**Complaints Policy**

**Policy Scope**

This Boutique Therapy policy sets out policy procedures and guidelines regarding complaint’s management for therapists, clients, and members of the public.

**Policy Purpose**

This Boutique Therapy complaints policy provides massage therapists with the skills and knowledge to respond appropriately and effectively to a client’s complaint in accordance to procedures and guidelines within the policy.

Therapist and Client complaints and other comments are taken very seriously.

Therapist complaints provide an opportunity to support therapists, to meet their needs and listen to their feedback. Complaints are a helpful learning tool because they create a unique opportunity to identify gaps in the quality of care relating to either the therapist and/or the client and address any issues. Handled well, a complaint can lead to positive changes in practice, enhancing the relationship between therapist and management, or Therapist and client relationships.

**Policy Implementation**

* The Boutique Therapy complaints policy provides an efficient, fair, and accessible mechanism for handling complaints from clients.
* The Boutique Therapy complaints policy is developed to recognise, promote, and protect the rights of both Therapist and client.
* The Boutique Therapy complaints policy is developed to collect data and monitor complaints to enable ongoing improvement in duty of care of therapists and duty of care of clients and service delivery.
* The Boutique Therapy complaints policy is developed to resolve the complaint in the shortest time possible, relieving discomfort, stress and/or anxiety.
* The Boutique Therapy complaints policy provides Therapists and clients the choice of submitting a complaint form, either anonymously or by identification. An email address is the other option for a therapist or client to submit a compliant at a time of their own convenience.
* Encourage the therapist or client to fill in as much information as they can accurately and present to management in a timely manner.
* If possible, get complaint form filled in as soon as complaint is verbally made.

**Procedures Dealing with (Verbal) Complaints**

Keep a respectful and professional manner and uphold association guidelines when dealing with complaints.

1. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to consider the context of the situation from the therapists or client’s point of view
2. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to gather as much information as reasonably possible to build an awareness of differing views of what happened and what was said.
3. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to summarise the concerns in the complaint draw focus on the issue reassuring the complainant that they have been understood.
4. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to communicate in a calm and clear manner explaining what happened from their own point of view.
5. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to keep a record of the conversation and the complainant’s concerns, all necessary details (date of incident, nature of incident, date of conversation) and provide a copy of this to the complainant to ensure it is factually correct.
6. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to offer an apology if warranted.
7. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to ask the complainant what would resolve their concerns.
8. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to try and negotiate a solution with the complainant.
9. Boutique Therapist management or therapist identify any issues or gaps in the quality of care that have been highlighted by the complaint, and Boutique policy policies and procedures to address them.
10. Document and file the information progression and resolution.

**Procedures Dealing with (Written) Complaints**

1. Boutique Therapist management or therapist are to investigate and respond to all written complaints.
2. Therapists of Boutique Therapy are to inform Boutique Therapy management immediately.
3. Boutique Therapist management are to contact their professional indemnity insurance provider immediately (if required) and inform them of the complaint
4. Boutique Therapist management are to contact their professional association and inform them of the complaint
5. Boutique Therapist management are to formally (i.e. in writing) acknowledge that the complaint has been received and inform the complainant of the complaint management process, including the time frame for dealing with the complaint
6. Boutique Therapist management are to evaluate the complainant’s concerns and try to understand the situation from the complainant’s perspective
7. Boutique Therapist management are to identify any issues or gaps in the quality of care that have been highlighted by the complainant, and institute policies and procedures to address them.
8. Boutique Therapist management are to respond to the complaint in writing.

The letter should include:

* an acknowledgement of the complainant’s distress
* a clear explanation of what happened from Boutique Therapies management perspective
* an acknowledgement of any errors and an apology if appropriate
* an explanation of the steps taken to address the problem/concern
* appropriate remediation or an offer of resolution.

**References**

Federal Privacy Act (1988)

Information Privacy Act (2009)

AMT Ltd. Association Massage Therapist’s Ltd

Office of the Health Ombudsman ( <http://www.oho.qld.gov.au> )

National Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers (Queensland)