

CS Policy 4

Client and Stakeholder Feedback (includes Compliments and Complaints)

Controlled Document

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Reviewed By	Quality & Risk CELT			QSC	

Statement

The purpose of this policy is to set the expectations of employees, authorised carers, advisors and consultants employed by CatholicCare Wollongong (CatholicCare) when a stakeholder makes a complaint against the agency.

CatholicCare recognises the value of client and stakeholder Compliments, Complaints and Feedback as an important tool in improving service delivery, with a view to exceeding clients' expectations and acknowledging the quality of services provided.

This Policy will:

- ensure employees uphold their responsibilities,
- uphold information sharing and privacy protocols,
- manage the risks posed to our clients and stakeholders,
- ensure investigations consider factors such as trauma, capacity, and reasonable adjustments,
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- explain the outcomes in a way that is understood,
- be fair and objective, and
- comply with record keeping and reporting practices.

The system provides opportunities to:

- identify what is working well and can be further developed,
- determine areas for improvement,
- assist in planning and allocating resources,
- strengthen public support, and
- address the concerns and feedback of clients.

Client input may be about access to CatholicCare's services, particular personnel or programs, the type of service provided or the way it is delivered.

Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline how regular input and feedback from clients, families/carers, and others, is sought and used to inform individual client service delivery, and program and organisation-wide Continuous Improvements

Grievances are not covered under this policy. Please refer to WS 1.3 Managing Workplace Complaints.

This policy does not include the disciplinary actions when CatholicCare Wollongong employees are not obliging to this policy.

All Allegations, Complaints, Compliments and Feedback (including Suggestions) will be entered into Protecht for monitoring and response.

Principles

Feedback can be positive and negative. Negative feedback is defined as minor dissatisfaction or a minor issue that can be easily resolved and/or the client does not want to make a formal complaint. For example, feedback on an occasion of late service provision. Positive feedback is a compliment or praise regarding service delivery, employees or the organisation. Feedback can be formal or informal.

All feedback and its importance will be acknowledged, and gratitude is expressed explicitly to the person providing the feedback.

CatholicCare Wollongong will:

- recognise and promote the rights of clients and stakeholders to give Compliments, Complaints and Feedback on CatholicCare's services, including employees,
- establish good practice for responding to and managing feedback including resolving complaints in a timely, courteous and fair manner,
- set out procedures for using feedback to improve service delivery to clients,
- encourage and support clients, families/carers and others to provide Compliments, Complaints and Feedback,
- ensure clients are made aware of and have access to advocates, interpreter services and other methods of raising and resolving complaints,
- ensure appropriate action is taken in response to complaints and an open disclosure process is used when things go wrong,
- review feedback and complaints and use them to improve the quality of care and services.

VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Vulnerable clients including children and young people may require additional support when providing feedback. Accommodations to meet their needs will be made.

USE OF AN ADVOCATE

Clients may use an advocate or external agency at any point in the complaint process.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES

As far as possible, the fact that a client has lodged a complaint, and the details of that complaint are kept confidential amongst employees directly concerned with its resolution.

WORKING WITH EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS AGENCIES

Where required and necessary, CatholicCare will provide (in compliance with our legal obligations) relevant information as requested.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS AND ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Feedback including complaints, as part of the investigation, will identify contributing factors/ root causes and systematic failures to mitigate the possibility of the reoccurrence of similar or same concerns.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Feedback	Information given spontaneously by a client or stakeholder in relation to CatholicCare services and may be in the form of a compliment, suggestion or complaint. Information that is not specifically solicited from clients and stakeholders via formal surveys and questionnaires
Formal Feedback	Information given with the intention of providing feedback or specifically informing a employees person about their dissatisfaction with services or care.
Informal Feedback	Information provided in the course of interaction, for example, a client speaks of dissatisfaction with a service during a phone call with an employee.
Compliment	An explicit expression of satisfaction or praise in relation to CatholicCare services, employees, foster carers or volunteers working on behalf of CatholicCare.
Complaint	An explicit expression of dissatisfaction with CatholicCare's services or the way in which it delivers its services, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected
Suggestion	A comment that indicates how CatholicCare could improve its service delivery. It may be part of a compliment or complaint but may also be offered as stand-alone information.
Allegations	An accusation or claim that something wrong or illegal has been done, made without giving proof
Grievance	A complaint raised towards an employer by an employee due to a violation of legalities (e.g. policies, employment contract, national standards)
Vulnerable People	(a) a Child or Children; or (b) an individual aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess, review and approve Agency policies to be distributed
Executive Manager Quality & Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend, Circulate, and obtain approval of policy
Executive Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, maintain, promote and monitor processes and procedures that ensure that clients are encouraged and supported to make complaints and provide feedback and that these are effectively responded to. Open disclosure is the basis of our approach to managing complaints and feedback. Assess, review, collaborate and update the policy and associated procedures and forms to have ready for the CELT prior to the policy expiring.

THIS DOCUMENT IS UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

The electronic version of this document is the approved and most current.

[https://catholiccaredow.sharepoint.com/sites/DocumentControlSystem/Policies Procedures Forms/CS 4 Client & Stakeholder Feedback.docx](https://catholiccaredow.sharepoint.com/sites/DocumentControlSystem/Policies%20Procedures%20Forms/CS%204%20Client%20&%20Stakeholder%20Feedback.docx)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain input from relevant stakeholders for develop, maintain, promote, and monitor processes and procedures
Line Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train employees in policies and associated procedures Monitor employees for compliance with the policies and associated procedures
QSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support in assessing, reviewing, and collaborating on policies to have ready for CELT
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure policies and associated procedures are read and understood. Comply to policies and associated procedures. Provide feedback on policies and associated procedures when necessary, and Employees utilise complaints and feedback to identify ways to improve care and services.
Clients/Representatives/ Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in the evaluation, input and feedback of policies and procedures that impact on the care provided to them from CatholicCare Wollongong. Clients and/or their representatives/stakeholders make complaints and provide feedback whenever they feel it is necessary and advise management if the feel they are not encouraged or supported to do so.

Induction and ongoing training

- During induction on commencement of employment with CatholicCare and ongoing training and educational resources will be provided to employees to ensure they understand the principles and guidelines outlined in this policy.
- Regular updates and reminders may also be provided to keep employees informed about changes in best practice.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any necessary updates or modifications to ensure compliance with legislative and standard requirements will be communicated to all employees, contractors, and representatives of CatholicCare Wollongong.

The agency will formally review this Policy every three years as part of the policy's known life cycle period.

Feedback and complaints processes and systems are regularly reviewed through the Quality Systems Committee and audited as part of our audit program.

References

Legislation

- Privacy Act 1988
- Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993
- Ombudsman Act 1974

- Aged Care Act 1997
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
- Children and Young Persons' (Care and Protection) Act 1998

Standards

- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority – Quality Area 7 Governance & Leadership
- Department of Social Services Families & Children Activity Administrative Approval Requirements
- Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission - Aged Care Quality Standards
- NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission, NDIS Practice Standards
- National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHS)
- The Australian Open Disclosure Framework

Agency Policies

Forms, Record Keeping and Other Documents