



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

FOI Reference number: 32/2013

Date: 5 July 2013

Request: “Also could you forward details of the procedure to make a formal complaint against Blackwell Associates”.

Answer: A copy of Blackwell Associates’ Complaints Policy is attached.

If you have queries about this request or the decision please contact the Board quoting the reference number above. If you are unhappy with the service you have received and wish to make a complaint or request a review you should write to the Board’s Chief Executive at the following address:

Northern Ireland Policing Board
Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast BT1 3BG

Email: foi@nipolicingboard.org.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner. Generally, the Information Commissioner’s Office cannot investigate or make a decision on a case unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Board. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:-

The Information Commissioner’s Office – Northern Ireland
3rd Floor
12 Cromac Place
Gasworks
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB.

Telephone: - 02890 269 380

Email: - ni@ico.org.uk

Please be advised that all Policing Board replies under Freedom of Information will be released into the public domain via our website @ www.nipolicingboard.org.uk.

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Record number 216698

Blackwell Associates Complaints Policy

It is inevitable that complaints will occur from time to time, most often related to a perceived problem with service delivery or with professional standards of care. Equally there will be occasions when an incident happens which may not actually result in a complaint, but which nonetheless highlights a problem which could have been handled better. Such incidents are usefully viewed as “near misses”. Near misses should be viewed as an opportunity to review procedures and policies to avoid similar difficulties in the future. Complaints are best viewed as an audit on the provision of care to our customers, whether they are businesses clients or individual patients. It is essential that all complaints no matter how apparently minor are taken seriously by being recorded and dealt with appropriately. The correct handling of complaints is both a commercial and a professional priority. It is for example vital that complaining customers are made to feel that their concerns have been dealt with fairly and promptly and that out-standing issues are resolved satisfactorily. When on further investigation it is felt that the complaint is justified, it is important that remedial action is taken and that the appropriate lesson is learnt to avoid a repetition. To err is human. To fail to learn from mistakes is however unacceptable.

- **Procedure**

All adverse incidents including near misses and formal complaints must be recorded using the appropriate form to enable correct handling of the issues and to facilitate periodic review and audit. In all cases where a member of staff becomes aware of a complaint being made against them or against Blackwell Associates, the member of staff should notify Dr Black immediately. A complaint tracking form (BW11) should be completed by the individual concerned and given to Dr Black. All material and correspondence relating to the complaint will be placed in the adverse incident file.

In cases where a complaint has been made against an individual member of staff, that member of staff should be given the opportunity to resolve and deal with the issue themselves where this is deemed appropriate by Dr Black. Where this is not appropriate, Dr Black will take over the investigation and handling of the complaint. In all cases, the completed BW11 should be forwarded.

All complaints must be recorded and tracked in this way, whether informal or formal, written or verbal. It is only by this means that we can become aware of any possible short-falls in performance or defend ourselves against criticism whether deserved or not. A sample of our Complaint Tracking Form (BW11) is enclosed.

Adverse Incident Near Miss Tracking Form (BW11)

Name of Complainant (if applicable)
Name of Staff Dealing with Adverse Incident
Complainant's Employer
Date of Notification
Nature of Incident / Complaint
Subsequent action taken
Recommendations