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Delivering an Effective & Integrated Complaints Handling Strategy

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Topics for discussion include:

- Top ten features of an effective complaints handling system
- Shedding corporate culture to enable more innovative practice
- Uncovering service expectations: opinions from the Ombudsman
- Grounds for overriding procedure with common sense solutions
- Empowering front-line staff to do the job
- Prising open inter-departmental communication channels that work
- Translating consumer views into practical improvements

Belfast

Eleanor Gill

Chief Executive, Consumer Council for Northern Ireland

Previously Leader of the Armagh and Dungannon Health Action Zone

Phillip Mears

Complaints Consultant

2002 Complaints Manager of the Year, National Customer Services Awards 20 years public-sector management experience in customer services and complaints management. Achieved an 80% reduction in Ombudsman complaints at LB Lambeth

Tom Frawley

Assembly Ombudsman and Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints

Richard Walter

Complaints Manager, NHS Lothian Primary Care Organisation

Previously seconded to Office of the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman. Chair, NHS Complaints Association Scotland

Jim Murray

Principal Information Officer, Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Michael Hill

Managing Director, complaintsrgreat
International speaker and complaints handling expert. Judge for UK's National Customer Service Awards Associate Consultant on Customer Service to UK's IDeA

Thursday 29 June 2006

Hilton Hotel, Belfast

0900

Registration and coffee

0930

Chair's introduction

Top ten features of an effective complaints handling system

- Giving higher stakeholder satisfaction
- Building operations around the customer
- Providing a clear outward focus and vision
- Linking policy making to the front-line
- Equal access to all community groups

Eleanor Gill

Chief Executive, Consumer Council for Northern Ireland

1000

Shedding corporate culture to enable more innovative practice

- What do we mean by culture?
- What you say versus what you do
- Examples of the impact culture can have on complaints
- Identifying your organisation's culture towards complaints
- Can you influence your organisation's culture?

Phillip Mears

Complaints Consultant
2002 Complaints Manager of the Year, National Customer Services Awards

1030

Uncovering service expectations: opinions from the Ombudsman

- National framework of standards and accountability
- Risk management focused on customer values and concerns
- Public perception, access and benefit from complaints
- Managing stakeholder relationships
- Clarity of standards and benchmarks of performance

Tom Frawley

Assembly Ombudsman and Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints

1100

Questions to the Ombudsman

1115

Morning coffee

1130

Grounds for overriding procedure with common sense solutions

- What people want when things go wrong
- Developing an effective complaints system
- Using initiative to problem solve
- Producing a complaints check list
- The Ombudsman's expectations of a complaints procedure

Richard Walter

Complaints Manager NHS Lothian Primary Care Organisation and Chair, NHS Complaints Association Scotland

1200

Empowering front-line staff to do the job effectively

- Aligning resources to meet customer objectives
- Staff motivation and improved morale
- Members of the management team with the authority to drive through change
- Devolving responsibility and resources
- Encouraging ownership of the complaint

Jim Murray

Principal Officer, Northern Ireland Housing Executive

1230

Presentation by Respond followed by Questions and discussion

1300

Lunch

1410

Prising open inter-departmental communication channels that work

- Enabling a deeper shared understanding of customers
- Fostering a team approach to meeting customer needs
- Defined relationship management and customer relationship roles
- Achieving an integrated system by sharing lessons learned
- Maintaining consistency and working towards a seamless service
- Impartial inter-departmental complaints investigators

Phillip Mears

Complaints Consultant
Achieved an 80% reduction in Ombudsman complaints at LB Lambeth

1440

Choking off serial and vexatious complainers before they start

- Spotting a serial complainant early on
- Setting boundaries for aggression or vexatious
- Considering each case on its merits - looking at the issues or behaviour not the person
- Deciding a course of action and sticking to your guns
- Clarifying processes, parameters and possible outcomes at start
- Reframing their goals from 'revenge and vindication' to reparation

Michael Hill

Managing Director, complaintsrgreat Ltd
International speaker and complaints-handling expert and judge for UK's National Customer Service Awards

1510

Translating consumer views into practical improvements

- Greater individual freedom and innovation so that local services develop as users want
- Taking account of consumer views at every level in the design and delivery of services
- Ensuring changes made have real meaning and impact
- Gearing services to the lives of consumers
- Closely managed partnerships with external organisations
- Informing complainants that change has occurred and ensuring solution works

Northern Ireland Speaker tbc

1540

Afternoon tea

1555

**Focus Session
Freedom of Information, Data Protection, and Human Rights**

A full discussion between speakers on customers' rights and your obligations

1620

Questions and discussion and chair's final remarks

1630

Close of conference

To book at £299 + VAT simply complete the form and fax it back to: 020 7384 6561

Full name (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss)

Position

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Address

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Signature

Date

Cancellation: All cancellations must be received in writing before 15 June 2006. These will be subject to £100 administration charge (but you will still receive the notes). Later cancellations will be liable for the full fee.

Programme changes: We may have to change the venue and/or speakers for reasons beyond our control.

