
4.2 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Trust recognises that an effective procedure for the settling of staff grievances and complaints can contribute significantly to the creation and maintenance of a harmonious working environment.

Susan Young
Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
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PURPOSE

The Trust acknowledges that from time to time a member of staff or group of staff may feel aggrieved by an incident that has occurred, a decision made, or a condition imposed, which affects them personally. In these situations, it is important that the issues are explored fully, fairly, swiftly and appropriate action taken where necessary. Staff are encouraged to discuss any issues informally with their immediate supervisor in order to allow for a speedy resolution if this is possible. Where informal discussions have taken place without a satisfactory outcome or where a more formal response is required then the Grievance

4.2 Grievance Procedure

Procedure set out below will be invoked. The Trust's Grievance Procedure complies with the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. All meetings will be held in a manner consistent with the Trust values.

SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all staff of the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and should be read in conjunction with other Trust policies.

GRIEVANCES

A grievance is a problem or concern that an employee has about their work, working conditions or relationships with colleagues. A collective grievance is a grievance brought by a group of staff. Grievances will not be heard if the complaint is lodged later than 12 weeks from the date of the alleged incident. If a grievance can be more appropriately dealt with under a different procedure, staff will be advised that this is the case. The examples below indicate where it is inappropriate to follow the grievance procedure as other mechanisms or Trust procedures are in place.

- dismissal or any disciplinary matters
 - any matters for which national procedures or agreements apply
 - matters relating to job evaluation
 - matters relating to the Trust's Attendance Management Policy
 - Complaints of Harassment and Bullying
 - Disclosures made under the Trust's "Whistleblowing" (Public Interest Disclosure Act) Policy
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MEDIATION

An independent third party or mediator can sometimes help resolve grievance issues. Mediation is a voluntary process where the mediator helps two or more parties in a dispute to attempt to reach agreement. The mediator will facilitate and oversee the process of seeking to resolve the problem but is not responsible for the outcome. Where mediation is unsuccessful in resolving the complaint, the aggrieved party may proceed to the next stage of the grievance procedure. However, employees should be encouraged to speak to each other and talk to their manager before they seek a solution via mediation.

Where mediation is considered an option it will normally only be attempted once throughout the whole grievance process.

INDIVIDUAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

At all stages meetings will be arranged quickly and details confirmed to the Complainant and other involved parties in writing. The Complainant will be informed of their right to be