

CCW Policy 9

Client and Stakeholder Feedback (includes Compliments and Complaints)

Controlled Document

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Reviewed By	Quality & Risk CELT				

Policy Summary

CatholicCare Wollongong is committed to listening to every client, family, carer, and stakeholder. We value all feedback – compliments, suggestions, and complaints – as opportunities to learn, improve, and deliver exceptional experiences. This policy explains how you can share feedback, what happens next, and how your voice shapes our services.

1. Purpose and Commitment

We believe every voice matters. Feedback helps us improve services, strengthen trust and ensures everyone feels welcome and valued. We actively encourage feedback and make it easy for you to share your thoughts in ways that suit you.

2. Accessibility Statement

CatholicCare is committed to making feedback processes accessible to all. We provide interpreter services, advocacy support, and accessible formats for people living with disability, language barriers, or digital exclusion. If you need help to share feedback, please let us know and we will make adjustments to support you.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all CatholicCare employees, volunteers and contractors – whether permanent, temporary, and casual. It applies to all programs and services provided. Some programs may have extra requirements due to contractual agreements (refer to Practice Manuals for details).

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/CCW 9 Client & Stakeholder Feedback \(includes Compliments & Complaints\).docx](https://catholiccaredow.sharepoint.com/sites/DocumentControlSystem/Policies%20Procedures%20Forms/CCW%209%20Client%20&%20Stakeholder%20Feedback%20(includes%20Compliments%20&%20Complaints).docx)

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Any feedback please email QR@CatholicCare.dow.org.au

It covers feedback received through multiple, easy-to-access channels for clients and stakeholders, including:

- Digital channels (web forms, QR codes, social media)
- Phone and in-person conversations
- Email or written correspondence
- Interpreter and advocacy support (TBC?)
- Accessible formats for people with disability or language barriers

Out of scope – structured and solicited feedback

This policy focuses on unsolicited feedback such as compliments, concerns, and complaints raised by clients, families, carers, or stakeholders at any time.

It does not replace or govern structured feedback activities, including surveys (e.g. NPS, PLTOC), service evaluations, or consultative committees. These activities are managed through separate frameworks and reporting processes, but insights may inform broader service improvement.

4. Definitions – What is Feedback

Feedback from clients, stakeholders, or peers can be positive or negative, formal or informal:

- **Feedback (Compliments):** Expressions of satisfaction or praise regarding services, employees, or the organisation.
- **Feedback:** Minor issues that can be easily resolved without a formal complaint (e.g., occasional late service provision) or recommendations for service improvement.
- **Formal Complaints:** Expressions of dissatisfaction requiring a resolution or response.
- **Suggestions:** All feedback and its importance will be acknowledged, and gratitude is expressed explicitly to the person providing the feedback.

Term	Plain Language Definition	Example
Feedback	Telling us what you think about our services – good or bad, at any time.	“I wish appointments started on time.”
Compliment	Saying something positive about our services or team.	“The staff were very kind and helpful.”

Complaint	Telling us you're unhappy with our service and want us to fix it.	"I didn't get a call back."
Suggestion	Sharing an idea for how we could do better.	"Could you offer more appointment times?"
Advocate	Someone who helps you share your feedback or complaint.	"My support worker helped me fill out the form."
Vulnerable People	Children or adults who need extra support to stay safe and have their say.	"A young person with a disability."
Formal Feedback	Feedback given with the intention of informing us about dissatisfaction or improvement.	"I'm not happy with the wait times."
Informal Feedback	Feedback shared during everyday interactions.	"During a call, a client mentions a concern."
Anonymous Feedback	Feedback provided without identifying the person who raised it.	"I don't want to share my name."
Allegation	Claim that something wrong or illegal has happened, even without proof.	"I believe my privacy was breached."

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Frontline Staff	Receive and acknowledge feedback, escalate as needed
Managers	Oversee feedback handling, ensure timely resolution
Quality & Risk Team	Monitor trends, report outcomes, ensure compliance
People & Culture	Manage training, review policy violations
CX, Marketing & Communications Team	Promote feedback opportunities, communicate outcomes, and use insights to improve client experience and organisational messaging

6. How to Give Feedback

You can share feedback in ways that suits you:

- **Online:** Web forms, QR codes, social media
- **Phone or in-person:** Speak to any staff member
- **Email or written letter**
- **With support:** Interpreter, advocate, or accessible formats for disability or language needs
- **Anonymous feedback:** You can choose to give feedback anonymously. While this may limit our ability to provide updates or ask follow-up questions, all anonymous feedback is taken seriously, reviewed fairly, and used to improve our services.

Information about these channels is available on our website, in service locations, and in all client communications. We make it clear that all voices are welcome.

Providing feedback, whether named or anonymous, will not affect your access to services or the support you receive.

7. Feedback Principles

These principles set out the standards and values that guide our interactions, decision-making, and approach to feedback and service improvement.

1. Every Voice Matters

We welcome and encourage all clients, families, carers, and stakeholders to share compliments, complaints, and feedback about our services and team members. Your input helps us grow and improve.

2. Easy and Fair Process

We make it simple for you to give feedback and promise to respond quickly, courteously, and fairly. We resolve complaints in a way that respects your time and experience.

3. Support for All

If you need help to share your feedback – such as an advocate, interpreter, or accessible formats – we will provide it. We want everyone to feel included and heard.

4. Positive Outcomes for Everyone

We use feedback to create better experiences for clients and improve our services. Our goal is to make things better for you and for CatholicCare.

5. Teamwork and Learning

We encourage everyone – clients, families, carers, and staff – to work together, share responsibility, and learn from feedback. This helps us deliver the best care possible.

6. Leadership and Accountability

Our leaders are committed to acting on feedback, being transparent, and making sure we learn from mistakes. We review feedback regularly to improve our services.

7. Personalised Approach

We understand that every situation is unique. We listen carefully and respond thoughtfully, tailoring our actions to your needs and circumstances

8. Accountability and Governance

We regularly review feedback data and report outcomes to clients, staff, and leadership. Our governance structures ensure feedback leads to real change and continuous improvement.

9. Transparency and Reporting

We share feedback themes and actions taken in regular reports and communications, using clear visuals and plain language.

10. Partnership and Co-Design

Clients and stakeholders are invited to help design, review, and improve our services and feedback processes. Their insights shape our policies and communications.

11. Data-Driven Improvement

We use feedback data, metrics, and audits to identify trends, measure satisfaction, and guide service improvements.

12. Staff Training and Support

Our staff receive ongoing training in feedback handling, trauma-informed care, and cultural safety, ensuring every interaction is respectful and effective.

13. Privacy and Confidentiality

We respect your privacy and keep all feedback and complaints confidential, sharing information only with those directly involved in resolution and in line with legal requirements.

14. Legal and Ethical Compliance

We comply with all relevant laws, regulations, and standards to protect your rights and ensure our feedback processes are fair, safe, and accountable.

8. Our Response Commitments

- **Acknowledgement:** Every feedback submission receives a personal thank you and confirmation of receipt.
- **Follow-Up:** We let you know who is handling your feedback, what to expect next, and how long it may take.
- **Investigation:** We review feedback fairly, considering trauma, capacity, and reasonable adjustments.
- **Outcome:** We communicate outcomes clearly, in your preferred format, and explain what actions were taken.
- **Regulatory and statutory reporting:** In some circumstances, CatholicCare is legally required to notify external regulators or authorities about a complaint or concern. Where this applies, we will take appropriate action in line with legislative and contractual obligations and inform the person raising the feedback wherever possible and appropriate.
- **Continuous Improvement:** We share stories of how feedback has led to improvements (“You said, we did”) in communications, social media, and service updates.

9. Response Timeframes

- We aim to acknowledge feedback within 3 business days.
- Complaints are generally resolved within 30 business days. If more time is needed, we will keep you informed.

10. Appeals & Escalation

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your feedback or complaint, you may:

- Request a review by a senior manager or the Quality & Risk Team
- Contact an external complaints agency (details available on our website and in service locations)

11. Special Considerations

- **Vulnerable People:** We make accommodations for children, young people, and others needing extra support.
- **Advocacy:** You may use an advocate or external agency at any point in the complaint process.
- **Confidentiality:** Complaints and their details are kept confidential among employees directly involved in resolution.
- **External Agencies:** Where required, we provide relevant information to external complaints agencies, in line with legal obligations.

12. Data Protection & Record Keeping

- Feedback is entered into our centralised system, Protecht, for monitoring and response.
- Records are stored securely and retained in accordance with privacy legislation.
- Only authorised staff have access to feedback records.

13. Monitoring & Evaluation

Feedback captured under this policy may be considered alongside insights from surveys, evaluations, and consultative processes to inform continuous improvement and organisational learning.

- We analyse feedback data to identify trends and opportunities for improvement.
- Regular reports are shared with clients, staff, and stakeholders, using clear visuals and stories to highlight our progress and impact.

14. Induction and Ongoing Training

- All new employees, volunteers, and contractors receive induction training on the principles and guidelines in this policy.
- Ongoing training and educational resources are provided to ensure everyone maintains a thorough understanding of feedback processes and best practice.
- Regular updates and reminders are shared to keep staff informed about changes in legislation, standards, and CatholicCare's approach to feedback.

15. Consequences of Policy Violations

- Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract.
- The severity of consequences depends on the nature and impact of the violation, as determined by CatholicCare Wollongong.
- People and Culture will review each case individually to determine appropriate actions based on the circumstances.

16. References

Legislation

- Privacy Act 1988
- Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993
- Ombudsman Act 1974
- Aged Care Act 2024
- 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
- Department of Social Services Families & Children Activity Administrative Approval Requirements
- Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission - Aged Care Quality Standards 2024
- Aged Care Code of Conduct
- Whistleblower Disclosure Policy
- The Statement of Rights
- NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission, NDIS Practice Standards
- National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHS)
- The Australian Open Disclosure Framework

Agency Policies & Forms

- Older persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)

17. Policy Distribution & Awareness

This policy is available on our website, in all service locations upon request, and is included in staff induction materials. Clients, staff, and stakeholders are regularly reminded of their rights and responsibilities under this policy.

18. Policy Review Cycle

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by feedback, incidents, new tools, mergers, or changes in services