

Accessible



## Person centred complaints management system self audit

Principle	Criteria	Assessment Indicator 1, 2, 3, 4	What supports your assessment?	Recommended actions for improvement	Action plan (Who, what & when)
<b>1. Accessible</b>	A complaint handling system should be open and available to all.				
1.1. Concise Policy Statement	<p>You have a short summary paragraph that states the importance of feedback/complaints to you including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Statement of principle</li> <li>(b) Recognition of the capacity to fail</li> <li>(c) What you are going to do</li> <li>(d) How you are going to do it</li> <li>(e) Why you think it is important</li> <li>(f) Signed by the CEO/organisation manager.</li> </ul> <p>This policy statement should be easily understood by clients and family and could include such things as the right to confidentiality, right to have support in making a complaint and the right to be protected from retribution</p>				
1.2. Clear policy	<p>Your written policy clearly explains to service users your strategic intent- the key principles that underpin your complaints management system.</p> <p>The policy should expand on what the policy statement mentions. It could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a commitment by your organisation to the importance of complaints whether they are made verbally or in writing</li> <li>(b) recognise the importance of complaints to quality and continuous improvement</li> <li>(c) that people will not be adversely treated should they make a complaint</li> <li>(d) the right to complain will be made visible and accessible, and that part of this may be that people may be able to access support to make a complaint</li> <li>(e) that you will seek to be responsive in seeking to resolve complaints in a timely way.</li> </ul>				

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1.3. Clear procedures	<p>Your procedures identify the steps needed to handle complaints.</p> <p>The procedures should explain how the principles contained in the policy statement and policy will be put into practice. The document should clearly explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) what to do when receiving a complaint, and make clear staff responsibilities at the different levels</li> <li>(b) the approach to take when a complaint involves safety concerns for service users or others</li> <li>(c) recording requirements and response time frames</li> <li>(d) give staff direction on what to do when investigating a complaint, including adhering to the principles of natural justice</li> <li>(e) how confidential information will be handled within the service.</li> </ul>				
1.4. Specific to complaints from service users	<p>The procedure for handling complaints from service users is separate to the grievance process for staff complaints.</p> <p><i>Whilst the principles underlying the approach to handling staff grievances may be similar to handling complaints from service users it is important to keep these two processes separate. There are different laws and associated obligations relating to handling staff grievances, such as occupational health and safety, and if these requirements are included in the procedure for handling complaints from service users it can be potentially quite confusing.</i></p>				

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1.5. Comm- unication	<p>You widely communicate your commitment to complaint handling to service users, including: a general information package, brochures, posters, signage and information on the website that explain how people can provide feedback to the service.</p> <p><b>You inform service users of any changes made to your services as a result of their feedback or complaint.</b></p> <p><i>This should explain that both verbal and written feedback is encouraged and that a complaint is considered to be any expression of dissatisfaction. This information is available throughout the organisation at key service access points and circulated regularly.</i></p>				
1.6. Provision of information	<p><b>You encourage service users to complain and you have made it easy for them to do so.</b></p> <p>You provide information that is clear and easy to understand on when, where and how to make a complaint.</p> <p>The information should be made available in appropriate formats having appropriate regard to ability and cultural identity. This information should explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) rights and responsibilities of clients and staff in relation to complaints</li> <li>(b) who to direct complaints to</li> <li>(c) processes for lodging and managing complaints</li> <li>(d) steps and timeframes in assessing and resolving complaints and disputes</li> <li>(e) internal and external avenues for making a complaint</li> <li>(f) process for review of decisions and mechanisms for appeal</li> <li>(g) recording and reporting of complaints.</li> </ul>				

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1.7. Complaints process	The complaints process is easy, effective, efficient and flexible, with multiple access and referral points that are actively promoted.				
1.8. Support	You support people with a disability to: (a) raise any concerns they have about the service provider (b) have issues resolved regarding aspects of the service with which they are dissatisfied (c) understand the Human Rights Charter and how (if at all) it may apply in this situation (d) access advocacy or other independent supports to assist with making a complaint				
1.9. Translating and interpreting	Staff have access to translation and interpreter services to support people with a disability.				
1.10. Staff education, training and support	All staff know and understand your complaints policies and procedures. Information and ongoing training is provided to new and existing staff, to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to respond positively and effectively to complaints. Your training program for staff includes: (a) active listening skills (b) customer service (c) acknowledging mistakes and providing apologies (d) handling criticism and managing conflict (e) problem solving (f) investigating complaints (g) responding to difficult behaviours in order to effectively identify underlying issues or concerns (h) writing in plain English, and (i) stress management.				

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1.11. No adverse consequences for complainants	Service users do not experience retribution for complaining. You make it clear in your policy, procedures and client information that not only are complaints encouraged, but any attempt to treat a service user who has complained in an adverse way will not be tolerated.				
1.12. Cost	There are no fees or charges involved in making a complaint.				

