that all workers (including volunteers) understand the policy surrounding managing and responding to complaints directed at Cherished Minds and its workers, not complaints to the NDIA or about the NDIS.

**Applicable to:** All clients of Cherished Minds and is to be upheld by all workers, volunteers, directors, subcontractors and other associates of Cherished Minds that engage with clients and is applicable at all times.

**Policy.** (Please also refer to process on Complaint Handling).

### **Goal of this policy:**

Cherished Minds values complaints as they assist us to improve our products, services and customer service.

This policy has been designed to assist both customers and staff. Cherished Minds is committed to consistent, fair and confidential complaint handling and to resolving complaints as quickly as possible. We aim to make it easy for people to make a complaint if they are dissatisfied and we will endeavor to correct and rectify any wrong doing.

We provide all persons who engage with Cherished Minds services the opportunity to access information on our complaint handling policy and processes. It is a client's right to complain and complaints should always be handled with upmost respect and every effort made to assist with rectification of this dissatisfaction.

All people making a complaint will be treated with courtesy. Where possible, complaints will be resolved at the first point of contact. Complaints will still be recorded whether they are able to be resolved at first point of contact or not.

### **Definition**

**Complaints** are defined as any expression of dissatisfaction or grievance made to staff by a customer or member of the public in relation to our business.

### **When is information provided to clients and workers on how to make a complaint?**

Information is provided to both workers and clients about how to make a complaint:

- In the complimentary visit when the service agreement is signed (for clients)
- Upon commencement of employment (for workers)
- Anytime upon request (for clients)
- Anytime workers access our Dropbox folder
- Upon exiting a service agreement

## **Complaint Handling Policy – Cherished Minds**

### **How are complaints received?**

A complaint to Cherished Minds can be received:

- By a complaint form (hand written and hand given, scanned and emailed)
- Via email or phone to Cherished Minds
- In verbal correspondence

We encourage all persons making complaints to fill in a complaints form so that no information is missed during the response process.

Complaints can be:

- Made anonymously
- Can be directed to us
- Can be directed to the NDIS Complaints Commissioner

### **Who can make a complaint?**

A complaint can be made by:

- A client/ participant
- A client/ participant's family, care givers or delegated person
- Workers
- An advocate
- A member of the public
- Other professionals
- Anyone that Cherished Minds service impact

### **Once a complaint is received**

The complaint should be recorded by the staff member who took the details. This is forwarded to the director of Cherished Minds as either a standard or serious complaint based on criteria in our processes and legislative requirements. Serious complaints are handled immediately and referred to the NDIS Complaints Commission within 24 hours of receipt. Standard complaints are also very important

When taking a complaint, staff will record the name and contact details of the customer, as well as full details of the complaint including the date. Details of all communication with the customer and any actions to resolve the complaint will be recorded in the same place.

Recorded complaints will also be monitored for any ongoing trends by management and efforts made to resolve any ongoing issues.

## **Complaint Handling Policy – Cherished Minds**

Customers' personal details or details of their complaint will not be divulged to third parties unless we have their written consent.

### **Informing clients of the progress of their complaint**

We strive to resolve all standard complaints within 14 days where reasonably possible and all serious complaints immediately. All complaints will be acknowledged promptly.

Customers will be given an approximate timeframe at the time they make their complaint. Customers will be informed of the progress of their complaint regularly, especially if there are any delays or changes to what has been agreed.

Customers will be informed of any changes to our products or services as a result of their complaint.

Where appropriate, customers who have had a complaint resolved will be contacted at a later date to see if they are happy with how their complaint was handled.

If the complaint can't be resolved immediately, the customer will be given a timeframe, a contact person and details of our complaint handling process. Where possible, the staff member taking the complaint details will be the contact person.

### **Escalation of Complaints**

If a complaint cannot be resolved by the usual complaint process, we will provide information about referring the matter to the NDIS Complaints Commission. The client or their advocate may be informed and given an amended timeframe for resolution.

### **Review of Complaint Handling Policy**

Cherished Minds is committed to continuous improvement and this policy will be reviewed regularly (at least every twelve months) for effectiveness and updated.

This complaint handling policy is supported by management and reviewed in conjunction with workers and client feedback. We commit to providing this policy to all staff and displaying it in our business for customers.