

FEBRUARY 1, 2021

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



PLAY THERAPY UK

The Coach House, Belmont Road, Uckfield, TN22 1BP

PTUK's Complaint Procedures

We try to ensure that all PTUK members deliver the highest standards of therapeutic care. However, if you become unhappy with the service that you are given or are worried about the conduct of a PTUK member, we suggest that you talk to our PTUK member first about your concerns to try and sort things out informally. Every practicing member has to have a Clinical Supervisor, so you may wish to talk to them as well.

However, if for any reason this is not possible, or hasn't solved the issue, then you can always raise your complaint directly with us. To make complaints hearings as quick, fair and effective as possible we have a three-stage process:

1. Mediation
2. Pre-hearing assessment
3. Professional Conduct Hearing

To register your complaint, you can do this by telephone or in writing, normal working hours are Monday to Friday 9.00 to 5.00pm. PTUK will respond to the initial complaint within 48 hours. It will keep complainants informed of the progress and timescales of each stage, as they will be dealt with, according to the complexity of the issue.

Phone 01825 761143 stating that you wish to complain about a PTUK Member, with brief details and your own contact phone number. You will then be given an email address for you to provide more details. If you call out of office hours, please leave a message. We aim to respond within 48 hours. Alternatively, you can write to:

The Chief Executive Play Therapy UK
The Coach House Belmont Road
Uckfield East Sussex
TN22 1BP

Mark your letter 'Highly Confidential and Urgent'.

If, however your complaint is regarding the PTUK Chief Executive Officer, these complaints should be sent directly to the Chair of the British Council of Therapeutic Interventions with Children (BCTIWC).

The Chair of BCTIWC
The British Council for Therapeutic Interventions with Children
Email address lol855@gmail.com

Complainants, in making their complaints under this Procedure, agree to allow their complaint and other associated submissions and documents to be sent to the PTUK Member complained against, and for their complaint to be processed in accordance with this Procedure.

Confidentiality and record keeping of complaints is key, complaints are of a sensitive nature, the complainant will be made aware of who is investigating the complaint. Both the complainant and

the PTUK member will be informed how the information of the complaint and communication will be shared and with whom. This will be confirmed in writing. PTUK record all complaints electronically, these are stored in a secure password protected online file in line with data protection procedures and will only be accessible to the Chief Executive and PTUK Senior Manager.

PTUK has two recording systems. Complaints are recorded initially on an excel log sheet by the PTUK Operations Manager. Once the complaints log sheet has been completed, a Complaints Record form is initiated by the PTUK Operations Manager, this documents each stage of the complaints process from the complaints contact details, date the complaint was received, documenting the actions, through to the outcome.

The Chief Executive will contact you, normally within 48 hours and ask you for details: the name and address of the child or young person; the name and work address of the person that you are complaining about; details of the services used to include dates and number of sessions and any other relevant details - what has happened, as much information as possible. This information will be added to the Complaints record form.

If the Chief Executive should not be available for any reason of illness or the like, the complaint will be passed on to the designated person in the PTUK Senior Management Team.

The Chief Executive will complete the triage and send the information to the PTUK Senior Manager who most probably will recommend mediation in the first instance as the quickest and most effective way of resolving the issue. Mediation will help identify what additional support might be beneficial e.g., additional clinical supervision, personal therapy, additional training. Where mediation is not appropriate or turns out to be unsatisfactory for you, a formal complaints procedure will be started.

The first stage is a Pre-Hearing Assessment Panel with not less than three persons appointed by the PTUK Senior Manager including a member of the public and a Play Therapist unconnected with your case. This panel will decide if there are valid grounds for a complaint hearing. They will take into account:

- The person that you are complaining about is a current member of PTUK. We cannot deal with complaints against individuals or organisation's who were not members of PTUK at the time of the alleged breach of professional conduct.
- You must either have used the therapeutic services of the member or be complaining on behalf of a child or young person with whom the person has worked.
- The complaint legitimately falls under one of the three headings for complaints specified in the PTUK Ethical Framework:
 1. Professional misconduct – where the practitioner has contravened the ethical and behaviour standards that should reasonably be expected of a member of PTUK.
 2. Professional malpractice – where the service/s provided have fallen below the standards that would reasonably be expected of a practitioner exercising reasonable

- care and skill. Examples of 'malpractice' include: Incompetence, negligence, recklessness, inadequate professional services.
3. Bringing the profession into disrepute - signifies that the practitioner has acted in such an infamous or disgraceful way that the public's trust in the profession might reasonably be undermined if they were accurately informed about all the circumstances of the case.
- A complaint must be lodged within three years of the alleged breach.
 - If the complaint is under investigation by the police or is likely to fall within the jurisdiction of any court or tribunal, for example for financial compensation, PTUK will not usually accept and investigate the complaint.

If the Pre-Hearing Assessment Panel decides the complaint is unfounded, the complainant and the PTUK Member complained against, will be formally notified in writing within 3 working days of the decision made. The decision of the Panel will be final.

If the Pre-Hearing Assessment Panel decides that the complaint is worthy of further consideration, the PTUK Senior Manager will initiate the second stage of the formal complaints procedure by appointing a Professional Conduct Panel of not less than five professionals to examine the complaint in detail and decide whether the complaint is proven or not.

The Panel will be made up of:

- PTUK Registrar
- Lay person
- Professional member
- PTUK Senior Manager
- CE or her representative

All staff and panel members likely to be involved in dealing with complaints will be given appropriate training on a regular basis.

Where a complaint has been made against the CEO of PTUK, the above procedure will be processed by the Chair of the BCTIWC. The Chair of the BCTIWC will recruit professionals with the competencies applicable to the case.

The complainant and the PTUK Member complained against, will be formally notified in writing within 3 working days of this decision including a timeframe for appointing the panel and undertaking the Professional Conduct Hearing.

If your complaint reaches this stage, you may wish to consider other options and engage professional advisers, the cost for any such advice will not be met by the PTUK. At an early stage all parties are advised to make themselves fully aware of the PTUK Complaints Procedure obtainable from:

<http://www.playtherapy.org.uk/Standards/EthicalFramework/EthicsProfessionalConductProc>

The complaint will be checked against current best practices, policies and procedures as well as the relevant laws and regulations.

If the complaint is proved, the panel will decide whether or not any sanction should be imposed upon the member. These could include:

- Probationary period. The PTUK member may continue to practice under certain conditions with an increased amount of clinical supervision, with prescribed actions that must be completed within a specified period of time.
- Suspension of Membership and removal from the PTUK Register. The PTUK member is deemed unable to practice until further training prescribed to meet the situation and/or taken other steps to become fit for practice have been undertaken, to the Panel's satisfaction. The PTUK registrar has the responsibility for removing the PTUK member from the register and informing PSA registers of this action.

The decision of the Professional Conduct Panel, together with details of any sanction, will be published in PTUK's journal in such detail as deemed appropriate to the findings and at its discretion. Such decisions will be based on considerations of public interest and the severity of the findings.

Members have the right to appeal against the decision made by the panel, the intention to appeal should be made within 5 working days of the panel decision to the Chair of the BCTIWC.

The Chair of BCTIWC

The British Council for Therapeutic Interventions with Children

Email address lol855@gmail.com

Appendix 2

PTUK Complaint Record

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--------|
| Name of Complainant | | Telephone number | |
| Contact address | | email address | |
| How was the complaint made | E.g., telephone, letter, email, social media | | |
| | | | |
| Date and time Complaint received | | Date Complaint forwarded to investigating officer | |
| Investigating officer | | | |
| | | | |
| Date complaint acknowledged | | | |
| How was Complaint acknowledged | Telephone | Email | Letter |
| Complaint details: | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Action taken | | | Date |
| | | | |
| Outcome of action (Mediation, Pre-hearing assessment, Professional Conduct Hearing). | | | Date |
| | | | |
| | | | |

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|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Stage 1, Mediation date of meeting | Mediation will take place between | Date complaint closed to PTUK |
| | | |
| Stage 2, Pre-hearing assessment date | | Pre-hearing assessment panel 1. 2. 3. |
| Reason for Pre-hearing assessment | | |
| Outcome of Pre-hearing assessment | | |
| | | |
| Stage 3, Professional Conduct hearing date | | Professional Conduct hearing panel 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |
| Reason for Professional Conduct hearing | | |
| Outcome of Professional Conduct hearing | | |
| Agreed actions from the Professional Conduct hearing | Date of actions | Actions review/completed |
| Additional Comments | | |