

Feedback and Complaints Policy

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Background

Living Choice Home Choice recognises feedback including complaints provide a valuable opportunity to improve our care and services. As such we welcome all forms of feedback and actively seek it through a range of engagement opportunities.

Our complaints management approach follows the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Better Practice Guide to Complaint Handling:

Culture: Our organisation takes a positive approach to complaints, recognising they are valuable for continuous improvement in everything we do.

Principles: The complaint handling system is modelled on principles of fairness, accessibility, responsiveness, transparency and efficiency and is integrated into all organisational practices.

People: All staff at orientation learn how to respond positively to complaints. Key staff are trained, skilled and supported in complaint management to ensure issues are resolved appropriately.

Process: Our complaints management process follows the seven stages of complaint handling: prompt acknowledgment, assessment, planning, investigation, response, review, consideration of systemic issues.

Analysis: Management use information from complaints to identify any trends. They share trends with the Living Choice Australia Executive Team body and staff, the consumer and/or representative and any continuous improvement processes put in place.

Refer to the Feedback and Complaints Management Process.

Applicability

All home care providers:

- all categories of employees
- governing body
- all volunteers
- contractors and consultants, whether or not they are employees all other service providers

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

Living Choice Home Choice regularly seeks input and feedback from consumers, carers, the workforce and others and uses the input and feedback to inform continuous improvements for individual consumers and the whole organisation.

Documents relevant to this policy

[Australia's Anti-Discrimination Law](#)

Regulations relevant to this policy



Quality of Care Principles 2014



Aged Care Act 1997



Standard 6 (3)(a) Feedback and complaints are encouraged and supported



Standard 6 (3)(d) Feedback and complaints are reviewed and used to improve the quality of care and services



Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)



Standard 6 (3)(c) Response to complaints and open disclosure process



Standard 6 (3)(b) Access to advocates, language services and other methods

Policy Commitment

Living Choice Home Care will:

- Establish a system to manage feedback and complaints and use this system to improve how we deliver care and services
- Encourage and support consumers, visitors, staff and contractors/suppliers to ask questions, share feedback, raise concerns or make complaints
- Provide a range of opportunities and means both formal (eg committees or surveys) and informal (eg ad hoc discussions) for sharing feedback about the service and ideas for improvement including options that allow the person to remain anonymous if they choose to
- Ensure information about how to make a complaint or provide feedback is easily accessible with respect for cultural, language or physical needs including accessing language and other support services and has up-to-date contact details
- Provide information about and support access to alternative and external advocacy and complaint resolution services including the Living Choice Home Care Information Folder
- Provide staff with information and training on:
 - how to encourage feedback
 - how to provide feedback on service quality and improvement opportunities
 - what to do when feedback or complaints are received
 - ways to support consumers to provide feedback or make complaints including access to advocacy, language and hearing services and how to identify when these may be required and
 - determining when feedback should be managed as a complaint in the Feedback and Complaints Management Process
- Establish effective complaints management practices consistent with the nature and scale of the business operations that:
 - are based on the principles of transparency, procedural fairness and natural justice and meets best practice guidelines
 - proactively, respectfully and cooperatively manages complaints
 - adopt a positive, blame free approach that focuses on the process not a person thereby avoiding any negative repercussions for the person providing the feedback
 - ensure appropriate investigation into the cause is undertaken
 - apply the principles of open disclosure when things go wrong (see Open Disclosure Policy) and
 - ensure accurate and current records are maintained including the:
 - name of the person making the complaint (unless choosing to remain anonymous)
 - dates the complaint was received, acknowledged and responded to
 - substance of the complaint and

- details of the response actions including the person responsible, due date and status.
- Provide sub-contracted service or brokerage providers with clear expectations and processes for managing feedback and complaints about the services.
- Partner with the person making a complaint throughout the Feedback and Complaints Management Process including inviting them to participate, keeping them informed, involving them in identifying the solution or follow-up actions and/or encouraging them to share ideas about improvement opportunities.
- Abide by any agreement, timeframes and commit to any undertaking to satisfactorily resolve the complaint.
- Facilitate any external or independent review of the complaint, including working cooperatively with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, when appropriate.
- Keep a central record of all complaints and feedback in a register that indicates the type of complaint to help identify trends.
- Undertake periodic analysis of feedback and complaint data to identify trends and systemic opportunities for improvement.
- Regularly report complaints and feedback data and trends to the Living Choice Australia Executive Team.
- Utilise consumer feedback in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of care and support services.
- Include opportunities for improvement that arise out of complaints and feedback in the organisation's Plan for Continuous Improvement.
- Regularly review the Feedback and Complaints Management processes.

Roles and Responsibilities

Living Choice Home Care is responsible for ensuring systems and processes for responding to feedback and complaints are maintained.

Management is responsible for:

- fostering an environment where feedback and complaints are encouraged, reported, investigated and outcomes incorporated into continual improvement activities
- ensuring matters contained in this policy are endorsed and clearly communicated to all relevant personnel within the organisation
- ensuring applicable staff have the required skills to effectively manage complaints
- implementing a process for reporting feedback and complaint matters to the management team and Living Choice Australia Executive Team
- monitoring feedback and complaint data as well as the effectiveness of this policy as part of continuous improvement activities and
- ensuring industry standards for complaints management are met.

References

Name	Source
Better Practice Guide to Complaint Handling in Aged Care Services	Department of Health
Better Practice Guides	Commonwealth Ombudsman
Good Governance Principles and Guidance	Australian Institute of Company Directors

Aged Care Open Disclosure Framework and Guidance	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
Seniors Legal Services	Seniors Rights Services
Creating a No Blame Culture	BMJ Journals

Suggested Evidence

- Open Disclosure Policy
- Results of consumer feedback
- Complaints register
- Continuous Improvement Plan
- Client Surveys