



## Policy for Client / Agency Relationship

Section:	Corporate	Number:	
Policy Subject	Client / Agency Relationship – Complaints and Compliments Protocol	Policy Sponsor Title	Sherry Fournier, Executive Director
Approved by	Sherry Fournier	Signature	
Approval Date	April 8 2015	Date Issued	April 8 2015
		Next Review Date	April 8 2018

### 1.0 Purpose, authority and application of this policy

#### Purpose of this procedure

To define CCR's standards and processes and management risk related to the reporting, analysis and management of complaints and compliments received from the clients (i.e. children, youth, primary caregivers, parents, families, visitors and community partners) we serve.

To ensure that CCR Staff authority, with respect to the treatment of clients, is limited so as to ensure that the rights of the clients to fair, equitable and humane treatment are not impeded and that all relevant legislation is followed.

To ensure the use of client-related information does not conflict with the spirit of CCR's confidentiality statement and the principles of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

To comply with the most up-to-date version of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) that requires organizations to have a process to receive feedback from the public that is related to accessibility of services, information and customer service for people with disabilities.

#### Application and Scope

This policy applies to all employees, board members, volunteers, and students in conducting business for/with CCR.

### 2.0 Policy

CCR's Governance Policy requires that all clients are treated with dignity; that all services are child and/or family centered, are sensitive to culture and language and include system and stakeholder collaboration.

In recognition of clients as partners, all CCR Staff and services endeavor to ensure the following client rights.

Clients have the right to:

- information i.e.: all options/resources available to child and/or family, information on each child's progress
- protection of privacy i.e.: personal information is protected (See C.C.R. / R.E.C. Confidentiality Policy)
- make decisions i.e.: setting of priorities for their child
- right to services available

- 
- right to participate i.e.: to have input into planning, to have opportunity to share information to team, right to observe

CCR values all feedback from the clients we serve. Feedback encompasses all information relating to our services, performance or the way we do our business. It may come in the form of a compliment, suggestion or complaint.

CCR is committed to responding to all complaints and concerns in a courteous, timely manner with a confidential, non-punitive process that supports effective and timely communication, investigation, action and follow-up.

### **Compliments**

CCR values compliments as they represent what our clients value and what they consider we are doing well. Compliments can provide examples of 'best practice', from our client's perspective that may be applied across the organisation to help improve service. Compliments also give us an opportunity to recognise our Staff and reward excellence.

### **Complaints**

Complaints are a valuable form of feedback to CCR as they represent what our clients consider we are not doing well. By investigating complaints we can identify areas in need of improvement. Through the effective acknowledgement and handling of complaints we are working to build relationships and minimise the likelihood of the issue recurring or escalating. Complaints are vital to informing the continuous quality improvement of CCR's services and processes.

## **3.0 Definitions**

### **Client**

A client refers to the children, youth, primary caregivers, parents, families, visitors and community partners we serve.

### **Compliment**

A compliment is feedback that communicates appreciation and acknowledgement of our services, performance or the way we do our business.

A compliment may be about an individual Staff member, a team or a service. A compliment could be expressed as:

- satisfaction or happiness with a service;
- Staff going 'the extra mile' to provide excellent client service;
- the client feeling valued;
- good complaint handling-service recovery.

### **Complaint**

A complaint is feedback that communicates dissatisfaction or unmet expectation by or on behalf of a client. It could relate to any aspect of our services, performance or the way we do our business. A complaint may relate to the performance of our agency in relation to our Client / Agency Relationship Policy including Staff attitude or conduct, or dissatisfaction with the quality of our service.

---

## 4.0 Responsibilities

### Supervisors/Managers/Directors

The Leadership at CCR will create an environment where feedback and continuous quality improvement of service is valued through:

- timely review and investigation of complaints;
- ensuring every reasonable effort is made to successfully resolve complaints;
- endorsement of the feedback process;
- fostering a 'no blame' environment in which complaints are seen as a valuable and necessary part of continuous improvement;
- provision of appropriate training and other support to empower Staff to confidently resolve complaints according to CCR's Client / Agency Relationship Policy;
- recognition of excellence in service recovery and dissemination of positive feedback and compliments;
- management of client expectations in terms of what the feedback process can and cannot deliver;
- ongoing monitoring and auditing of the complaint handling process to ensure that it is effectively and efficiently maintained and continually improved.

### All Staff

CCR employees are empowered to own and handle client concerns as they occur.

Staff will:

- promote CCR's values and Family Centered Care philosophy;
- adhere to the Client / Agency Relationship Policy and Issue Resolution process;
- review the Client / Agency Relationship Policy and Issue Resolution process with clients at point of service engagement and no later than one month after service engagement.

## 5.0 Issue Resolution Procedure

### At time of complaint

CCR recognises that the most effective and efficient way to resolve feedback and achieve client satisfaction is to deal with the issue as soon as possible, at the point where it is received.

Should a parent (client) feel that any of their rights, as described in section 2.0, are not being upheld, the following Issue Resolution Process should be followed:

When an issue is brought forward to a CCR Staff member they are responsible to:

1. respond to the client, and inform their Supervisor, within two business days of receiving the complaint;

- 
2. listen to the complainant to review and validate concerns and perceptions of the situation;
  3. thank them for bringing their concerns to our attention;
  4. make every reasonable effort of resolve the complaint in compliance with CCR's Client / Agency Relationship policy and within the scope of their practice and responsibilities;
  5. if a successful resolution is achieved, advise the complainant of the actions that will be taken to address their concern;
  6. if the issue cannot be resolved, it will be transferred to the Staff member's immediate Supervisor who will begin the Issue Resolution Process.

### **Stages of Issue Resolution**

The issue resolution process has four progressive stages. If a consensus is not achieved or a remedy cannot be implemented, the process is escalated to the next Stage within two business days.

The four stages of issue resolution are as follows:

- Stage One: Supervisor / Manager
- Stage Two: Manager / Director / Director of Central Services
- Stage Three: Executive Director
- Stage Four: Board of Directors

### **Issue Resolution Process**

At each Stage the responsible person must adhere to the following processes:

1. communicate acknowledgment of the complaint within two business days of receiving it and thank them for bringing their concerns to our attention;
2. review all pertinent information and interview others as required;
3. attempt to resolve issues through facilitating communication between the complainant and the relevant parties, within the scope of practice and responsibility;
4. if a successful resolution is achieved, advise the complainant of the actions that will be taken to address their concern;
5. if the issue cannot be resolved all relevant information will be transferred to the individual responsible for the next Stage of the Issue Resolution Process, within two business days;
6. once the process has reached the Executive Director or the Board of Directors level, a Client Issue Resolution form (Appendix A) must be completed, signed by the Client, and submitted to the Supervisor of Administrative Services for tracking and reporting purposes and annual review by the Board of Directors.

Complaints brought forward directly to the Board shall not be impeded if the parent (client):

- has exhausted the internal procedure; and
- alleges that C.C.R. / R.E.C. Policy has been violated to the child or families' detriment ;or

- 
- the policy itself is insufficiently cognizant of civil or human rights and dignity.

## **6.0 Compliment Tracking and Recognition Process**

Any verbal or written compliments received will be shared with the appropriate Supervisor, who will recognize and celebrate with employees, program teams and Management group as appropriate.

Letters or notes which single out a particular member of Staff should be shared with the appropriate Supervisor so they can be recognized for the quality service they have provided, as it is important that the relevant Staff and Supervisor know their services have been appreciated. Supervisor will include their Managers and Directors in their recognition of Staff and compliments to their service delivery.

Compliments, written or verbal, will be tracked by Supervisors and shared at regular intervals with Managers. Managers will collate and report compliments and recognition activities annually to the Management and Executive Leadership Teams as well as the Board of Directors.

## **7.0 Concerns and Complaints Tracking and Compliance**

Annually, the Manager of Central Services will collate all Client / Agency Issue Resolution Forms and provide a report to the Executive Director, who will provide the report to Management Team, Executive Leadership Team and the Board of Directors.

This report will include a summary of the types of complaints and concerns reported by Service and District, and will include a summary of timelines and Stage of resolution.

This report will be reviewed annually by the Executive Director and the Public and Client Relations Committee Board Subcommittee. This review will include an evaluation of the types and trends of concerns and complaints as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of the resolution process and actions taken to improve Client / Agency relationships and service delivery.

## **8.0 Family / Caregiver Feedback**

CCR's Quality Assurance team has worked with each program to develop feedback surveys that aim to collect relevant and timely information about clients' unique experience with the program or service.

CCR has available on our website, a generic [Parent and Caregiver Feedback Survey](#) that allows respondents to comment on a wide range of CCR services.

CCR also has available on our website, an [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Survey](#) which provides a process to receive feedback from the public that is related to accessibility of services, information and customer service for people with disabilities.

The Information Management team will share results immediately with program Supervisors should feedback be received that is identified as time sensitive (e.g. negative or constructive feedback). Annual reports will be created and presented to the Supervisor, Management and Executive Leadership Teams that

---

summarize feedback results, identify opportunities to recognize what we are doing well, and inform recommendations for continuous quality improvement.

## **9.0 Education**

During the orientation process, new Staff will be made aware of the commitment of CCR to an open and constructive response to feedback and to the Client / Agency Relationship Policy.

Staff will review this Policy annually and be continually supported by their Supervisors and Managers in maintaining their understanding and managing these processes. The acknowledgement form can be found on the portal under: Human Resources / Agency Shared / HR Forms / Forms.

### **Family Centered Care Training Modules**

One of Child & Community Resources' (CCR) core values is to practice Family Centered Care (FCC). FCC is an approach to engage and empower families by supporting the family unit as a whole; ensuring each family receives the information they need; collaborating with children, youth and family throughout service planning and delivery; and building on the strengths of each family.

### **CCR's Family Centered Care Guiding Principles**

- Each family receives services that foster caring and supporting relationships.
- Each family will be provided with information tailored to their needs.
- All families are respected and collaborative partners.
- Family strengths are explored and developed.

### **Family-Centered Care Training Modules**

Family-Centered Care Training Modules were developed to enhance the ability of CCR's employees to provide care and service that reflects and aligns with CCR's values and Family Centered Care philosophy. Descriptions of the Training Modules are as follows:

#### **Module 1 – Supporting**

Unit 1: Informed Consent

Unit 2: Identifying needs and building on the strengths of families

Unit 3: Sharing information within a multi-disciplinary setting: how to hold an effective meeting

#### **Module 2 – Communication**

Unit 1: Effective communication between families and service providers

Unit 2: Repetitious communication

Unit 3: Barriers to Communication

Unit 4: Open and Honest Communication Strategies

#### **Module 3 – Anti-Oppressive Practices**

Anti-Oppressive Practices (AOP) will be presented as a compliment to FCC. AOP tools, strategies, and group actives will be presented along with practical

---

applications in an online module developed and produced by the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health.

**Module 4 – Sustaining Family Centered-Care**

Unit 1: Achieving Family-Centered Care

Unit 2: More Opportunities to Practice FCC Knowledge and Skills

**10.0 Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the event of policy, legislative or regulatory change or direction from the funding source.

---

**APPENDIX A**  
**Child & Community Resources**  
**Concerns and Complaint Resolution Form**

---

Date of receipt of complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of staff initially receiving complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe a brief history of concern or complaint (*attached all required documents*)

Describe actions taken to resolve the concern or complaint (*attached all required documents*)

Name of Client: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of ED \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Client: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Board Member:: \_\_\_\_\_  
(If required)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_