Student Complaint and Grievance Resolution Policy

A. Policy Statement

The Center for Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) at Portland State University (PSU) is committed to providing high quality and ethical care to the students of PSU and creating an environment where all people of diverse backgrounds and identities can expect to be treated with respect and dignity. SHAC addresses student complaints or grievances depending on the nature and taking into consideration the guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Protected Health Information (PHI).

B. Reason For Policy

This policy is to ensure a complaint and grievance process is accessible and inclusive to all PSU students utilizing services at SHAC. Students have the right to be heard and have their concerns, complaints, or grievances addressed in a timely manner.

C. Applicability

This policy applies to all SHAC departments.

D. Definitions

Complaint: A verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction regarding care or services provided, which can be resolved in a timely manner by staff present and/or the department Director.
Grievance: A written or verbal complaint by a patient or a patient's representative regarding the quality of patient's care, which may require additional investigation. A complaint will be considered a grievance when the patient or patient representative verbally declines to accept the written resolution of a complaint or writes to request further review into a complaint. Grievances are escalated to the department Director for further investigation and will follow the procedure below.

E. Complaint or Grievance Reporting Options

The Feedback page on SHAC's website provides patients with the Complaint and Grievance Resolution Policy and a link to each department's Feedback Form. Each form has the option to be completed anonymously.

General - General SHAC Feedback Form
Students may also contact the Associate Vice Provost for Health and Wellbeing or the Administrative Services Director via phone, in person or email to be heard.

Counseling Services - Counseling Services Feedback Form
Clients may also contact the Counseling Services Director or the Associate Vice Provost for Health and Wellbeing via phone, in person or email to be heard.

Dental Services - Dental Services Feedback Form
Patients may contact the Dental Services Manager or the Associate Vice Provost for Health and Wellbeing via phone, in person or email to be heard.

Health Promotion - Health Promotion Feedback Form
Students may contact the Health Promotion and Education Director or the Associate Vice Provost for Health and Wellbeing via phone, in person or email to be heard.

Health Services - Health Services Feedback Form
Patients may contact the Health Services Director or the Associate Vice Provost for Health and Wellbeing via phone, in person or email to be heard.

Student Health Insurance Plan - General SHAC Feedback Form
Students may contact the SHAC insurance team directly by phone, email or in person to be heard. Students may also lodge a complaint with a higher entity such as the Office of Student Affairs.

Confidential Advocacy Services - Confidential Advocacy Form
Students may also contact the Associate Director for Clinic Operations or the Associate Vice Provost for Health and Wellbeing via phone, in person or email to be heard.

F. Procedure for Complaint Response

Applies to all SHAC Departments
The complaint response process will be followed upon receipt of a complaint. Depending on the nature of the complaint, PSU's Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion and/or Office of Human Resources may need to be involved as to follow all institutional policies and procedures.

1. Students/patients/clients have the right to submit complaints verbally, by phone, email, or by use of the SHAC Feedback Form, which is posted on SHAC's website.

2. If a complaint is given in person, the staff member receiving the complaint should try to resolve the situation, and if the complaint cannot be resolved it should be escalated to the employee's direct supervisor. Complaints received by phone or email will be forwarded directly to the appropriate Director. If a complaint is received on the SHAC feedback form, it will be forwarded to the department Director. Complaints will be responded to within 7 business days of receipt. If the complaint cannot be resolved, it will be escalated to a grievance and will follow the grievance response procedure.

3. Depending upon the complaint, an incident report may be completed, at which time the Incident Documentation Policy will be followed, and the complaint will be reviewed by the SHAC Leadership Team.

G. Procedure for Grievance Response

The response process below will be followed by each department when a grievance is received by SHAC. Depending on the nature of the grievance, PSU's Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion and/or Office of Human Resources may need to be involved as to follow all institutional policies and procedures.

1. All grievances are brought to the attention of the appropriate department Director, either by the student/patient/client, the student/patient/client's representative, or by a staff member report. The department Director will contact the student/patient/client within 7 business days to acknowledge the grievance.

2. The Director will review the grievance, investigate, and contact the student/patient/client directly for follow-up within 30 days.

3. The Director will use the means of communication requested by the student/patient/client when following up on a grievance. The Director will outline the steps taken during investigation and explain how the grievance has and will continue to be addressed.

4. A chart note is placed in the patient/client's electronic health record if appropriate. This will only apply to Dental, Health, or Counseling Services grievances.

5. The Director will document the grievance by completing an incident report, following the Incident Documentation Policy. The grievance will be reviewed by the SHAC Leadership Team, and will be documented on the Incident Report Tracking, as well as the Grievance Report Tracking.

6. The Director may discuss the grievance with staff involved in order to provide coaching and counseling as defined by collective bargaining agreements. Staff with repeated complaints may require additional coaching, professional development and/or disciplinary measures, as defined by collective bargaining agreements. If additional support is needed, the Director will contact PSU Human Resources Employee Relations.

7. If further action is required, the grievance may be taken to the Associate Vice Provost for Health and Wellbeing, the SHAC Clinical Review Team, or Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion (GDI).

H. Grievance Documentation, Review, and Annual Reporting

All complaints and/or grievances will be documented and reviewed upon receipt. The SHAC Leadership Team will also conduct a yearly review of all grievances as part of the annual incident review process.

I. Related Policies, Procedures, Forms, and Resources

Applicable Forms

- PSU Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion: Complaint of Discrimination or Harassment Form
- SHAC Incident Report Form

Applicable Policies

- SHAC Incident Documentation Policy
- PSU Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Policy