



Information & support

and support

- 1 When someone comes to you about an issue or problem, you'll need to:
 - find a private spot where you won't be interrupted
 - set aside enough time to hear the full story and respond appropriately
 - affirm the decision to raise the problem with you
 - clarify your role
 - respond, but don't react
 - listen sensitively and respectfully and without judging or appearing to judge
 - avoid personalising emotional outbursts or aggression; don't absorb their anger, sadness or frustration
- 2 Get the facts/ story clear. Ask permission to take notes. Ask open rather than closed questions; identify the problem's impact, noting (alleged) facts and the person's feelings; recheck the facts/story with them.
- 3 Ask if there are any witnesses, or any other evidence that supports what they have told you.
- 4 Work out if you're the right person to help them, for example, refer them to another club committee member, MPIO or official if you believe that you may have a conflict of interest or be perceived to have a conflict of interest (for example, you may be a friend of the person they are complaining about).
- 5 Tell them whether the allegation(s) appear to contravene any of the organisation's policies, for example, you might say 'If it is proved, this type of behaviour appears to be a breach of our Member Protection Policy and Code of Conduct'.
- 6 Find out how they think the problem should be fixed. What outcome do they want?
- 7 Talk with them about the options available which may help them achieve their desired outcome.
- 8 Explain how the complaint procedure works and what complaint resolution outcomes are possible. Talk about self-management, informal options, formal options and external options.
- 9 Determine if anyone else needs to know. If their problem involves something that is very serious (for example, if it is about child abuse or someone's safety is at risk), let them know that you will need to report the matter confidentially to an official. Explain that this is to meet any legal requirements and to ensure safety within the organisation.
- 10 Advise them to keep the matter confidential. Explain that this will help contain the issue and assist resolution. Let them know that they do have the right to talk with someone who is confidentially supporting or counselling them or who is involved in resolving the problem.
- 11 Find out what other support or information they may require, for example, if it is an issue related to sexual harassment or abuse, they may require counselling.
- 12 Explain that you can come with them, if they want, when they talk with the offender, an official or the complaints officer. Explain that you will be there for support. It is not your role to resolve the problem or to speak/advocate for them. Resolving the problem is the role of officials or the complaints officer.
- 13 Monitor the situation and follow-up as required.