**Disability North**

**Service User Complaints Procedure**

**Introduction:**

All staff at Disability North are dedicated to providing exceptional support and advice. Your satisfaction is of utmost importance to us, and we value the trust you place in us. We understand that, despite our best efforts, there may be occasions when you feel the need to bring a concern or complaint to our attention. We want to assure you that we take such matters seriously, and we are committed to addressing them promptly and fairly.

**Our Commitment to You:**

We believe that your feedback is invaluable, as it helps us continually improve and enhance the quality of our service. Your experiences and insights are integral to shaping the way we operate, and we welcome the opportunity to address any concerns you may have.

**Why Your Feedback Matters:**

Complaints provide us with valuable insights into areas where we can improve our services or processes. We view each complaint as an opportunity to improve, ensuring that we consistently deliver the high standards you deserve.

**How We Handle Complaints:**

Our complaints handling process is designed to be transparent, accessible, and efficient. We have established dedicated channels for you to submit your concerns, and our team is trained to handle each case with sensitivity and diligence. We are committed to resolving complaints in a fair and timely manner, keeping you informed throughout the process.

**Your Role in the Process:**

We encourage you to communicate openly with us. Your feedback, whether positive or negative, is essential to maintaining a strong and positive relationship. By sharing your concerns, you not only help us rectify specific issues but also contribute to the continuous improvement of our services.

**Complaints Procedure**

Disability North’s complaints procedure seeks to achieve a satisfactory resolution of complaints at the earliest possible stage.

1. **Information:**

Information about the complaint’s procedure is available to all service users in appropriate formats. You can also find a copy on our website. Please ask a member of staff for the format that best suits your needs.

All staff are aware of the procedure for making a complaint and can explain the procedure to service users.

1. **Registering Complaints:**

Complaint forms are available at reception and from any member of staff. If you would like to complain please request and complete a form. If you would like any assistance with this, please let a member of staff know.

Complaints received by letter, telephone, email or social media will be referred to the Complaints Manager who will record the complaint using the complaints form and deal with the issues raised.

The complaints manager is the Chief Executive Officer Vici Richardson. The deputy complaints manager is the Service Team Manager Keith Moore.

Any complaints which could potentially be linked to Safeguarding will be reported to the relevant safeguarding team and to the Charity Commission.

Complaints will also be managed in accordance with our professional indemnity insurance policy requirements.

Disability North will co-operate with the relevant authorities in respect of resolving complaints, including permitting access to all relevant records and staff.

1. **Dealing with Complaints: Stage 1**

All complaints will be dealt with as soon as possible and will be acknowledged within 5 working days**.** The Complaints Manager will seek to resolve all complaints by discussing the issues informally with the complainant. A record of the conversation will be noted for our records and saved within the central complaints electronic file.

**Stage 2**

If the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, the complaints manager will undertake a further investigation and provide a written response to the complainant. This will include findings of fact and proposed action to resolve the complaint.

Disability North aims to complete this investigation and respond within 20 working days. Where this is not possible, complainants will be kept informed and given reasons for any delay.

**Stage 3**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response they can ask for a review. This request can be made in writing or verbally to the Complaints Manager within 20 working days of receiving the response.

A review panel will be convened within 10 working days to consider the complaint. The panel will consist of 2 members of the Executive Committee and an Independent Person. The Independent Person will Chair the panel.

The Panel will write to the complainant within 5 working days to let them know the decision.

**Disability North Complaints Form**

**Date:**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Telephone no:**

**Email:**

**Details of Complaint:**

**Members of staff/Volunteers involved.**

**Signature:**

This policy was updated on 22nd January 2024

Amendments include:

* Update of the complaints manager and deputy manager
* Stating that a copy of the complaint’s procedure is now on the website
* Reference to where complaint information is stored
* The addition of the introduction section
* Reference to our professional indemnity insurance

Next Review January 2025