

Writing your CHP checklist

It is important to ensure that your complaints handling procedure (CHP) contains all the relevant information needed to meet your legal obligations under sector-specific and consumer law requirements. This checklist brings together some of the key information that should be contained within your CHP and enables you to check off the requirements against the content of the CHP for your care home.

Does your CHP set out:

- How a resident, family member or other representative can make a complaint, for example, by phone, email, in person or by letter

- The types of complaint and concerns that your procedure deals with and any relevant timescales

- The types of issues that your procedure does not cover

- Some examples of the nature of complaints that your procedure covers

- How the complaint will be acknowledged and the timescale for this

- How the 'route of complaint' for a resident will differ depending on the nature of their concern (turn to Part 1, on page 11 of the *Business Companion Care home complaints booklet* for a flowchart showing the different organisations that may also need to be involved)

- How anonymous complaints will be handled

- How residents will be supported – for example, by supplying information in another format if required and any independent advocacy support available

- Who is in charge of handling complaints at your care home

- A step-by-step guide to how your internal complaints procedure works – for example, an explanation of the frontline resolution and investigation stages involved

- How long it should take for each part of the process to be completed, and when extensions to timescales may be required and how these will be handled

- A requirement for any responses or communications relating to the complaint to be easy to understand and communicated in an appropriate manner

- How a resident can raise a complaint with an external body, and when and under what circumstances they can do this – for example, the Care Inspectorate in Scotland can investigate individual complaints at any stage

- Details of the relevant sector regulator for your care home and their remit

- How a resident can take their complaint further if they, or their representative, isn't satisfied with the outcome achieved using your internal CHP – for example, how to contact the ombudsman to ask them to review the issue

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Is your CHP:

- Simple and clear?

- Putting your residents at the heart of the procedure?

- Written in a way that does not deter residents from making a complaint?

- Written in a way that is reassuring to residents – for example, it does not imply that they will be treated less favourably, or be putting their place or the quality of care they receive at risk by making a complaint

- Objective, impartial and fair? For example, by ensuring that staff who have been complained about are not part of the investigation into the complaint

- Easily accessible and readily available, including in different formats such as braille or large print?

- Easy to find on your website?

- Highlighted in written information packs given to your residents?

- Included in your contract with residents?

- On display in your main reception area and in common sitting rooms, through notices, posters and leaflets?

- In your residents' bedrooms – for example, highlighted in a resident's booklet kept in all bedrooms?

- Being put into practice by your staff, who have all been trained on the procedure and their role within it?

- Being reviewed regularly to ensure that it is still legally compliant and fit for its purpose?
