

Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure

Purpose

Feedback (complaints and compliments) provides unique information about the quality of service delivery from the perspective of consumers/participants and their carers.

Management of feedback provides the opportunity for complainants to have their issues resolved effectively, ensures that any identified risks are managed appropriately, and that action is taken to minimise or eliminate those risks. A key component of feedback management is the systematic recording of issues, risks, complaints, and their resolution.

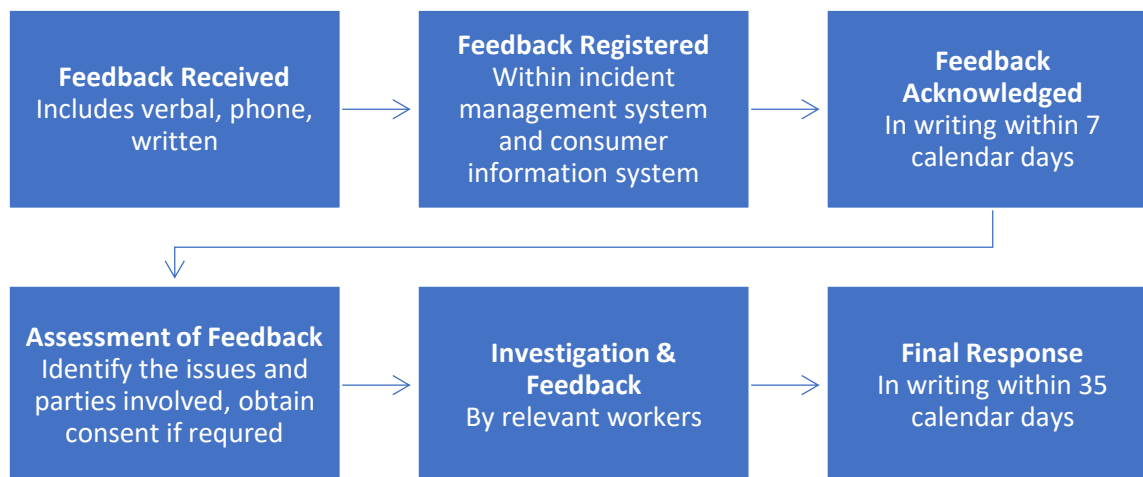
The objectives of a feedback management pathway are to:

- Assist workers with the timely and effective management of feedback;
- Establish a standard approach to feedback handling; and
- Ensure all workers are aware of their responsibilities and are empowered to manage feedback.

Scope

This procedure applies to all workers (permanent, temporary and casual), including contractors and volunteers working in care settings where specialist mental health services are delivered.

Overview of Feedback Process



Principles

Our feedback management procedure is underpinned by the following guiding principles:

- We are committed to consumers/participants and quality improvement;
- Consumers/participants and their carers are encouraged and enabled to provide feedback about the service, including complaints;
- All feedback is acknowledged and responded to promptly and sensitively;
- Feedback is assessed by considering risk factors, the known facts, the wishes of the complainant and accountability of the workforce;
- All feedback is dealt with in a manner that is effective, complete, fair to all parties and provides just outcomes;
- Information is openly communicated while protecting confidentiality and personal privacy; and
- All feedback is recorded to enable review of individual cases, to identify trends and risk and report on aggregated information.

Receiving Complaints

Feedback may be received verbally in-person, over the telephone, or in writing (which may include letters, emails, or via an online mechanism such as via the public website).

Verbal feedback procedure:

- Provide a calm explanation of what happened if they do know why it happened.
- Offer an apology if warranted.
- Advise the complainant of the feedback management process, including sharing this procedure with the complainant as indicated;
- Know when to refer the feedback on or escalate;
- Comprehensively record the conversation and concerns, along with all necessary details (names, addresses, identified providers, etc.) in the Consumer Information Management System (Theranest) and in the Incident Management System (SafetyChampion);
- If possible, provide a copy of the completed record to the complainant to ensure they agree that it is factually correct;
- Advise them of the appropriately identified person if they wish to send any written correspondence; and
- Commence actioning the feedback if possible.

Registering and Acknowledging Feedback

As soon as feedback is received:

- It must be registered on SafetyChampion as 'New Action', with the following considerations:

Low impact feedback	Relates to a single service or individual (consumer, carer).
Medium impact feedback	Complaints from multiple persons or about multiple services; Feedback from external agency (eg. NDIS Commission, ANZACATA); or Small claims or minor compensation requested.
High impact feedback	Issue relating to significant regulatory or ministerial intervention; Significant legal action; Complaint from multiple external agencies;

- If the feedback also involves an incident, a separate SafetyChampion 'Incident' form must be completed; and
- Any correspondence received or sent in relation to the feedback should be uploaded to the SafetyChampion records.
- Acknowledge receipt of the feedback within seven (7) calendar days. Acknowledgement may occur verbally but must also be in writing. Written acknowledgements will:
 - o Explain the feedback process;
 - o Identify contact person/details for the complainant;
 - o Expected timeframes and what might be requested from the complainant, e.g. client consent;
- Assess the feedback and assign it to the relevant person.

Initial Assessment

The purpose of the assessment process is to:

- Classify the feedback appropriately to determine appropriate action;
- Ensure the process is commensurate to the seriousness of the feedback and the issues raised; and

There are several steps to take in assessing feedback:

1. Identify the issue/s raised: Identify the issues for resolution, which includes the key concerns raised by the complainant, as well as any other issues that arise or are identified by the program area, and if any or all of the issues are unclear, before progressing the matter, clarify them with the complainant.
2. Identify the parties involved: The relevant parties are those key people involved with the complaint plus those involved with the incident that is the subject of the complaint. They may not always be a respondent to the complaint, but may be key people in the provision of service under inquiry.
3. Within the bounds of legislation and where possible, obtain consumer consent: If the feedback relates to the treatment received by the consumer and complainant is not the consumer; if the feedback is made by a Member of Parliament on behalf of their constituents; or the feedback investigation requires information supplied to a third party.

In these instances, an authority to release information is required in order to provide confidential information to a third party. Consumer or carer/guardian to sign the authority to supply information, and to be provided with an explanation how the information is to be used.

Investigate the Feedback

All feedback requires to a greater or lesser degree a fact-finding process in order to determine what has happened and what course of action is required in response. Consideration is required to determine:

1. What information to obtain.
2. Where it is to be obtained.
3. How it should be collected (interview, phone call, email).
4. How it is communicated (report, statement).

Other considerations:

- Consider who may be appropriate to provide specialist or expert advice/review;
- Consider if information is required from a third party or external agency;
- Construct a chronology of events/flow chart if complex;
- Identify who is to be interviewed and the appropriate order;
- Consider if an interpreter is required
- Develop questions for the key parties based on the analysis of the issues and information required; and
- Determine the applicable standards, procedures, policies and whether they were adhered to.

As information is collected, it must be analysed and reviewed. Analysis includes identifying:

- What can be agreed upon between the parties?
- What are the facts?
- Is information relevant and reliable? Are there any inconsistencies?
- Has sufficient information been gathered to determine whether particular policy/standard has been met?
- Is independent verification necessary? If so, has been obtained?
- What systemic or performance factors led to the outcome?

Respond

Once the information has been analysed, the person managing the feedback makes findings and recommendations for action. Actions taken to resolve feedback must be based on the evidence, address any system, process or practitioner issues, and are informed by the principles of public interest and good service governance. Options for appropriate action may include:

1. Offer an apology.
2. Develop/amend policy or procedure.
3. Training/education.
4. Modification of the environment.
5. Requesting a formal review.
6. Ongoing monitoring of an issue.
7. No action recommended.

The outcome and recommendations are to be clearly communicated to the consumer and workers, and integrated into quality improvement systems through appropriate implementation and subsequent review of effectiveness.

Feedback Resolution – Final Response

The nominal target for finalising feedback is **35 calendar days**.

Final responses will be in writing. The final response must be factually correct and:

- Validate the complainant's concerns (this is not necessarily about accepting blame or fault, but will sometimes be an acknowledgement of the complainant's experience and their feelings);
- Address each of the points the complainant has raised with a full explanation or give the reason(s) why it is not possible to comment on a specific matter;
- Give specific details about the investigation ie. Sources of information;
- Give details of action taken as a result of the complaint;
- Provide the contact information for further queries/discussion if required;
- Offer to meet the complainant.

If there is a reason why a specific issue cannot be addressed this should be stated and include details of further action available to the complainant.

The final response will be:

1. Sent to the complainant with a copy of the feedback procedure.
2. Copied to any requesting third parties (prior consent required).
3. Copied to SafetyChampion feedback record and the Consumer Information Management System (Theranest).

Any further correspondence from the complainant, which is being dealt with under this process, will be acknowledged within seven (7) calendar days, and the points raised within the complaint are logged within the SafetyChampion feedback record. Timeframes for answering further correspondence will be as those for the first response.

Record Keeping

Copies of letters/memos sent including update letters, acknowledgement letters, letters requesting information or clarification, letters notifying parties of feedback, should be uploaded in the relevant SafetyChampion feedback record, and if appropriate, within the Consumer Information Management System. File notes should record the subject matter of telephone conversations and other actions. These files will be kept in accordance with the Privacy Policy.

Procedural Considerations

Point of Service Feedback

Ideally, most feedback will be dealt with directly and quickly at the point where the matter arises.

Escalation Process

Depending on the type of feedback, it may be necessary to alert the insurer or obtain legal advice. This should not interfere with the aim of resolving the complaint quickly and amicably.

Considerations for Handling Feedback

All participants are to be provided with information about how to make a complaint prior to services commencing, including how they can make an anonymous complaint.

Anonymous Feedback

Anonymous callers should be advised that an investigation is made more problematic if they do not divulge identities as this severely limits the service's ability to obtain information. They should then be informed of confidentiality, as applied to the feedback management process, to encourage them to reveal their own and/or the subject's identity.

The complainant needs to be informed:

- There will be disclosure of information to any respondents identified;
- There is nothing 'off the record'
- What will happen with the information provided.

However, the complainant's wishes should be respected, as an assurance of absolute confidentiality cannot be given. Anonymous written feedback may reveal the identity of the complainant or it may be apparent from the complaint details. An inquiry may still be possible and may be warranted if the complaint raises public health and safety concerns or where external agencies may need to be notified.

Feedback relating to events older than 12 months

Normally feedback will be given within 12 months from the event that caused the problem. If the passage of time has been considerable, it may affect the capacity to investigate the feedback and these constraints should be discussed with the complainant. Although it may not be possible to investigate the facts of the case, attempts should be made to achieve resolution.

Declining to Deal with Feedback

We may decide to decline to deal with certain feedback because it is:

- Vexatious or frivolous;
- Outside of jurisdiction;
- The subject matter of the feedback (or part) has been or is under investigation by some other competent person or body or has been or is the subject of legal proceedings.

Care needs to be taken in assessing this type of feedback to ensure that every effort is made to understand the information the complainant is attempting to convey.

If feedback has been declined, complainants should be advised of the reasons for the decision as well other agencies that may be able to assist them with their concerns.

Mandatory Notifications

In some cases, feedback raises issues that require mandatory external notification or referral because:

- The feedback should be managed by a government agency (Department of Housing, Department of Community Services, Commonwealth Aged Care Complaints Resolution Scheme, etc); or
- The feedback requires mandatory notification to another agency, such as the Police, the Coroner, the Department of Health, or the NDIS Commission for NDIS Reportable Incidents.

This may only become apparent once preliminary inquiries are made. Other external bodies that may need to be involved in feedback include (but not limited to):

- Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC)
- Commonwealth Aged Care Complaints Resolution Scheme
- Coroner in the case of a notifiable death
- Professional registration body eg. ANZACATA, PACFA, Medical Board etc.
- Medical defence organisation
- Health provider's insurer or legal advisor
- ICAC and/or Ombudsman's Office

Progress Reports for Feedback Exceeding 35 Days to Resolve

If at 35 calendar days from the date of receiving the feedback, the matter has not been concluded; a detailed progress report must be sent, with:

- An apology for the delay
- A full explanation of the delay
- Details of the results of the enquire to date if possible
- The date by which a full response can be expected

A copy of the letter should be uploaded to the Risk Management System and Consumer Information Management System.

Should a feedback response be delayed further, a holding letter will be sent every 20 days until the final response is sent, unless otherwise indicated (e.g. it will incite aggression from the complainant, will be seen as harassing the complainant, or it is not appropriate as litigation is involved).

Unresolved Feedback

If a complainant remains dissatisfied following the service's response, they have several options available to them, which may include:

- Independent review by an external agency or person
- Referral to HCCC

Complainants have the right to pursue their feedback until it is resolved to their satisfaction. However, there are reasonable limits in terms of dealing with continued contact and correspondence with dissatisfied complainants and matters that might be considered frivolous or vexatious feedback. Every attempt should be made to resolve the issues that have been raised.

At this stage, where it is felt appropriate, encourage complainants to attend a face-to-face meeting. If the complainant agrees, they should be involved in determining who should be present (including offering a support person or advocate to attend).

Independent Review Request

Requests for an independent review will only be considered if made in writing.

Information to be provided to participants

Prior to commencement of services, as part of the **Participant Information Pack**, all participants should be provided with information about how to make a complaint. Whilst this information is provided as part of the Service Agreement, participants should also be provided with a copy of the NDIS document 'Making a complaint about your provider'. This document contains information about how to make a complaint and includes the following information:

- Phone numbers for contacting the NDIS to make a complaint
Phone: 1800 035 544
Website: www.ndiscommission.gov.au
Text: 133 677
National Relay Service: internet-relay.nrs.call.gov.au and ask for 1800 035 544
Translation/interpreting Services: 131 450
- Information about making a complaint: www.ndiscommission.gov.au/participantpackonlineform
- NDIA - <https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants>
- Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office - <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/working-with-people-with-disability>

Participants should be encouraged to discuss any questions they may have about the documentation provided. The information pack should also include a copy of the NDIS complaints form. Participants are also encouraged to complete the feedback form on <https://www.mishyrowan.com/ndis-feedback> (see below) should they wish to provide feedback.

<https://www.mishyrowan.com/ndis-feedback>

Home Art Therapy Services NDIS Support Mishey's Story Contact

How do I give feedback or make a complaint?

I welcome all kinds of feedback, including compliments and complaints about my services. This helps me to provide a better service for the community, and I am committed to resolving any problems that may arise.

What can you provide feedback or make a complaint about?

Anything that you are not happy about, including incident management, if in any way you felt you were not treated well or if the services did not meet your expectations.

Who can offer feedback or make a complaint?

Parents, carers, participants, young people and agencies.

How can I get support to provide feedback or make a complaint?

Providing feedback can sometimes be challenging, so you may want to seek a support person, social worker or advocate to help you with your complaint. Or you might feel more comfortable to ask a friend or family member to assist.

Is it private?

Your feedback or complaint is confidential. However, there may be some instances where other people need to be informed due to legal or mandatory reporting requirements. Please refer to the [Privacy Policy](#) for more information. Feedback can also be anonymous, however it may make it difficult to resolve issues in such cases.

What is your complaints process?

Upon receiving your feedback or complaint, it is reviewed and then registered in my incident management system. Feedback is acknowledged in writing within 7 working days. From there, I assess the feedback and investigate as appropriate. A final response is provided in writing within 35 working days. If you would like to read more about my complaints and feedback policy and procedure, you can do so here.

How do I offer feedback, make a complaint or pass on a compliment?

There are multiple ways to offer feedback.

1. You can provide feedback or make a complaint via the webform on this page.
2. If you feel comfortable and it is safe to do so, please talk to the person whom you are unhappy with. You can do this via phone (0487727657), email (hello@mishyrowan.com) or via the form below.
3. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the Independent Complaints Agency, they are an independent government agency that assists with complaints about government departments, councils and community service organisations (toll-free: 1800 451 524 or email: nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au).

Feedback or Complaints

Name

E.g., Kat Jones

Email

E.g., mail@example.com

Phone

e.g., 123 456 78910


Message *

Message *

Type your feedback here...

Would you like to be contacted about this feedback? If so, when is the best time to contact you and how would you like to be contacted?

eg. Mondays after 3pm via phone

I'm not a robot  reCAPTCHA
Privacy - Terms

Submit Feedback