

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



## Complaint Process

A written or verbal complaint is received from a client and/or family member/caregiver, by a *Stop* staff member or Clinical Manager/Team Leader.



If the person receiving the complaint is not the subject of the complaint, clarify if the complainant is willing to address the matter directly with the person who is the subject of the complaint - with or without a meeting facilitated by the Team Leader or Clinical Manager.  
If such a meeting results in an outcome satisfactory to the complainant, the matter need not proceed further. If no resolution can be reached, the matter is to be dealt with using the process outlined below.



Refer the matter to the relevant Team Leader or Clinical Manager.



The Clinical Manager/Team Leader shall offer the complainant the choice of using a support person they nominate to assist with recording the complaint or facilitate the engaging of an independent advocate (via H & D Commissioner).  
The complaint must be recorded, identifying the issues/s or concern/s in the complainant's language and signed by the complainant.  
The complaint is to be delivered to the Clinical Manager.



The Clinical Manager/Team Leader shall record the complaint in a file, notify the complainant in writing within five working days, that the complaint has been formally received and give an assurance that his/her (or his/her family member's) treatment will not be prejudiced by the complaint.



The Clinical Manager/Team Leader shall give a copy of the complaint to the staff member/s who are the subject/s of the complaint and to their Team Leader and (internal) supervisors.



The Clinical Manager or Adult Team Leader as appropriate shall generally conduct the investigation and must be deemed to be acceptable to the complainant. An external investigator may be appointed if necessary.  
If an Adolescent and Children's Service or Adult Service Team Leader or Clinical Manager is the subject of the complaint, the Chief Executive will investigate 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 Team Leader, and staff member/s concerned.



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.



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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*.