
COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

Red Hen Speech Pathology takes feedback, concerns and complaints seriously and is committed to ensuring that all clients, their families, representatives, guardians and other interested parties are enabled to provide feedback. In addition, we are committed to ensuring complaints are resolved promptly, fairly and in a non-threatening way.

We welcome feedback and suggestions as they allow us to drive change and improvements in service provision.

Persons with communication disability may face multiple barriers to making a complaint about their support or services. These include lack of experience asserting their rights as consumers, fear of retribution, negative experiences with complaints systems (including not being believed) and difficulty communicating what happened without support. Additionally, in the case of violence, neglect and abuse, people can face substantial barriers to making a complaint.

Definition

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction or concern made to an organisation by a client, client representative, employee or contractor that relates to the organisation's products or services, or the performance, behaviour or conduct of staff, or the complaints handling process itself.

A compliment is any positive feedback or expression of appreciation for the services provided.

Policy

The Complaint Management Policy and Procedures will:

- Support clients to understand their rights and what they should expect of Red Hen Speech Pathology,
- Support clients to have the confidence to complain when they face issues,
- Enable other stakeholders (such as guardians and advocates) to make complaints and ensure issues can be addressed when clients are unable or unwilling to make a complaint,
- Support the resolution of complaints when possible and provide an escalation pathway where required,
- Enable the identification of systemic issues and drive improvements,
- Identify and report on any complaints or issues that are reportable (as per the Incident Management Policy and Procedures).

Procedure

- 1.1. All current, potential and past clients of Red Hen Speech Pathology will be able to access up-to-date information regarding the Complaint Management Policy and Procedures via the Red Hen Speech Pathology website.

- 1.2. Complaints may be received via completion of a feedback form, telephone call, in writing, electronic mail (e-mail) or in person from the client, client's guardian or representative.
- 1.3. When a complaint is received, any supports required to facilitate communication and participation by the client/complainant (e.g. supports in languages other than English, or AAC) will be identified and all reasonable steps taken to have these available.
- 1.4. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that:
 - A person who makes a complaint, or a client affected by an issue raised in a complaint, is not adversely affected as a result of the making of the complaint;
 - Information provided in a complaint is kept confidential and only disclosed if required by law or if the disclosure is otherwise appropriate in the circumstance;
 - All staff at the Practice will respond to client complaints in a polite, prompt, consistent, positive and constructive manner.
- 1.5. The Feedback Form will be completed by the staff member who initially receives the complaint.
- 1.6. Complaints will be referred to the Director/Principal Speech Pathologist, Manda Hollins, within 24 hours of receipt.
- 1.7. Once a client has given an indication of a concern/complaint, there will be an attempt to determine the exact nature of the concern/problem and where possible correct or resolve the issue within 21 days.
- 1.8. The Director/Principal Speech Pathologist will:
 - Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 business days of receiving the complaint,
 - Record the complaint on the Incidents and Complaints Register,
 - Assess and investigate the complaint,
 - Ensure that procedural fairness is afforded to all involved in the complaint,
 - Endeavour to resolve the complaint in a fair, efficient, and timely manner,
 - Take appropriate action in relation to the issues raised in the complaint,
 - Report back to the client/complainant regarding the decision and the reason for the decision of the complaint within 21 days of receiving the complaint,
 - Record of the complainant's response to the outcome (dis/satisfaction) on the Incidents and Complaints Register,
 - Provide appropriate support and assistance for the client/ the complainant, to contact HaDSCO, the Commissioner of the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission or Speech Pathology Australia (whichever/all that are applicable) if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

Monitoring, and Reporting Complaints

- 1.9. All records in relation to concerns and complaints must be kept for 7 years from the day the record is made.
- 1.10. It is important to record the complaints information on the Incidents and Complaints Register to assist management in measuring effectiveness in a number of areas. The information can be used to:
 - identify and address recurring, or systemic issues,
 - identify training requirements,
 - highlight product or internal control weaknesses, and
 - report information relating to complaints to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, HaDSCO or Speech Pathology Australia, if requested.

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- 1.11. The Director/Principal Speech Pathologist, Manda Hollins, will analyse complaints data half-yearly to identify any trends in the complaints received by the Practice and then make changes to policies and procedures as required to reduce the possibility of repeat complaints.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.12. The Director/Principal Speech Pathologist, Manda Hollins, is responsible for ensuring that all persons engaged in the practice to provide services to clients have been trained and comply with this Complaints Management Policy and Procedures.
- 1.13. The Director/Principal Speech Pathologist, Manda Hollins, will review this Complaint Management Policies and Procedures annually to ensure its effectiveness.
- 1.14. Employees or contractors are responsible for
- Raising any concern/complaint in a timely manner to avoid undue escalation of issues and to achieve resolution of the issue in the shortest possible timeframe
 - Adhering to this policy and procedures
 - Aligning behaviour to the Speech Pathology Australia Code of Ethics
- 1.15. Clients or their representatives are responsible for raising their concerns at the earliest possible time.

Related legislation, regulations, and standards

Carers' Recognition Act 2004
Disability Services Act 1993 (WA)
Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)
Western Australian Mental Health Act 1996.
United Nations Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities
NDIS Practice Standards (2021)
NDIS Code of Conduct (2019)
National Quality and Safeguarding Framework (Feb 2017)
Speech Pathology Australia Code of Ethics (2020)

Approvals

Date of original approval: [20/9/20]

Date reviewed: [20/04/23]

Director: Manda Hollins

APPENDIX 1

Red Hen Speech Pathology – Complaints Management

Red Hen Speech Pathology strongly believes that feedback including concerns, complaints, suggestions and compliments are crucial to ensuring effective and high quality service delivery and the continual improvement of services and systems.

Ways to help us improve

- Discuss your feedback with the staff member who is directly involved
- Discuss the issue the Director/Principal Speech Pathologist, Manda Hollins.
- Complete a feedback form to ensure that we understand the specifics of your concern.
- Your phone calls, letters or emails are also welcome.

Can someone help me give feedback?

You can choose a support person to assist you with providing your complaint or feedback. This person can be a friend, family member, guardian, representative or advocate.

What will happen?

Red Hen Speech Pathology is committed to resolving complaints in an ethical, confidential, timely, transparent, and fair way. Complaints are treated confidentially. Only the people who need to help find a resolution will be involved.

Wherever possible our aim is to resolve your concerns or problem when you first contact us.

We will complete the following steps in responding to your concern/complaint:

- Acknowledge receipt of your complaint;
- Keep you informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint;
- Keep you involved in the resolution of the complaint and any actions taken;
- Advise you in writing of the decision/outcome and the reason for the decision.

If we are not able to resolve your complaint within 10 working days, we will keep you informed of our progress and how long we expect that it will take to resolve your complaint.

What to do if you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint

If you feel that your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may wish to speak to one of the following:

Health and Disability Services Complaint Office (HaDSCO)

1800 813 583

<https://www.hadSCO.wa.gov.au/home/>

Speech Pathology Australia Ethics Board

https://speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/SPAweb/Resources_for_the_Public/Making_a_Complaint/SPAweb/Resources_for_the_Public/Make_a_Complaint/Making_a_Complaint.aspx?hkey=6b603c7c-33ec-4845-8b3f-d43b22909465



0417 855226
manda@redhenspeech.com.au
www.redhenspeech.com.au
Red Hen Speech Pathology

The Commissioner of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
(if the issue is connected with the provision of services for an NDIS participant)

1800 035 544

<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/>

APPENDIX 2

Red Hen Speech Pathology Feedback Form

Name of person providing Feedback
Date of Feedback
Nature of Feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Concern <input type="checkbox"/> Complaint <input type="checkbox"/> Suggestion <input type="checkbox"/> Compliment
Would you like to be contacted in relation to this feedback? Yes/No
If so, please provide your contact details:
Relationship to client/service:
Details of Feedback:
Has any action been taken already in relation to your feedback? Please specify:
Outcome so far:
What action or improvement would you like based on this feedback?

Signature: _____

**Please provide a copy of this document to the Director/Principal
Speech Pathologist.**

manda@redhenspeech.com.au