



COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PURPOSE: Hospice Wellington (HW) is committed to providing excellent service. We recognize that from time to time there may be concerns or complaints, that our stakeholders have the right to raise such complaints or concerns and that they need avenues to do so.

We are committed to:

- Addressing complaints in a timely, fair, respectful and accountable manner.
- Providing an opportunity to explain the problem, prompt action and ongoing follow up until the issue is resolved.
- Making this process accessible and open.

These procedures are set out in order to facilitate the submission and resolution of any complaints or concerns.

RESPONSIBILITIES: Executive Director (ED), with support of Team Leads and Operations.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

How To Make A Complaint:

If you have a complaint or concern, contact the Executive Director by completing and submitting feedback form on the Hospice Wellington website, or contacting directly by phone or email.

1. Where a complaint is related to the Executive Director, the complainant may direct the complaint to the Board Chair, who will work to resolve the complaint.
2. If the Executive Director is not able to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties, your concern will be referred to the Quality & Risk Committee or Board Chair. You will be kept informed at each step.
3. The Executive Director may choose to bring the complaint forward to the Board of Directors for review and advice.
4. The Executive Director will then determine what the appropriate action or recommendations are and will inform you in writing of this information. It is the responsibility of Hospice Wellington staff to implement the recommendations.



Matters of serious concern include but are not limited to:

- Professional misconduct/malpractice
- Abuse/neglect of clients
- Criminal activities

Where the complaint is of serious concern any of the following actions may be taken:

- The employee at the centre of the allegation may be removed from their duties pending the outcome of the investigation. The employee will be informed of the necessity for this action and will be assured that, at this point, there is no inference of guilt.
- Report the matter to the Police, if appropriate to the circumstances.
- A full investigation will be undertaken, interviewing all parties concerned in the allegation.
- This may include other workers and a client's family, relatives and advocates as appropriate.
- If the allegations are substantiated the worker concerned will be disciplined up to and including termination. Criminal charges may be brought by the Police or other parties, depending on the circumstances.
- After the investigation, where it is believed the worker has committed an offence prescribed by relevant regulations, details will be reported to the appropriate authorities, irrespective of whether disciplinary procedures are completed and whether or not the employee concerned is suspended from duty.

If your complaint remains unresolved and you are uncomfortable discussing the issue and resolution with Hospice Wellington directly, a third-party individual will be provided in order to address that resolution.

Guidelines

- Confidentiality will be respected at all times. There will be no repercussions for someone bringing forward a complaint in good faith.
- The initial response to a complaint should occur as soon as possible and not longer than one week from receiving the complaint. Every effort will be made to review and respond to a complaint within 30 days.
- Documentation about the complaint will be kept in a file separate from any other file related to the stakeholder.
- It is the responsibility of all employees to have a working knowledge of the complaint resolution process and to cooperate with the processing of complaints.
- It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to report to the Board and the Quality & Risk Committee at least quarterly on the number, type and disposition of the complaints received.



WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

Hospice Wellington's Code of Conduct and the Executive Limitations (together referred to below as the "Code") requires Directors, Officers, Volunteers, Employees, Contractors and Subcontractors to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives or contracted workers of the Organization, all must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Purpose:

To provide employees, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors with information about how to report violations of Hospice Wellington's Code of Conduct and issues of serious concern and to protect them from reprisals or intimidation. Matters of serious concern include but are not limited to:

- Professional misconduct/malpractice
- Abuse/neglect of clients
- Criminal activities

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

How To Report an Occurrence:

If you have an occurrence you wish to report, please complete and submit feedback form on the Hospice Wellington website or contact the Executive Director by phone or email.

Where the complaint is of serious concern any of the following actions may be taken:

1. The employee at the centre of the allegation may be removed from their duties pending the outcome of the investigation. The employee will be informed of the necessity for this action and will be assured that, at this point, there is no inference of guilt.
2. Report the matter to the Police, if appropriate to the circumstances.
3. A full investigation will be undertaken, interviewing all parties concerned in the allegation.
4. This may include other workers and a client's family, relatives and advocates as appropriate.
5. If the allegations are substantiated the worker concerned will be disciplined up to and including
6. termination. Criminal charges may be brought by the Police or other parties, depending on
7. the circumstances.
8. After the investigation, where it is believed the worker has committed an offence prescribed by relevant regulations, details will be reported to the appropriate authorities, irrespective of whether disciplinary procedures are completed and whether or not the employee concerned is suspended from duty.



No Retaliation

No Director, Officer, Volunteer, Employee, Contractor or Subcontractor, who, in good faith reports a violation of the Code of Conduct shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse consequence. An employee, volunteer, contractor, or subcontractor who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of their role. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable volunteers, employees, contractors and subcontractors to raise serious concerns within the organization prior to seeking resolution outside the organization.

Reporting Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all Directors, Officers, Employees and Volunteers to comply with the Code of Conduct, and organizational policies, and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy. Employees and Volunteers will be provided with the policy during orientation and will provide a signed acknowledgement of their receipt and their understanding of the process. The policy will be posted on the Hospice Wellington website for ease of access to all stakeholders.

Reporting Violations

The Code addresses the Organization's open-door policy and suggests that volunteers share their questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, the Volunteer Engagement Coordinator is in the best position to address an area of concern. However, if you are not comfortable speaking with the Volunteer Engagement Coordinator, you are encouraged to speak with the Executive Director.

Employees, contractors and subcontractors are required to report suspected violations of the Code of Conduct to the Executive Director who has the responsibility to investigate all reported violations. For suspected fraud, serious concerns, or when you are not satisfied or uncomfortable with following the organization's open-door policy, individuals should contact the Executive Director directly.

If the Executive Director is the subject of your concern, contact with the Chair of the Board of Directors should be initiated.

If the Executive Director is not able to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties, the concern will be referred to the Quality & Risk Committee or Board Chair. You will be kept informed at each step.



The Executive Director may choose to bring the complaint forward to the Board of Directors for review and advice. The Executive Director will then determine what the appropriate action or recommendations are and will inform you in writing of this information. It is the responsibility of Hospice Wellington staff to implement the recommendations.

Accounting and Auditing Matters

The Finance and Audit Committee of the Board of Directors shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing. The Executive Director shall immediately notify the Finance and Audit Committee of any such complaint and work with the committee until the matter is resolved.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Code must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Code. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which proved to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offence.

Confidentiality

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Handling of Reporting Violations

The Executive Director will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five (5) business days. All reports will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation. Every effort will be made to review and respond to a complaint within 30 days.

Signature Pat Stuart

Pat Stuart,
Executive Director, Hospice Wellington

Date November 8/24

Date for review: January 2025

