



Complaints Procedure

If anyone is unhappy with any part of our service, or if they have a complaint to make, we would like to know about it as soon as possible in order to resolve the situation quickly. All complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Aims of the Complaints Procedure

- To enable a complaint to be investigated in a fair manner
- To enable complaints to be resolved as speedily as possible
- To allow consequences of mistakes to be put right without unnecessary conflict
- To improve the quality of the service

Access to this Complaints Procedure document

This Complaints Procedure can be accessed from the website contact us page and from any Sanomentology therapist.

A hard copy can be requested by phone, email, letter.

Who can complain

Anyone who is using the services of a Sanomentologist.

Anyone who has used the services of a Sanomentologist within the past three years.

Anyone who has enquired about the services or is booked in for a session.

Anyone from another organisation who has enquired about our services, or who is working with or representing someone who is using or has used our services.

Anonymous complaints will be investigated by the Founder and selected representatives, who will use discretion in assessing what action should be taken.

Time limits for complaints.

Complaints can be accepted up to three years from the time of the problem arising. If the complaint refers to specific client work the maximum is three years from the date the client ended therapy with the therapist. However, it is much easier to sort out difficulties if the complaint is brought to our attention as quickly as possible.

How to Make a Complaint.

If you are receiving services from a Sanomentologist, please try to talk your concerns over with your therapist if you can.

A formal complaint should be made in the first instance to the Head Office. This can be in person by appointment, by telephone, or in writing by email. Please contact:

Martin Rothery, 07805 505487, martin@sanomentology.com

If you have any difficulty making a complaint in person or in writing, please let us know and we will try to help you.

Scope of Complaints.

Complaints made under this Procedure cover anyone using the Sanomentology brand, trained therapists and trainees.

Confidentiality and Communications.

Every complaint will be treated with care and confidentiality. We will attempt to communicate clearly and directly with all complainants or their representatives in a timely manner, as described below.

Safety of Clients

If a complaint relates to the conduct of a Sanomentologist in therapy, at all times the client's safety will be a primary consideration. Suspension of therapy and/or disciplinary proceedings may take place at any stage of the complaints process, if appropriate.

Stage 1 – Informal Complaint

Every opportunity will be taken at the time of the initial complaint to settle the concern informally. This may include telephone conversations and/or face to face meetings or written explanation of the reasons for a decision taken. The Founder will normally handle the complaint at this stage, but if the Founder is the subject of the complaint, then a designated team member will undertake to respond to the complaint and manage the complaints procedure.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of discussions at this stage then a formal complaint can be made.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

A formal complaint will be acknowledged in writing by the Director within seven days. A copy of the Complaints Procedure will be enclosed. If an Sanomentologist is the subject of the complaint, they will be sent a copy of the complaint along with the Complaints Procedure.

Investigation of the Complaint

A dedicated team with relevant experience will be appointed by the Founder to investigate the formal complaint. The investigator(s) will make a thorough and confidential investigation of the complaint, contacting both the complainant and the person complained against.

The investigator(s) will have access to relevant documents and policy papers. They may ask for evidence from either party and if this is sought in person, they will meet with each party separately. All parties will have the right to be accompanied, and/or be represented, by a supportive person of their choice. The complainant and the party or parties complained against and/or their representative will not be asked to attend any meetings together.

The investigator(s) will make a written response to the complainant within twenty-eight days, a copy of which will be sent to the Founder and the person complained against. If it is not possible to respond within 28 days, the complainant will be informed of any reasons for a delay. All investigations will be completed and responded to within six months.

The investigator(s) will make recommendations regarding the action required to bring about the resolution of the complaint and any sanctions which they may consider appropriate to apply to either party. In such circumstances, they will also provide instructions for the monitoring of the fulfilment of said actions or sanctions. Examples of possible sanctions would include:

- A formal apology to the complainant.
- A requirement to undertake further relevant training.
- Suspension of the person concerned from their work as a Sanomentologist.

The Founder, and whoever is managing the complaint, may halt the procedure at any stage if it emerges that legal action is under way, pending or intended, until such time as any legal process is complete.

Stage 3 – Appeal

The Grounds for an Appeal

Any party may appeal against the findings of the investigator(s) on the following grounds:

- that the complaints procedure had not been followed.
- that there was new evidence which the investigator(s) did not have access to in the investigation.

An appeal cannot be accepted only on the grounds that either party disagrees with the investigators' report.

Making an Appeal

Any appeal must be made in writing to the Founder within fourteen days of the receipt of the investigators' report.

The reasons for the appeal must be clearly set out in writing.

The appeal will be acknowledged in writing by the Founder and considered.

The appellant will be informed in writing within twenty-one days whether or not the appeal is accepted.

The Appeal Panel

If an appeal is accepted, the Director will arrange to set up an Appeals Panel. The panel will be made up of three members who may be considered impartial in the matter of the appeal.

The panel will meet within twenty-eight days of the notification of the acceptance of the appeal to the appellant.

No-one on the panel will have taken any part in the previous handling of the complaint.

The Appeal Hearing Fourteen days written notice of the date of the hearing and the composition of the panel will be given to all parties.

All documentation relating to the appeal will be copied to all parties and the panel members fourteen days before the hearing.

The complainant and the complained against may be asked to make a written statement to the panel which will be circulated seven days before the hearing.

The complainant and complained against may be required to attend the hearing and may be accompanied, and/or be represented, by a supportive person of their choice.

The complainant and complained against will have the opportunity to make a short statement to the hearing.

The investigator(s) and the Director or the Chair of the Board (whoever managed the original complaint) will be available to give information to the panel.

The appeal hearing will be recorded.

The appeal panel will have the authority to adjourn the hearing.

The panel will come to a decision regarding the appeal in private session. This discussion will not be recorded but a written record will be made of the proceedings. The decision will be given in writing within seven days. If the appeal is upheld the panel will make recommendations regarding the action required to bring about the resolution of the complaint.

The Founder will abide by the decision and recommendations of the appeal panel.

Monitoring of Complaints

A record will be kept of all complaints received. Anonymous complaints will also be recorded, including the reasons for any decision to pursue or not to pursue the complaint. Complaints will be monitored regularly by the Founder. Once a complaint has been concluded, a record of the complaint will be kept for a period of five years.