

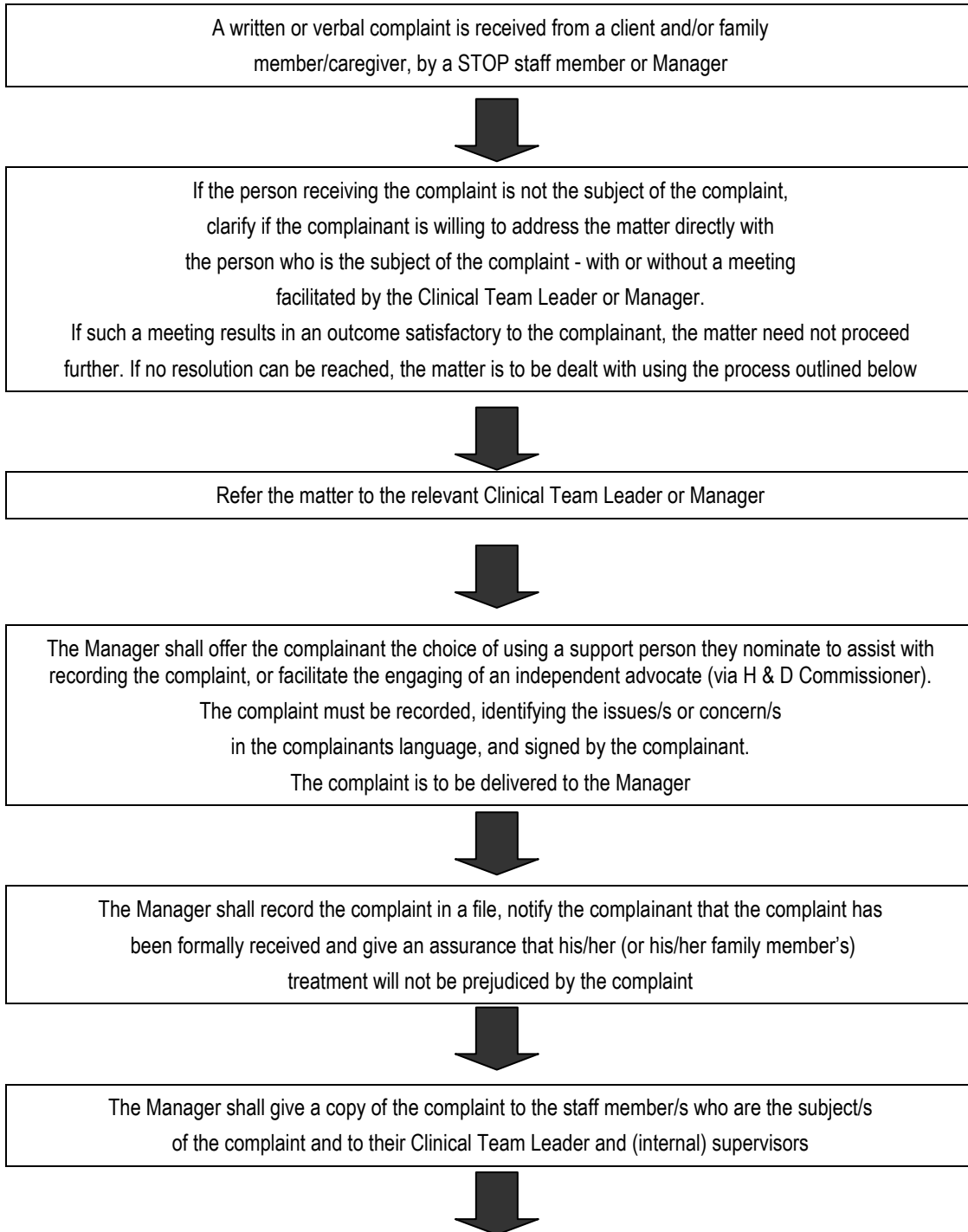
Complaint Procedure Information for Clients

- Complaints will be treated seriously, dealt with in an effective and timely manner, and resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, where at all possible
- Any complaint made about STOP staff shall be addressed in the manner outlined below. Such a process shall not preclude you from pursuing the matter (either concurrently or subsequently) through other channels e.g. the Health and Disability Consumers Advocacy Service.
- Any complaint made will not result in the complainant being disadvantaged or their treatment prejudiced
- Complainants have a right to be supported when making a complaint. They are to be offered the choice of their own nominated support person or an independent advocate available through the Health and Disability Commissioner. The support person/advocate may also meet with the complainant at the completion of the process to ascertain whether he/she is satisfied with the investigation outcome
- Clients for whom English is a second language have a right to an interpreter to assist them with the complaint process. Such an interpreter will be arranged by STOP
- The resolution is to be reached within one month of the complaint being made, unless there are extenuating circumstances and the complainant is made aware of, and agrees to, a (specified) delay period

The following flow chart following summarises STOP's procedures for handling complaints:



Complaint Process



The Manager shall generally conduct the investigation and must be deemed to be acceptable to the complainant. An external investigator may be appointed if necessary. If a Clinical Team Leader or Manager is the subject of the complaint, an external investigator shall be engaged, and the Board Chairperson informed of the nature of the complaint.



The complaint investigator shall interview all relevant parties, including any witnesses to the alleged incident/s. The complainant may choose to have an independent advocate arranged through the Health and Disability Commissioner or a support person present during his/her interview with the investigator. The investigator, having collected and analysed all relevant information, shall write a report, including any recommendations e.g. whether the complaint is to be wholly or partially upheld, and any recommendations made as to: steps to ensure redress for the complainant; and any changes in policy or procedure that may be appropriate.



The report shall be given to the complainant, the nominated support person or independent advocate, and the relevant Clinical Team Leader, and staff member/s concerned.



Where the investigation recommends disciplinary action against staff member/s, this is the responsibility of the Manager, who shall also inform the relevant professional body, if appropriate



Where the complainant so desires, and the investigation report recommends it, the investigator (or another person agreed to by the complainant) shall facilitate a meeting between the complainant and the staff member/s concerned, with a view to mediation and ideally, a resolution.



Records of the complaint process shall be kept securely and the complaints register shall be updated to reflect the outcome of the complaint. (The resolution is to be reached within one month of the complaint being made, unless there are extenuating circumstances and the complainant is made aware of, and agrees to, a (specified) delay period.)



If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome or the process of the complaint they may lodge a complaint with the Health and Disability Commissioner at any time during the STOP complaint process or at the completion of the STOP Complaint Process.