06. Complaints Policy

Introduction

This Policy is based on guidance from the Stroke Association and outlines how Woking Strokeability will deal with complaints. The guiding principles for dealing with complaints should be:

- Listen; let the person have their say
- Get the facts and make notes
- Be honest
- Be understanding and take the person making the complaint seriously
- Stay calm even if the person gets angry
- Tell the person what will happen next and the stages of the procedure
- Act quickly and meet agreed timescales

Handling complaints

When dealing with complaints and issues, it is important to deal with them sensitively and in a timely manner, not letting them drag on for a long time. The following process should be followed.

Step 1 - Make a note of the details of the complaint. In the first instance it may be raised with any member of the management committee or a Trustee,(i.e. management). They will appoint a member to look into the issue on their behalf.

- The subject of any complaint shall neither be tasked with the investigation nor involved in deciding any resulting actions.

Step 2 - The individual tasked with the investigation will look into the complaint and try to establish the facts by talking to people in the group.

- The complaint should be recorded in writing including notes of results of the investigation.

Step 3 - The management will then decide if any action needs to be taken, and agree what this might involve.

- Advice and help can be sought from the Stroke Association regional office, or nationally through the Stroke Club and Community Partnerships Manager, especially if the complaint is about health and safety issues, or the protection of vulnerable adults.

Step 4 - Report back to the person who made the complaint as to whether any action is going to be taken.

- This should be done in writing and within good time of the complaint being received

Role of the Stroke Association

The majority of Stroke Clubs in the UK are independent organisations, with their own governing arrangements for dealing with complaints which should be followed, and as such the Stroke Association should not be involved in handling these complaints.

The Stroke Association does have a responsibility to support Stroke Clubs that are part of its affiliation scheme; however, where possible the Stroke Association should support groups to handle complaints locally, as they do not fall under the Stroke Association complaints procedure. In particular

- If the Stroke Association receives a complaint about a Stroke Club, it will encourage the person making the complaint to raise it with the club's organiser. It is advised that a complaint is resolved locally.
- Where a complaint concerns the organiser or a senior committee member who could end up investigating themselves, the Stroke Association will try to identify another appropriate committee member, and were this is not possible may agree to act to help resolve the complaint locally.
- If after exhausting all local remedies the complainant is still unhappy and feels the issue has not been dealt with, they can ask for an independent review of the complaint by the Stroke Association. This will be undertaken by the Stroke Club & Community Partnerships Manager.
- Final decisions will always be taken by the Trustees of Woking Strokeability.

Dated: 18 January 2021