



AYME Complaints Policy

Policy Statement

It is the policy of AYME to provide good quality, accessible services to young people with ME/CFS, their families, carers and professionals. In order to be sure this is being carried out we need client feedback whether negative or positive. Should you have cause to complain about our services, a member of staff or volunteer will deal with the matter and try to resolve the situation as soon as possible. Further to this we will provide training or a change in our practices to improve our level of service, where appropriate.

If you do have a suggestion about how our service could be improved or how we might respond better to the needs of children and young people with ME/CFS please feel free to write or telephone the AYME team.

Whenever a complaint is made about a service every attempt is made to resolve it directly with the volunteers and managers responsible for that particular service (this is called an informal complaint)

Sometimes it is not possible to resolve a complaint informally, or the person complaining prefers for it to be investigated by someone else. In these circumstances it is possible to make a formal complaint, which is defined as being an unresolved dissatisfaction requiring formal investigation. Such complaints are investigated and a written response is provided within the timeframe detailed in the procedure below.

If you do have a complaint against one of AYME's personnel, you can meet, write or telephone or email AYME's Chief Executive. If you prefer, someone can act on your behalf as your advocate. If your complaint is about the Chief Executive then your complaint will be allocated to a member of the Board of Trustees to look into.

Procedure for reporting complaints for members, parents or users of AYME's services including the helpline.

- Any person who complains will not be penalised in any way for doing so
- Complaints may be made in writing (or other media as appropriate) to any member of AYME staff or Young People's Committee [YPC] or YP Trustee
- Complaints may be made by a third party on your behalf, with your agreement
- Staff and YPC will refer complaints to AYME CEO
- We will acknowledge the complaint has been received within 5 working days
- The CEO (or person dealing with complaint) will contact the complainant within 14 days and may wish to discuss your complaint with you
- The CEO (or other) will adopt an objective, open-minded problem-solving approach
- When facts are clear, the AYME CEO (or other) will take appropriate action as agreed with complainant/respondent
- The CEO will report back to complainant/respondent
- Should the complainant not be satisfied with the outcome then he/she will be put in touch with the Board of Trustees who will, within an agreed timeframe, deal with your complaint, following consultation with the Trustees
- A designated trustee will acknowledge receipt of the complaint with 10 working days and respond with a decision with 28 working days or alternate agreed timescale.
- Where YPC managers or YP Trustee are involved in the process they will be contacted ensuring trustees are fully briefed
- The trustees' decision will be final and may result in sanctions or the permanent exclusion from the service involved or the individual's membership of AYME be revoked.

- Recommendations may be made to put things right, improve services and to ensure where necessary mistakes are not repeated in the future
- We will endeavour to respond to complaints within 28 days unless a more cautious and paced approach is deemed to be in the best interests of the complainant or any parties involved. In this instance you will be notified.

Conclusion

- Incidents may result in temporary suspension from the relevant service (helpline, message board, txt m8s [pen pals by text], pen pals, etc.) whilst the matter is investigated
- If possible the parties will be reconciled
- Either party may be asked to genuinely apologise
- In serious or repetitive cases the respondent’s membership may be terminated
- Should the complainant not be satisfied with the outcome then he/she will be put in touch with the AYME representative on the Trustees who will, within an agreed timeframe, deal with your complaint, following consultation with the Trustees

AYMErs and associates are requested to adopt this complaints policy, to have respect for each other's diversity and differences when communicating with each other by any method, and to look after one another's emotional health and well-being.

First adopted by Board of Trustees at AGM 2004

Reviewed2005 AGM

Reviewed2006 AGM

Reviewed2008 AGM

Reviewed.....2009 AGM

signed on behalf of Board by J.Moss. Chair

Date