

SERVICE USERS – COMPLAINTS

Purpose

This document outlines BH&DHRC's policies and procedures relating to complaints about BH&DHRC's products, services and staff.

Principles

BH&DHRC recognises that clients have the right to make complaints. BH&DHRC recognises that complaints enable services and administration to be reviewed and improved.

BH&DHRC aims to prevent and resolve complaints by:

Making information about the BH&DHRC and its services easily available to clients, staff and the Broken Hill community

Encouraging comment from clients, staff and stakeholders about how they view the BH&DHRC's programs and administration.

Anyone who has a complaint about the BH&DHRC's programs, services, or administration will have the matter dealt with:

- In a fair, non-discriminatory manner
- Promptly and confidentially
- With the help of a friend or advocate if they wish
- Without their access to services being affected
- Without fear of reprisal

Any person about whom a complaint has been made will have their rights respected, including their right of reply to any allegations, and will be kept informed throughout the process of resolving the issue.

Complaint procedure – first step

If a person has a complaint, they should contact the BH&DHRC Office (see contact details below) and speak to the senior BH&DHRC Staff member present. When BH&DHRC Staff receive a complaint, they will:

- Discuss the complaint with the person making the complaint, taking notes as appropriate
- Make every effort to resolve the complaint promptly, informally (at the lowest possible level of management), amicably and with mutual agreement
- Explain the BH&DHRC Complaints Policy/Procedure to the complainant and keep all parties informed and involved in the process
- Suggest the use of an advocate or interpreter if a client has difficulty communicating with them or understanding the information being provided.

Complaints which cannot be resolved by BH&DHRC staff are to be referred to the Management Committee.

Complaint procedure – second step

If the first step has been followed and the complaint remains unresolved, the person making the complaint should provide the following information in writing to the Secretary – Management Committee at the postal address listed below:

- Contact details for the person(s) making the complaint
- A description of the complaint indicating the time, date and people involved; attach supporting documents if required
- An indication of the result(s) that is sought by the person(s) making the complaint

- Any other relevant comment or relevant information

The complaint will be placed on the agenda of the next BH&DHRC Management Committee Meeting. The Management Committee will be responsible for discussing the issue and determining what action, if any, should be taken as a result of the complaint.

When a complaint has been referred to the Management Committee for investigation, the Management Committee is to:

- Declare any conflict of interest which may exist for any Member in their dealings with the complaint in question
- Interview and obtain a written statement from all parties
- Discuss the complaint and recommend what action if any should be taken as a result of the complaint within 2 weeks of the Meeting
- Consider the assistance of a service skilled mediator; if so, all mediation meetings are to be documented
- Advise all parties of the progress and results of the investigation and invite comment from them about both the results and the process
- Arrange for documentation to be filed in a secure and confidential file

The Management Committee shall review the results of any complaint investigation and may recommend changes to, or reviews of, BH&DHRC policies and procedures.

Complaint procedure – third step

Should there be no internal resolution and mediation is either not an option, or has been unsuccessful, the Chairperson should inform the person making the complaint that they may choose to use the contacts below. (please refer contact details below)

Broken Hill and District Hearing Resource Centre Inc (BH&DHRC)

187-189 Argent St
Po Box 958
BROKEN HILL NSW 2880
CEO: Anne Woods JP
PH: (08) 80882228
Email: hearthis@australiaonline.net.au

NSW Ageing, Disability & Home Care, Department of Family and Community Services

Peter Lupton
peter.lupton@facns.nsw.gov.au
PH: (02) 6831 1800

Australian Human Rights Commission

Level 3, 175 Pitt ST
SYDNEY NSW 2000
PH: (02) 9284 9600

Disability Advocacy Service Inc

Room 10, 96 Russell St
BATHURST
Po Box 1469
BATHURST NSW 2795
PH: (02) 6332 2100
FAX: (02) 6332 6611
Email: admin@dias.net.au
www.dias.net.au