Responding to a complaint - what is the consumer unhappy about?

NZOHNA recognise the importance of maintaining occupational health nurse professional standards and code of conduct; this includes taking appropriate action when a complaint is received. Our aim is to facilitate a fair, simple, speedy, and efficient resolution of complaints.

When a complaint about NZOHNA or an individual member is received, a designated Executive Member will clearly identify signs of dissatisfaction from the consumer. The Executive member will also try to determine:

• Can the concern be diffused through honest and open communication?

• What is the consumer hoping to achieve by making a complaint?

• Could a misunderstanding have arisen from workplace, cultural or similar differences?

• Would the complainant and/or consumer benefit from further communication from a nominated Executive Member?

All NZOHNA occupational health nurses hold a nursing annual practicing certificate and are bound by the Nursing Council of New Zealand code of conduct and professional standards. The Council’s role is to protect the health and safety of the public by ensuring that nurses are competent and fit to practise. When a nurse fails to meet the required standards, the Council will investigate and depending on the nature of the issue either aid them in meeting the standards or if necessary follow disciplinary processes.

How should the complaint be handled by NZOHNA ?

• Is the NZOHNA member aware that a complaint has been made about them?

• Would it be appropriate to advise the member(s) complained about and/or the manager in charge of the services provided to the consumer? If appropriate, this may activate a local resolution meeting without the need for further NZOHNA involvement?

* Should the customer be informed of suitable escalation complaints options such as the Nursing Council of New Zealand, Privacy Commissioner, or the Health & Disability Commission [HDC]? [Complaint form available on individual websites]

• Whilst under NZOHNA review, has the consumer and/or complainant been provided with updates or advise about their complaint in accordance with appropriate timeframes [refer Right 10 of the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers’ Rights]?

* When relevant, NZOHNA Executive will monitor the complaint to ensure an appropriate referral which fits the situation does occur.
* If the complaint is upheld and deemed professional misconduct, a further review will determine whether continued NZOHNA membership is appropriate, e.g. APC revoked, bringing NZOHNA into disrepute.
* Where professional misconduct is upheld, the review will include consideration of notification to other involved parties such as HASANZ i.e. if member of the HASANZ competency register.

Understanding

• All NZOHNA members have a responsibility to be aware of Nursing Council Code of Conduct, and HDC Code of Rights including ‘Right 10: Right to Complain’.

* All complaints will be recorded by the NZOHNA Administration and notified to the Executive Members for review.
* Learnings from complaints will be disseminated to NZOHNA members as appropriate.

Reference Documents

* Health & Disability Act and Code of Rights [Health & Disability Commission]
* Privacy Act and Code of Rights [Privacy Commissioner]
* Nursing Code of Conduct [Nursing Council of New Zealand]
* Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act)

Refer NZOHNA Complaints Procedure page 2



