

SUBJECT: THE RESOLUTION OF CONSUMER COMPLAINTS

EFFECTIVE
DATE: 04-20-10 (replaces 02-17-10)

APPROVED BY:

Reviewed (no changes): _____

Executive Director

POLICY

It is the policy of McIntosh Trail CSB that a consumer/family has a right to initiate a complaint or grievance concerning quality of care. They are informed about the complaint and grievance process in the Consumer Handbook (given to each consumer) and at anytime during the course of treatment/service when requested by the consumer. All consumer complaints and grievances must be taken whether received via telephone, in person, by referral, or by other telecommunications medium. A consumer complaint or grievance will not result in retaliation or barriers to service. Consumer Rights are posted at each service site, and all staff receive training in the consumer complaints and grievances policy and procedure, including the duty to assist consumers in reporting complaints and grievances.

INFORMAL COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE:

Treatment issues and/or quality of care complaints and grievances are best resolved at the lowest level - the service/program site. The informal complaint/grievance is reviewed and follow up with the consumer within five business days of the complaint/grievance to verify that the complaint or grievance has been or is in the process of being resolved. If it is resolved with the participation of the consumer, staff, and director, a copy of the resolution along with the complaint or grievance is kept on file at program site. Any unresolved informal complaints/grievances are documented by the director of the program or service and forwarded to the Rights and Ethics Committee for review, resolution, and trending. The consumer may also file an unresolved complaint with the Executive Director.

FORMAL COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE:

Formal complaints and grievances are defined as complaints/grievances which are not resolved at the treatment/service site level and require investigation by the Rights and Ethics Committee and/or the Executive Director. The Rights and Ethics Committee investigative methods may include, but are not limited to, personal interviews, telephone calls and/or reviews of documents and correspondence. Recommendations for resolution are given to the Executive Director, who will review and/or amend the recommendations and issue the decision(s). Follow up review and resolution process will not exceed 5 business days.

All allegations of consumer neglect or abuse are addressed as a formal complaint.

In any situation that requires immediate action to protect a consumer's welfare or safety, such as abuse, neglect, or exploitation, the director of the program or the Rights and Ethics Chairperson immediately notifies the nearest available staff person with authority to address the situation. A Critical Incident Report Form is completed (see Policy 1015) and the Executive Director is notified immediately.

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POLICY (Continued)

OTHER SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE/APPEAL:

Within 5 business days, each consumer/family making a formal complaint receives a timely response from the organization that substantively addresses the complaint. If resolved, a copy of the resolution along with the complaint or grievance is kept on file with the Rights and Ethics Committee Chairperson. If the consumer prefers, a direct complaint can be made to the Regional Board without going through McIntosh Trail CSB at 705 North Division Street, Building 401, Rome, GA 30165-1454, phone 706-802-5272.

Complaints and grievances are reviewed quarterly and a quarterly report is completed by the Rights and Ethics Chair and forwarded to the Executive Director and the Risk Management Team. A copy of the report is forwarded to the Regional Office by the Executive Director, by the 15th of the month following the quarter being reported. Reporting should include complaints and grievances received directly as well as those received through the Regional Office. The reports must include:

1. Types and dates of all complaints and grievances;
2. Originator of complaints and grievances;
3. Complaints and grievances new in the current quarter and those unresolved from previous quarters;
4. Of resolved complaints and grievances, the numbers of substantiated and unsubstantiated complaints and grievances;
5. Days to resolution for each complaint or grievance;
6. Disability and program involved; and
7. Identified systems issues and corrective measures taken, if any.

The Rights and Ethics Committee members are appointed by the organization's Executive Director and/or committee chairperson. Members represent each disability and function and report to the organization's Leadership Team.

Reference: JCO Chapters RI, LD
MHDDAD (DBHDD) Policy 3.106

McIntosh Trail MH/DD/AD Community Service Board
Informal Consumer Complaint and Grievance Report *

Complainant Name

Date of Complaint

Describe complaint briefly:

How does consumer want the complaint resolved?

Activity/meetings/negotiations summary:

Resolution:

Is consumer satisfied?

_____ YES

_____ NO

Signature of Director of Service/Center Site

Date

Name of Service/Center Site

* Director of Program or Service must report all unresolved consumer complaints to the Rights and Ethics Chair to be reviewed.

**SUMMARY OF CONSUMER RIGHTS FORMAL
COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

Any consumer (or his guardian or parent of a minor), or his representative, or any staff member may file a complaint alleging that a consumer's rights have been violated. A simplified outline of that process is provided below. The full procedure appears in the Rules and Regulations on Clients' Rights (Chapter 290-4-9) and is available to you on request.

Step 1

You should file your complaint/grievance with the Rights and Ethics Committee. Your representative's name is given on a poster at your service/service site. A form for this complaint/grievance is available on request, though you may also make your complaint by telephone or in person.

The Rights and Ethics Committee will investigate your complaint within five working days and resolve it, if possible. You will be notified of the action taken.

Step 2

If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may file a written request for a review of your complaint by the Executive Director. This request must be filed within five (5) working days after receiving notice of the action taken on your complaint in Step 1).

You may discuss your complaint directly with the reviewer if you wish to do so. The review will be completed within five (5) working days from the date of your request, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Step 3

If you are not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, you may appeal this decision by filing a written request for review with the Executive Director within five (5) working days after receiving notice of the action taken in Step 2. The Executive Director will issue a decision within five (5) working days of the filing of the request for review.

This process is available to you for seeking a remedy whenever you believe your rights have been violated. If you choose, you may contact the McIntosh Trail CSB, 1501-A Kalamazoo Drive, Griffin, Georgia 30224, phone 770-358-8250; you may also submit a written complaint to Executive Director, Region 1, 705 North Division Street, Building 401, Rome, Georgia 30165, phone 706-802-5272.

CONSUMER RIGHTS INVESTIGATION REPORT
OF FORMAL COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE

Step 1

Findings: _____

Recommendations: _____

Resolved: _____ YES _____ NO

Signature: _____ Date
Executive Director

Step 2 Review of Executive Director

Summary: _____

Recommendations: _____

Resolved: _____ YES _____ NO

Signature: _____ Date
Executive Director

Step 3 Review of Region 1 Executive Director

Summary: _____

Recommendations: _____

Resolved: _____ YES _____ NO

Signature: _____ Date
Region 1 Executive Director
