

Feedback, Complaints & Appeals

Statement:

The Feedback and Complaints Policy outlines the guidelines and procedures under which Ipswich Therapy Centre will investigate and assist in resolving complaints and how feedback is collected, managed and is used to improve the therapy services and/or supports coordination functions that Ipswich Therapy Centre supplies.

Principles:

- Feedback is vitally important part of the business processes, quality and being person centred.
- Ipswich Therapy Centre would like your Feedback, both positive and negative.
- All feedback and complaints are encouraged from participants, family members, stakeholders and partners.
- Ipswich Therapy Centre has systems in place that enables people to provide feedback to and lodge a complaint
- Feedback can be provided verbally, in written form or via filling out a feedback form found on the website.
- The Managing Director will ensure your feedback is processed and your issues are resolved, or improvements are implemented as deemed necessary.
- All feedback will be recorded on the feedback register and reviewed by the Clinical Governance Committee.
- Ipswich Therapy Centre will also hold an annual participant survey to provide information into the strategic planning process.
- Ipswich Therapy Centre is committed to having all feedback and complaints dealt with promptly, fairly and non-threateningly, and to have situations addressed/resolved.
- Complaints will be given high priority for resolution and remediation.
- The Managing Director will make sure the person's views are respected, that they are kept informed as the complaint is dealt with, and that they have the opportunity to be involved in any resolution process.
- No person will be disadvantaged or adversely affected as a result of making a complaint
- All complaints will be regularly reviewed and analysed by the management team and the Clinical Governance Committee. This information will be used to inform continual improvement across its operations.
- All complaints, feedback and details about appeals are maintained in a confidential and secure manner on the business's database, which has authorised levels in place to ensure only senior staff have access to specific details of complaints and appeals. Records are maintained for seven (7) years from the date of receipt
- Ipswich Therapy Centre is governed by the *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018*. Ipswich Therapy Centre will refer to external bodies if the complaint warrants it e.g. criminal allegations will be reported to the Police.

Ipswich Therapy Centre will provide information on the participant's rights, process and procedures for making complaints and offering feedback and a list of external agencies where a complaint can be lodged.

The service advises participants that complaints may be made to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner and other relevant Commissioners, depending on the individual participant's situation. This process includes situations where the complaint is being made about Ipswich Therapy Centre, its

staff and operations. Ipswich Therapy Centre complies with the requirement to report information about any complaint to the NDIS Commissioner, if requested to do so by the Commissioner.

Ipswich Therapy Centre has the responsibility for ensuring all personnel receive training about the receipt, management and resolution of complaints made to the service, and ensures all personnel comply with the Ipswich Therapy Centre's system for complaints, feedback and appeals.

Process for participants

General Principles:

1. The Managing Director informs each person of their right to complain and works with the person, their families, support facilitator and/or support circle as directed by the participant, or advocate to try and resolve the issue.
2. Ipswich Therapy Centre provides a safe environment for each person to make a complaint.
3. Ipswich Therapy Centre ensures that there are no negative consequences or retribution for any person who makes a complaint.
4. Ipswich Therapy Centre supports the participant's participation in the complaint handling process and to anyone else wishing to make a complaint and works with the person to identify the desired goal.
5. Ipswich Therapy Centre will treat each person making a complaint in a manner that protects their privacy and respects confidentiality as per the *Privacy Act 1988*.
6. Ipswich Therapy Centre is committed to and demonstrate fair and timely resolution of complaints.
7. Each person is kept informed at all stages of the decision-making process concerning their complaint and the reasons for those decisions.

Ipswich Therapy Centre informs each person of their right to complain to an external body

1. Each person has continuous and easy access to meaningful and culturally relevant information about the complaint policy.
2. Each person has the opportunity to have a chosen support person such as an advocate to assist or represent them during the process.
3. Each person making a complaint is supported by Ipswich Therapy Centre, in a way which reflects their individual, cultural and linguistic needs to assist them to understand and participate in the complaint handling process.
4. Each person determines how, when and where the complaint will be made.
5. Each person has the opportunity to nominate the person they want at the service as the key contact regarding the complaint.
6. Where an individual's rights cause conflict with another person's rights the Managing Director and/or a mediator will work with the persons and the agency/agencies involved.
7. All feedback provided is recorded along with recommendations and actions that occurred. These documents are reviewed by management on a quarterly basis.
8. When required, Ipswich Therapy Centre has the capacity to nominate a specific staff person to co-ordinate complaints. All people who access Ipswich Therapy Centre will be made aware that they can lodge a complaint to whomever they feel comfortable with and they will then refer on to the nominated staff member.

Internal Practices:

Ipswich Therapy Centre ensures that policies and processes include ways of responding to the cultural and linguistic needs of individuals. Personnel are trained in complaint handling and demonstrate understanding and capacity to implement complaint handling.

1. The Managing Director will record and analyse trends from complaints to drive business policy development and continuous improvement.
2. The Managing Director supports each person to participate in the review and development of local complaint handling policy and processes and report outcomes to them and their families, support facilitators and/or advocates.
3. Staff meetings include a standing agenda item on complaint handling, with trends presented and implications for service planning discussed.
4. The Managing Director is aware that some complaints need to be managed in a particular way, either because the person making a complaint has specific rights of review or because the complaint includes allegations that must be reported to an external body. For example, criminal allegations should be reported to the police.
5. The Managing Director and/or relevant therapist and/or supports coordinator informs each person of their right to make a complaint to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Ombudsman and listed complaints services about the provision of Ipswich Therapy Centre's services.
6. On an annual basis, Ipswich Therapy Centre seeks the input of participants to review the accessibility of the complaints management and resolution system. Suggestions and recommendations are recorded and analysed for continual improvement purposes, and feedback is provided to the participants involved in this process of the service's response. General information is also provided to all participants, family members and stakeholders.

Verbal complaints/feedback

1. Listen carefully and respond to the participant and/or advocate in a polite and respectful manner clarify your understanding of the complaint and ask the participant and/or advocate how they would like the complaint resolved.
2. Wherever possible, try to resolve the complaint at the time.
3. If the circumstances do not allow the complaint to be resolved immediately, direct the complaint to the Managing Director.
4. If the participant and/or advocate wish to speak with the Managing Director, arrange a meeting between her and the participant and/or advocate at a time that is mutually convenient.
5. Advise the participant and/or advocate that they may submit the complaint in writing or offer a mechanism suited to their abilities to make the complaint.
6. Follow the process for written complaints below.
7. Record the complaint in the Complaint Register.

Procedure for written complaints/feedback

Written complaints/feedback:

1. Read the complaint carefully and respond in writing to the participant and/or advocate in a polite and respectful manner clarify your understanding of the complaint and ask the participant and/or advocate how they would like the complaint resolved. Wherever possible, try to resolve the complaint at the time. If the circumstances do not allow the complaint to be resolved immediately, direct the complaint to the Managing Director.
2. If the participant and/or advocate wish to speak with a Managing Director, arrange a meeting between the Managing Director and the participant and/or advocate at a time that is mutually convenient.
3. Advise the participant and/or advocate that the complaint has been submitted to the Managing Director and give them a copy.
4. Follow the process for written complaints below.
5. Record complaint in the **Complaint Register**.

Procedure for a written complaint- internal review:

1. If a person has elected to have the complaint dealt with internally, the nominated staff member shall meet with the complainant within five working days of being advised that the person/s wishes to proceed with the complaint internally.
2. The Managing Director shall be made aware of, or have clarified and documented the nature of the complaint or concern and the resolution sought by the complainant.
3. The nominated staff member shall interview the involved parties and assembled a proposed course of action within ten (10) working days of meeting with the complainant.
4. In the event of the proposed course of action being unacceptable to the complainant, the Managing Director shall advise the complainant of his or her rights and avenues to take the matter further.
5. All complaints, resolved and unresolved, have been recorded in a confidential Complaint Register. Senior staff utilise this register to inform future service improvement efforts.
6. The Managing Director will make an:
 - Acknowledgement – of how the situation has affected the person and their expectations of a quality service.
 - Apology – for some people, a genuine apology may be all or part of what is sought.
 - Explanation – provide an explanation of what happened or the provision of information that may be needed to address the person's concerns.
 - Action – give an agreement on steps to address the concern and improve services.

Anonymous complaints

Some participants and/or advocates may wish to remain anonymous in making their complaint. This should be respected and the complaint investigated. All participants as well as family members are provided with information about the following:

Australian National Disability Abuse & Neglect Hotline

Receives reports of abuse and neglect of people with disability using government-funded disability services and refers allegations to appropriate government agencies for investigation.

NDIS Commission

Ph: 1800 880 052 / 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines)

TTY: 1800 301 130

Web: www.disabilityhotline.org

Complaint contact form: www.ndiscommission.gov.au

Making a complaint about the NDIA

You can make a complaint by talking to someone at any one of our local offices or you can fill in an [online complaint form](#) on our website. You can make a complaint in your preferred language.

The NDIS Complaints - also see easy English handout

feedback@ndis.gov.au or call on 1800 800 110.

Make a complaint to the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Complaints: 1300 362 072 (Calls from mobile phones are charged at mobile phone rates)

Indigenous Line: 1800 060 789

Overseas callers: +61 2 6276 0111

Queensland Ombudsman

Telephone: 07 3005 7000 / 1800 068 908 (outside Brisbane metro)

Website: ombudsman.qld.gov.au

