

# Complaints Policy

## 1.) Introduction

The BDD Foundation is committed to providing high quality services and ensuring the wellbeing of all individuals who engage with us. However, we recognise that there may be occasions when staff, volunteers, service users, their families, or representatives from organisations wish to raise concerns or make a complaint. This policy outlines our commitment to handling complaints fairly, efficiently, and transparently. We encourage feedback as an opportunity to improve our services and will ensure that all complaints are taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and resolved in a timely manner.

## 2.) Scope

The BDD Foundation staff and volunteers, any member of the public who has had contact with The BDD Foundation, or is affected by its work and any organisation which has contact with The BDD Foundation may use this procedure.

We know that making a complaint can be stressful, as such we are happy for an advocate or friend to be present at any meeting about the complaint or to support you in communicating with us. The BDD Foundation's Managing Director can give you details of local advocacy services.

## 3.) Overview of Procedure

### **Stage One - Informal Resolution**

In some cases, it is possible to resolve a complaint by discussing your concerns directly with the staff member or volunteer involved. If you feel comfortable doing so, we encourage you to discuss the issue with them, as it may lead to a quick resolution.

If you do not feel the issue is resolved to your satisfaction, or do not feel comfortable addressing the issue directly with the volunteer or staff member you are complaining about, proceed to Stage Two.

### **Stage Two - Formal Complaint to The BDD Foundation Senior Manager**

Please put your complaint in writing, either in a letter or using The BDD Foundation Complaints/Harassment form (see below). If you would like help putting the complaint in writing, please contact the Managing Director who will arrange this.

Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within seven working days. The appropriate Senior Manager will investigate your complaint. The Manager carrying out the investigation will meet with you, if you wish, to hear your concerns in more detail. They will also talk with staff members or other people involved in the complaint.

The Manager will respond to your complaint in writing within twenty working days. If there is any delay, they will contact you, explain the reason for the delay, and tell you when to expect a response.

If your complaint is about the Managing Director, the Chair will carry out the investigation. If your complaint is about the Chair, the Managing Director will investigate.

If you are unhappy with the response, you should contact the Chair (see contact details below) within one month to say that you would like to appeal.

### **Stage Three - Appeal to Trustees**

If a complaint response is appealed, The Chair of The BDD Foundation will acknowledge your request for an appeal within seven working days. They will appoint two of the Trustees to review the investigation into your complaint. There will be an opportunity to meet with the two Trustees if you wish.

You will receive a written response within twenty days. If there is any delay they will contact you, explain the reason for the delay, and tell you when to expect a response.

If you feel your complaint has not been handled fairly within The BDD Foundation you may make an appeal to an independent adjudicator. You should contact the Chair of The BDD Foundation within a month of receiving the Stage Three response to ask for a Stage Four review.

### **Stage Four - Review by Independent Adjudicator**

Sometimes it is useful for someone outside the organisation to impartially assess the complaint. The BDD Foundation will appoint an independent adjudicator who has experience of investigating complaints, but who is not part of the organisation.

Your request for a review will be acknowledged in writing within seven working days.

The adjudicator will look again at your concerns and meet with you if you wish. They will also review the way the complaint has been handled within The BDD Foundation.

You will receive a full response from the adjudicator within thirty working days. If there is any delay the adjudicator will contact you, explain the reason for the delay, and tell you when to expect a response.

**Complaints/Harassment/Whistle Blowing Form**

Please state what has happened and when:	
What are your concerns?	
What would you like to happen as a result of your complaint?	

Your name	
How would you like us to contact you?	Address:  Phone/ email:

Please return this form (marked Private and Confidential) either to the Managing Director, Kitty Newman or to The BDD Foundation's Chair: Rob Willson, 45b Stanford Road, London, N11 3HY

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