

4C's Policy

Gaddum Policy Front Sheet

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Context

1. Gaddum is committed to providing an exceptional service for its services users and families, but improving service delivery and user experience are not without challenges. Firstly, Gaddum has to collect, analyse, review and learn from feedback from a variety of sources to understand what might be done better; and secondly, we have to implement, track and measure our learning to see whether the improvements made have worked.
2. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our services is by learning from listening and responding to the views of our service users, their families and all other stakeholders so that we:
 - learn from all **comments** received to improve and provide better services
 - address **concerns** promptly to try and resolve quickly and satisfactorily
 - can respond positively to **complaints** and rectify mistakes
 - celebrate our **compliments** and continue to provide the level and manner of service that initiated the praise
3. In order to achieve this, Gaddum seeks to work in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders and we encourage and welcome all feedback.
4. This policy is aimed at all individuals at any level/grade or location who either deal directly with service users and their families and carers, or who know of a situation where feedback about Gaddum has been raised (which may be on social media channels).
5. This policy does not form part of a member of staff's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

Scope and purpose

6. This policy and procedure is designed to deal with feedback, statements and observations from an **external** source. As such, any person wishing to comment, raise a concern, submit a complaint or send on a compliment will receive information relevant to their particular needs. It is good practice to have summarised copies of each type of feedback 'route' on display so that service users, families and other stakeholders can read it without having to ask a member of staff for a copy.
7. Feedback in general, but particularly a complaint or concern, may also be raised by a service user's relative, carer or representative when the service user:
 - 7.1.(or carer) has granted consent for the representative to act on their behalf
 - 7.2.has died
 - 7.3.is under the age of 18

- 7.4. the individual has the legal right to raise a concern on behalf of the service user
8. Feedback will also be deemed to have been received when a serious incident has occurred (refer to our '*Serious Incident Policy*' and which may trigger a response via this policy.
9. This procedure does not cover situations where a member of staff wishes to make a complaint or raise an issue – we have separate policies and procedures appropriate to such situations such as our:
 - 9.1. Grievance Policy
 - 9.2. Whistleblowing Policy
 - 9.3. Equality Policy
 - 9.4. Duty of Candour Policy
 - 9.5. Employee Handbook
10. The purpose of this document is to encourage external feedback, and that:
 - 10.1. When someone wants to give us a compliment, provide comments, raise a concern or make a complaint, it is as easy as possible for them to do so
 - 10.2. In recognising that concerns will often be raised informally, Gaddum commits to deal with them quickly and as locally as possible; this is our 'first line' approach so that we can:
 - 10.2.1. Resolve informal concerns quickly
 - 10.2.2. Keep matters low-key
 - 10.2.3. Wherever possible, enable mediation between the complainant and the individual against whom the complaint has been made/concern raised
 - 10.3. We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service, calling for an immediate response and
 - 10.3.1. We deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
 - 10.3.2. We respond in the right way – for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong; or provide information on any action taken (refer to '*Duty of Candour Policy*')
 - 10.3.3. We keep the complainant informed, as far as is reasonably practicable, on the progress of their complaint
 - 10.3.4. We learn from complaints, using them to improve our service, and inform any reviews of this document
 - 10.4. The following do not come within the scope of this policy:
 - 10.4.1. A complaint received from a local authority, another NHS body, primary care provider or independent provider.

10.4.2. A complaint by an employee of a local authority or NHS body about any matter relating to that employment

10.4.3. A complaint which is made verbally and resolved to the individual's satisfaction no later than the next working day after which the complaint was made (though records will be kept of the situation, on our client database).

Useful Definitions

4Cs	Comments, Concerns, Complaints and Compliments
Comment	An observation, expression of personal opinion or suggestion for improvement – without an expectation from the person making the comment that action is required
Concern	Issues of importance, interest or worry raised by a service user or stakeholder which they wish to be dealt with on an informal basis. Concerns do not require a formal investigation as the issues raised should be capable of resolution locally and quickly
Complaint	Any dissatisfaction raised, either verbally or in writing (including by email) about any aspect of service provided by Gaddum which the individual or their representative (with the individual's consent) or any person has specifically asked to be addressed through Gaddum's 4Cs procedure. A complaint may be made by any person about concerns they have regarding the quality of service that they have experienced.
Compliment	Positive feedback or an expression of gratitude from a service user or stakeholder about Gaddum, a member of staff or the service they have experienced
Feedback	A generic term used in this document to indicate any information (a comment, concern, complaint or compliment) that someone wants Gaddum to hear and/or do something about
Informal Resolution	Any issue that is resolved satisfactorily within 48 hours is not considered a complaint
Local Resolution	The first stage of our complaint's procedure – an informal process to try and resolve the issue

Responsibilities

11. Gaddum's **Senior Leadership Team** (SLT) has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with any relevant regulatory or statutory frameworks. In addition:

11.1. Signing formal responses to complainants

11.2. Liaising with legal/regulatory bodies in connection with matters relating to complaints or concerns

- 11.3. Feeding back any 4C data to other stakeholders as required
- 11.4. Ensuring the 4C's policy remains fit for purpose in the light of feedback from Service Managers, including Business Systems Manager
12. Day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review has been delegated to the **Business Systems Manager**. Their responsibilities include:
 - 12.1. Ensuring that our 4Cs routes are well-publicised in ways which reach all service users and their carers and families
 - 12.2. Keeping relevant records/logs of all 4Cs received by Gaddum
 - 12.3. Monitoring our 4C processes to ensure that they are developed, agreed and communicated throughout Gaddum
 - 12.4. Providing reports/analytics to the SLT on any 4C issues
 - 12.5. Ensuring concerns/complaints are investigated, including identifying and agreeing actions to resolve concerns/complaints
 - 12.6. Supporting individuals and staff during concerns/complaints processing
 - 12.7. Communicating lessons learned to relevant departments/teams
 - 12.8. Making recommendations for staff training/other support measures arising from issues identified
13. **Line managers** will ensure they are familiar with the contents of this policy and support their staff to deal promptly with issues raised by services users; it will be a regular discussion point in 1 to 1s/supervisions and team meetings.
14. All **members of staff**, regardless of where they work or what they do, must:
 - 14.1. Read through this document and understand our processes for dealing with comments, concerns, complaints and compliments
 - 14.2. Be confident to handle feedback from an external source
 - 14.3. Uphold our values at all times when dealing with such issues
 - 14.4. Direct services users or others giving us feedback, to the appropriate resource to obtain help, advice or further information
 - 14.5. Provide appropriate support to any complainant who requires help in identifying or articulating a problem (for example, arising from literacy limitations)
 - 14.6. Ensure all feedback received is handled promptly and correctly
15. **Complainants** (that is an individual who does not work for Gaddum) should:
 - 15.1. Initially raise concern(s) promptly and directly with a member of staff, who will inform their line manager and the Business Systems Manager.

- 15.2. Ideally put their complaint in writing using our Compliments, Comments and Complaints Form (however staff must be able to recognise feedback even though it is not written down, and this policy/procedure is initiated when needed)
- 15.3. Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date
- 15.4. State how they would like things to be resolved
- 15.5. Allow Gaddum a reasonable time to deal with the matter
- 15.6. Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Gaddum's control

Guidance for Gaddum staff

16. It is a priority for Gaddum that concerns and complaints are resolved as quickly and effectively as possible. In most cases, member of staff in which a concern was expressed to will do this through an informal response, the principal being that issues are best sorted out at the point of contact with our services, straight away.
17. Complaints should be dealt with sensitively by an appropriate member of staff who has sufficient seniority to review the matter. This person will be allocated by the Business Systems Manager. Expressing regret that the complainant feels unhappy may help reassure them that the issue will be taken seriously, dealt with, and in a sympathetic way. Sometimes a sincere apology, promptly delivered, is all that is needed to settle a complaint (refer to our '*Duty of Candour Policy*').
18. It is extremely important however, that no statement accepting responsibility or admitting liability is made by any member of staff, until a full investigation has been undertaken and a measured, evidence-based conclusion reached.
19. The individual raising the concern or complaint is to be kept informed of the next appropriate step, the progress being made with their issue, the assistance available to them and have the assurance that the concern/complaint raised will not affect the service or care being received/delivered.

Complaints – general

20. All complaints will be considered as complaints against Gaddum and not against individual members of staff.
21. All complaints (formal or otherwise) must be notified by the member of staff receiving it to their line manager and the Business Systems Manager. Every communication between the complainant and Gaddum should also be recorded and copied to the Business Systems Manager.
22. Notes will be kept of meetings; all telephone calls will be logged and this information will be copied to the Business Systems Manager.

23. The complainant will be given a full written response to the complaint within ten working days of receipt wherever possible.
24. When this is not possible, an explanation will be given in writing to the complainant within ten days with a proposed schedule for response.
25. The final response should include an explanation to the complainant of how to take their complaint further, if necessary.
26. All complaints will be treated as confidential and will be handled with sensitivity by the investigating manager.

Concern – procedure

27. Informal resolution

27.1. All team members are involved in delivering a good service user experience, so it may be appropriate to have a team discussion prior to handling informally any complaints received. The following simple process may be helpful:

- 27.1.1. **Listen**, without interrupting, to the person who is making the complaint
- 27.1.2. **Ask** open questions to clarify points
- 27.1.3. **Agree** a mutual understanding of the issue, including how the individual might wish to resolve the matter
- 27.1.4. **Identify** a solution – check with line manager and check satisfaction with the individual
- 27.1.5. **Implement** the solution – as soon as possible
- 27.1.6. **Follow up** and make sure resolution agreed has been effective
- 27.1.7. Keep a **record** of the matter throughout and send to Business Systems Manager when resolved

27.2. The aim should be to deal with less significant issues in an informal way at the point of service delivery to ensure a speedy resolution.

Complaint – procedure

28. Stage 1 – formal process

28.1. If the complainant is not satisfied with the informal resolution (or wishes to raise a complaint instead), the formal complaints process must begin. Alternatively, a complaint can immediately be dealt with through the formal process if it is made directly to a member of the SLT and/or it is deemed serious enough to warrant the formal procedure – and it does not have to be made in writing to initiate the formal process.

28.2. Even though a formal complaint has been initiated, it is still preferable to have the complaint dealt with as close to the source of the complaint as possible – usually the Service Manager, Lead, Line Manager – using the following process:

28.2.1. Business Systems Manager notified in writing by email within two hours of receiving the complaint. The email must be clearly identified as a complaint.

28.2.2. Complaint 'owner' identified by the Business Systems Manager.

28.2.3. Complaint Owner will contact complainant as soon as possible and provide; their contact details, informing the complainant what the process is and anticipated timeframe for actions to be taken. This should be done within 10 working days, but if this is going to be longer then the complainant should be informed of the likely timescales

28.2.4. An investigation begins and findings documented

28.2.5. Discussions with relevant parties within Gaddum to determine way forward

28.2.6. Contact complainant with outcomes and resolutions – these should be presented in person or phone wherever possible and appropriate and confirmed in writing

28.2.7. If the complainant is happy/satisfied/accepting confirm in writing and notify the Business Systems Manager who will log that the complaint is resolved, feeding any learning back into the organisation.

28.3. If the complainant is dissatisfied, the matter is escalated to the line manager of the person who conducted the Stage 1 investigation, who will contact the complainant immediately to agree next steps, which will usually be a face-to-face meeting to try and resolve the matter

28.4. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following 28.3 the complaint can be appealed and will be reviewed by the Chief Executive.

Vexatious and/or unreasonably persistent complainants

29. There may be occasions when a complainant repeatedly raises the same or similar issues despite having received a full and complete response(s) previously when explanations have been given and all reasonable attempts have been made to resolve their concerns. Clearly each such occurrence will be considered carefully and will be case specific.

30. These cases will be referred to and dealt with by the Head of Department at each and every occasion. These will be logged with the Business Systems Manager, including decisions made.

Comments - process

31. All comments should be properly acknowledged and the individual thanked for their feedback.
32. Comments received in writing should be acknowledged in writing.
33. Whoever receives a comment should pass it on promptly to their line manager, who will ensure this is escalated and recognised by the respective SLT colleague and cc to Business Systems Manager to determine what lesson(s) might be learned.

Compliments - process

34. All compliments should be properly acknowledged and the individual thanked for their feedback.
35. Compliments received in writing should be acknowledged in writing.
36. Whoever receives a compliment should pass it on to their Service Manager and cc to the relevant Assistant Head of Operations to drive recognition of good performance.
37. See also 'Gifts and Gratuities' within the Finance Policy where a compliment may also be accompanied with a gift.