

AADE DEAP POLICY



POLICY NUMBER: 7

TITLE: COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS

POLICY

AADE has a responsibility to ensure all DSMT programs accredited maintain National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (NSDSMES) and will respond to complaints about services provided by accredited DSMT programs from consumers or health care providers in a timely manner.

Process for coordinating complaints with licensing authorities and CMS

The Director of Accreditation will determine the extent to which the complaint is related to the NSDSMES. If the complaint is related, but also involves other accreditation or licensure processes, the investigation will be coordinated with appropriate authorities. CMS will be notified of all complaints against an accredited entity. If a complaint is related more specifically to CMS, such as reimbursement issues, the investigation will be coordinated with or referred to, the CMS Regional Office.

- If the complaint involves a healthcare professional's competence or ethical conduct, the professional's credentialing organization will be consulted.
- If the complaint involves a Life Safety Code potential violation, the Director of Accreditation will determine the responsible State Agency personnel and contact them.

PROCEDURE

Complaints alleging an AADE accredited DSMT program failed to comply with the NSDSMES will be responded to and investigated in the following way:

- AADE staff will contact the informant for additional information if necessary.
 - The informant's identity will remain confidential throughout the process, unless it is determined that the complainant's identity is necessary for complaint resolution.
 - If the complaint was made verbally, the informant will be asked to submit a detailed, written description.
 - If the complaint was anonymous, an attempt will be made to obtain the identity of the informant.
- AADE staff will contact the program to assess current status, to identify any problems and to inform them that a complaint has been received.
 - Materials relevant to the specific issue identified in the complaint will be submitted to AADE for review.
 - An onsite audit may be made to evaluate current DSMT program compliance. Onsite audit criteria are based on the assumption that an actual onsite audit is a more valid and expedient method of determining

compliance and would be particularly useful in high-risk circumstances, such as a serious complaint that has a high probability of being substantiated. An onsite audit could expedite the investigation process and also decrease the likelihood that an invalid conclusion is reached, resulting in the disruption and/or lack of availability of DSMT services to large groups of beneficiaries.

- Onsite audits may be considered necessary if (See Compliance Policy #5):
 - The complaint indicates that there is not only one or a few specific potential deficiencies, but a widespread problem.
 - The DSMT program is large and the complaint indicates a serious problem (the complaint does not come from only one person, but indicates widespread concern among several). Fraudulence is highly suspected.
 - There is a history of recurrent deficiencies and/or previous complaints, particularly of a similar nature.
- Following a thorough investigation of the facts surrounding the issue, a decision will be made regarding the validity of the complaint, and if the complaint was substantiated, a determination made about the DSMT program's accreditation status, utilizing the decision making process.
- Detailed written documentation about all phases of the complaint process will be kept in the DSMT program's record.
- Timeframes for responding to the complaint will be based upon the nature and severity of the complaint and with consideration of what is fair and equitable to all parties. However, in general, response times frames will be as follows:
 - AADE will initiate the complaint investigation by contacting the complainant within five working days of receipt of a written complaint.
 - The DSMT program that is the subject of the complaint will be contacted by phone and email within ten days of receipt of the written complaint.
 - The complaint program will submit any required documentation/materials to AADE within thirty calendar days from the AADE contact.
 - A determination to substantiate or not substantiate the complaint will be made within fourteen days of the complaint program's documentation submission.
- Failure of the accredited program to respond to AADE contact attempts or to submit materials as required will result in loss of accreditation.