

Aged care feedback and complaints management

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the feedback and complaints management process to respond to concerns expressed by any client of the NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Support Service and to assist with continuous quality improvement efforts. The policy aims to meet the requirements for Aged Care Quality Standard 6 Feedback and complaints to support the:

Consumer outcome

I feel safe and am encouraged and supported to give feedback and make complaints. I am engaged in processes to address my feedback and complaints and appropriate action is taken.

Organisation statement

Our organisation regularly seeks input and feedback from consumers, Personal Care Workers, the workforce, and others and uses the input and feedback to inform continuous improvements for Individuals consumers and the whole organization.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Complaint	A cause of dissatisfaction or resentment
Complainant	The person who complains
Open Disclosure	Open disclosure is the open discussion with consumers, their family, Personal Care Workers and other support people about feedback and complaints made. It involves an expression of regret and factual explanation of what happened in response to a complaint, the potential consequences and what steps are being taken to manage this and prevent it happening again
Investigator	The person who investigates the complaint

POLICY

- Client satisfaction affects service outcomes. NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Service acknowledges that consumers complaints are an important source of customer feedback.
- NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Service and NPARC encourages consumers to provide compliments, complaints, or suggestions.
- Feedback and complaints can be provided verbally or in writing. Consumers /families with verbal complaints will be contacted to have their complaint documented to ensure the nature of the complaint is captured accurately.
- A consumer feedback survey and a meal survey will be conducted every year to seek consumer input into planning and quality improvement activities.
- NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Service and NPARC will deal with complaints in a courteous and understanding manner.

- An open disclosure approach is used when managing feedback and complaints. NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Service and NPARC will be open and honest with our consumers about what occurred and apologise for the dissatisfaction and feedback the outcome from complaints.
- Information about the complaints policy is available on the organisation’s website.
- All staff are made aware that perceptions of what is reasonable, and fair can change when a consumer is unwell, anxious or their family is not fully informed of what the service is required to provide and is able to deliver.
- All complaints whether they are minor or serious will be promptly dealt with to minimize harm and distress to both the complainant and the staff members involved and to minimize the damage to NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Service and NPARC.
- All complaints will be investigated within 5 days. It is important that the complainant feels they have been heard.
- All staff are to ensure that the Client who make complaints are not discriminated against and remain in the service if they choose during the processing of the complaints. If the complaint is serious then the consumer may need to be withdrawn from the service and alternate arrangements made.
- Complaints can be made verbally in person or in writing to the Aged and Disability services Manager or via an employee, family member or through another third person to the service. If the complaint is about the Aged and Disability Coordinator the complainant should be referred to the Executive Manager, Corporate Services.
- If the complaint is about the Executive Manager, Corporate Services. the CEO will manage the investigation of the complaint and may call on external support to investigate the complaint.
- Information about how to seek assistance with making complaints through Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia and to make complaints to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission will be made available in the Home Care Package Client Handbook and NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Service information brochures.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities of staff for implementation of the complaints management policy are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1
Complaints management policy and procedure

Staff member	Responsibility
Executive Manager, Corporate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing trend reports • Investigating a complaint if it is about the Aged care and disability services manager.

Staff member	Responsibility
Aged care and disability services manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all complaints are investigated within 5 days. • Making the NPARC aware of all complaints reported to the service • Investigating a complaint if it is about a NPA Community Aged Care and Disability Support Service worker • Ensuring staff are aware of the complaints reporting system • Implementing any changes required in response to complaints. • Communicating outcomes and changes required as a result of complaints to their teams.
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring Clients are aware of their right to lodge a complaint • Assist complainants to complete a complaints form.

PROCEDURE

Receiving complaints

1. Talk with the person making the complaint to get the information from them about the issue they are concerned about and try to resolve the complaint immediately.
2. If the person wants to lodge a formal complaint, ask them to complete a complaints form. A complaints form is available from the Aged and Disability Manager.
3. If the person is not confident completing the complaint form themselves, offer someone of their choice to assist them to complete the form to collect all the information that is needed to investigate the complaint and advise them they may have a support person present when making a complaint.
4. As part of getting the story about the complaint find out what the person complaining wants to happen as a result of the complaint.

Complaint investigation process

5. Forward the complaint to the Aged and Disability Manager for review and investigation.
6. Enter information about the date the complaint was made, who made the complaint and what the complaint was about into the complaints register.
7. A copy of the complaint with information about who is investigating the complaint should be provided to the Executive Manager, Corporate Services for information.
8. The Aged and Disability services manager will investigate the complaint, unless the complaint is about the Aged and Disability Manager in which case the Executive Manager, Corporate Services or CEO will investigate the complaint.
9. As part of the investigation process the Aged and Disability Manager will talk to the person who made the complaint to get their complete story and to clarify the expected outcome from the complaint.

10. If the complaint relates to a staff member, a copy of the complaint should be provided to the staff member with a request to provide a written response to the complaint. If the staff member needs help to provide a written response to a complaint assistance should be provided by the person of their choice.
11. The Aged and Disability Manager services manager will review the material and may conduct follow up interviews. They will decide what action needs to be taken and write it on the complaints form.
12. Discuss the recommended action with the Executive Manager, Corporate Services or NPARC as appropriate to get their approval for the action proposed on response to the complaint.

Feedback about complaint outcomes

13. The Aged and Disability Manager or the Executive Manager, Corporate Services will talk to the person who made the complaint and let them know about the findings from the investigation of the complaint and any action that will occur as a result of the complaint.
14. Check with the persons to see if they are satisfied with the explanation of the investigation of the complaint and action that will be taken.
15. Provide a copy of the completed complaints form with the action taken, the date the complaint was resolved and the date the feedback was given to the person who complained.
16. If the person is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they should be provided with the contact details for the funding body to lodge the complaint with them.

Completing the monthly report

A report is submitted to the Council each month as part of the routine report summarizing any complaints which have occurred since the last NPARC meeting, action taken to address the complaint and any trends emerging in complaints reported. To prepare the report the following steps should be completed.

1. At the end of the first week of the month check the complaints register.
2. Insert the total number completed within 5 working days into the first Column of the table
3. Indicate the type of complaint and the % of investigations that were completed within 5 days.

Table 1: Example of trend report table for results section

Complaints	Total No	Type of incident			
		Employee	Service	Facilities	Other
Number of Complaints in the reporting period					
% Investigations completed within 5 days					

4. In the “Corrective or preventative action already taken” section of the QI report indicate any corrective actions that have been taken to address the results of the report.

5. In the “Continuous Improvement actions recommendations” section of the CQI report enter any recommendations to address the issues identified in the report.
6. Indicate the resources required to implement the recommendations in the “Resources required to implement recommendations” section of the CQI report.
7. Enter the name of the person who completed the report in the CQI report
8. Forward report to the Community Services Manager for circulation with meeting papers.

OTHER RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	Open Disclosure
Forms or other Council documents	Complaints form Complaints register

RELEVANT STANDARD

- Aged Care Quality Standard 1: Consumer dignity and choice
 Aged Care Quality Standard 6: Feedback and Complaints
 Aged Care Quality Standard 8: Organisational Governance