



## Complaints Policy

### 1 Purpose and Scope

Barod provides support, information and advocacy to people who misuse drugs and alcohol, and their loved ones, to assist them in improving their social, physical and emotional wellbeing.

Barod regards itself as a learning organisation that is constantly striving to improve. In order to achieve this we need to know from professionals, our partners and the people who use our services and their loved ones, what works well and areas where we need to improve. At all times Barod invites comments, complaints, compliments and suggestions on any aspect of our service delivery.

This document details the arrangements for the receiving, recording and resolution of complaints concerning Barod from any stakeholder.

The formation of this policy has received guidance from regulations made under:

- The National Health Services (complaints) Regulations 2004
- The Care Standards Act 2000 and the Children Act 1989 (Regulatory Reform and Complaints) (Wales) Regulations 2006 (No 3251). With particular reference to the guidance from the Welsh Government 'Listening and Learning'
- The Local Authority Social Services and national Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 (No 309)
- The Public Services Ombudsmen (Wales)
- The Charity Commission.

This policy covers both service users, concerned others and professionals who may not be happy with the service received from Barod.

### 2 Principles

A complaint can be defined as a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction or displeasure.

- Barod is not a public body, but chooses to follow the Public Services Ombudsmen (Wales)



Principles of Good Complaint Handling as set out below:

- Getting it right;
- Being customer focused;
- Being open and accountable;
- Acting fairly and proportionately;
- Putting things right; and
- Seeking continuous improvement.

Barod service users and other stakeholders have the right to:

- have support or advocacy in making any complaint
- have their complaint dealt with efficiently and properly investigated
- know the outcome of any investigation into the complaint
- take their complaint to commissioners of Barod services if they are not happy with the outcome

Barod believes that everyone who makes a complaint about the services provided by Barod has a right to be listened to properly and to have their concerns resolved quickly and effectively. Where possible, we will aim to resolve issues at the earliest opportunity and as informally as possible.

### **3 Procedure**

Comments boxes are available for anonymous comments to be made at all Barod premises. Alternatively, comments may be emailed to [info@barod.cymru](mailto:info@barod.cymru) or given verbally or in writing to any staff member.

This complaints policy is available to all our service users at the outset of their engagement with our services. All complaints are brought to the attention of Barod's management team who are responsible for monitoring the performance of services.

#### **3.1 Service User Complaints**

If you are not happy with the care, support or treatment you (or someone you are representing) have received from Barod you have the right to complain, have your complaint investigated and be given a full and prompt reply. We take all complaints very seriously, and we will deal with the complaint confidentially, quickly and with sensitivity.



If you would like to make a complaint, this is what you need to do:

- In the first instance you should contact the manager of the service that you are complaining about. You can write to them directly, or send an email. Please include your name, the date, a contact address, and telephone number (if available), and explain in as much detail as you can what it is you want to complain about. You can get the contact details for the relevant service manager by emailing [info@barod.cymru](mailto:info@barod.cymru) or by calling Barod Head Office on 01633 439813
- If the complaint relates to the Service Manager, please write directly to the Director of Operations or the CEO.
- In all cases, complaints will be investigated, and a written response sent to you within 14 days of receiving your complaint.
- If you are unhappy with the response, or the complaint concerns the Director of Operations or the CEO, please write to the Chair of Board of trustees, c/o Barod at 73-74 Mansel Street. Swansea. SA1 5TR. Please mark the envelope private and confidential, and your complaint will be forwarded directly to the Chair.
- The Chair will return a written response within 14 days of receiving your complaint.

If you are unable to submit your complaint in writing due to a disability or limited English, please contact our Head Office on:

Barod  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
114 Lower Dock Street  
Newport, NP20 2AF  
Telephone: 01633 439813

Also, if you would like support from, or to speak to, an independent advocate about your complaint we will help you to identify and contact an advocate.

If you are unhappy with the response that you receive from Barod you may escalate your complaint directly to our commissioners, who are known as Area Planning Boards (APB). Barod currently operates under four APBs – covering Gwent (Newport, Torfaen, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire), Cwm Taf (Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil), Western Bay (Swansea, Neath, Port Talbot and Bridgend) and Dyfed (Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion). The contact details for the APBs are available from Barod's Head Office, as above.

We assure you that making a complaint will not affect your right to use Barod's services, nor the quality and standard of service you receive.

### **3.2 Professional and other Complaints**

While Barod are keen to investigate complaints and improve its practice, it must balance this aim with ensuring that its working relationships with partner organisations operate



effectively and equitably. As such complaints made by professionals should follow agreed channels -

Examples of appropriate channels for complaint are:

1. For a member of staff of a partner organisation – the complaint should be discussed by that individual with their respective line manager and if the organisation wishes to make a complaint then they should make it on headed notepaper to the relevant Service Manager making it clear whether or not the individual is making the complaint on the partner organisation's behalf;
2. For a student on placement – the complaint should be made in accordance with that individual's learning contract; and
3. For a volunteer – the complaint should be made in accordance with that individual's volunteering agreement.

Barod has a Five Stage Procedure for dealing with complaints by professionals and/or complaints made by individuals about its services

Stage 1 – Putting things right

Stage 2 – Local resolution

Stage 3 – Formal consideration

Stage 4 – Appeal

Stage 5 – Independent Panel / Review Panel

*(Please see Appendix 1 for more details).*

At each stage we aim to respond to all complaints within 7 working days.

Barod will always consider other policies and procedures when investigating a complaint such as: Disciplinary procedures, whistleblowing procedures and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policies.

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Barod will ensure that its Complaints Policy is accessible to potential complainants.



#### **4. Confidentiality**

Due regard will be given at all stages to the need for confidentiality in respect of complaints information.

Information will only be shared with those who have a genuine need to know. Managers and Investigating Officers should remind interviewees of this when sensitive information is being discussed (See Confidentiality Policy and Data Protection Policy).

Anonymous complaints will be considered and recorded, but we will be unable to respond to anonymous complainants, unless contact details are provided.

#### **5. Methods of resolution**

Depending on the nature of a complaint there are a range of possible resolutions including –

- Agreeing that no further action is required;
- Conciliation and mediation;
- Explanation;
- Apology;
- Action

#### **6. Recording and Monitoring Complaints**

Barod is committed to learning from complaints by monitoring performance in handling complaints, learning from complaints and using learning to improve services.

It is the Service Manager's responsibility to:

- manage the procedures for handling and considering complaints.
- ensure that the procedure is publicised and complaints are dealt with in accordance to the organisation's Policy.
- ensure that all complaints are recorded.
- ensure that the 'Complaints Recording and Monitoring form' (appendix 2) is completed and returned to the Central team for filing.

It is the role of the Human Resources Team to:

- regulate and monitor complaints.
- produce an annual report for discussion during a senior management meeting.



This must include details of the complaints received, the outcome and notes of the timescales for each stage.

Barod is also committed to satisfying the contract it has with the relevant APBs in relation to reporting complaints and it is also the Service Manager's responsibility to ensure that this commitment is satisfied. Barod will anonymise the complaints wherever possible when reporting them to the APB.

## **7. Managing Inappropriate Behaviour**

A minority of complainants can be unreasonably persistent or behave unacceptably in pursuing their complaints.

While being responsive to complaints, Barod cannot be distracted from its primary purposes by unacceptable behaviour.

Barod will not therefore investigate:

- a complaint the subject matter of which is the same as that of a complaint that has previously been made and resolved;
- a complaint the subject matter of which has previously been investigated; or
- a complaint which it regards as 'vexatious' – a 'vexatious' complaint is one whose purpose is not to complain about a specific aspect of Barod's practice but an attempt to pursue an objection or personal conflict by other means.

Barod will confirm that it will not investigate such a complaint on the first occasion but will not continue to respond to this correspondence.

## **8. Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the management team on an annual basis.

**Date of sign off:** September 2019

**Date of next review:** September 2021

**Policy Lead:** Richard Broadway