

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

## Purpose

This policy is written to ensure Playful Connections Pathology (PCSP) address complaints and grievances with respect, confidentiality and with procedural fairness.

PCSP is committed to the maintenance of good working relationships with its clients. It is, however, recognised that from time to time, a grievance may occur that has a negative impact on the working relationship. The procedures described in this document aim to resolve any conflicts or issues which arise, and have the following objectives:

- To provide all parties with the opportunity to have their concerns heard in an equitable and prompt manner.
- To ensure all parties have equal access to therapy
- To have a strong emphasis on problem solving
- To achieve constructive outcomes for all parties where possible.
- To ensure complaints and grievances are resolved with minimum stress to all concerned.
- To ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

## Procedure / Process

- In the first instance, the person making the complaint is encouraged to seek resolution of the grievance informally between the immediate parties concerned. A simple apology may finalise the matter at that point.
- If the above has not resolved the complaint, the party making the complaint or has a grievance shall inform the PCSP Director of the nature of the complaint/grievance in writing.
- The Director can be contacted via phone (m. 0457 613 421); email (belinda@playfulconnectionspeech.com.au)
- When PCSP Director has received your complaint, we will investigate and reply within a reasonable period of time (7 working days). PCSP will document the substance of any meetings held and the process undertaken to resolve the issue.

If the complainant feels that resolution has not occurred, they are required to advise PCSP Director accordingly. The Director may refer the matter for professional external mediation, and if still unresolved, the matter may be referred to the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre (ACDC) or Fair Work Commission for resolution.

At any stage throughout the process and individual can escalate their feedback or complaint to an external agency. Such agencies include the relevant State Commissioner for EEO and the Commonwealth Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC). A person may elect to escalate at any point throughout the process.

PCSP welcomes the inclusion of support for families external to the organisation, to assist families in their interaction with us. Assistance may be provided by a friend/family member, translator, community visitor, advocate or anyone else who is acceptable to the family.

If the grievance is related to privacy, you are not satisfied with PCSP's response or how we handled your complaint, you are entitled to complain to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. More information is available on the *Office of the Australian Information Commissioner* website.

Note:

- All parties must co-operate to ensure that these procedures are carried out as quickly as reasonably possible
- Work must continue as normal whilst the complaint or grievance is being resolved through these procedures, unless he or she has a reasonable concern about an imminent risk to his or her health or safety.
- Legitimate attempts to resolve the problem must be made at each level by all parties at PCSP and referrals to an external body should be regarded as a last resort.

## **Responsibilities**

PCSP staff are responsible for:

- Managing complaints/grievances in a timely, respectful and private manner.
- Ensuring this policy is known to clients, and encouraging feedback.
- Adherence to the process detailed above.
- Providing the process in a timely, respectful, private and confidential manner, where procedural fairness applies.
- Supporting all parties appropriately through this process.
- Aligning behaviour with the Code of Conduct for Certain Health Care Workers.

<https://www.hcsc.sa.gov.au/code-of-conduct-for-unregistered-health-practitioners/>

- Aligning behaviour with the Professional Standards of Speech Pathology in Australian occupational  
<https://speechpathologyaustralia.cld.bz/Speech-Pathology-Australia-Professional-Standards-2020>
- Engaging in external professional mediation where appropriate.

Clients are responsible for:

- Raising their concerns at the earliest possible time in order for the matter to be resolved quickly, and client service and treatment can proceed.
- Participating in complaint resolution activities.

We take any privacy complaint seriously and will assess your complaint fairly and promptly.

## **Variation and Review**

PCSP will review this policy every five (5) years, if new legislation is introduced, if legislation is changed or as a result of feedback, complaints or risk management; whichever comes first.