

Whilst most healthcare experiences are positive there are times when you may feel the need to make a complaint to raise a concern or resolve a problem. It can be difficult at times however, to find clear information on how to make a complaint. This tip sheet provides information to support you.

The benefits of making a complaint

- Consumers can often recognise safety risks and incidents that have not been identified by the health services staff or monitoring systems
- Consumers and their family often recognise problems with care that impact their health and wellbeing early
- Reviewing consumers complaints and negative experiences strengthens the ability of the health service to detect problems in care and improve safety and quality
- Consumers often use and observe a wide range of health services and can recognise areas where care could be improved
- Consumer complaints help health services provide better care

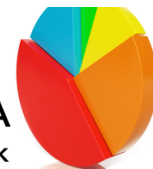
When to make a complaint

Making a complaint as soon as possible when something goes wrong means health services can act quickly to assess and act on the problem to resolved it promptly

- **You can make a complaint when;**
 - You feel you have been misinformed, treated unfairly, or have received poor care or service
 - You were refused services or they were not completed on time
 - You feel you were treated in a rude or disrespectful way
 - Services were delivered inadequately, negligently, or if significant errors were made during care
 - You feel have not received the appropriate care or treatment you needed
 - The service provider treated you in a rude or disrespectful manner
 - Abusive treatment, whether physical, verbal, or sexual
 - The care provider failed to respect your rights

How to make a complaint

- **You can make a complaint directly to a staff person**
 - Speak to your nurse, doctor or senior staff member if you are not happy with your care
 - Say you want to make a complaint and ask to speak to the unit manager or senior clinician
 - Ask for information about how to make a complaint in the health service
 - Ask for a complaint form and written information about their complaint process
 - Ask to speak directly to a Complaints Manager (sometimes called a Consumer Adviser) or ask for their contact phone number and email
 - Ask a family member, carer or friend to speak on your behalf if you need support
- **You can end an email or written letter of complaint**
 - Describe your problem and the outcome you want
 - Include key dates, such as when the problem/incident occurred
 - Describe the impact or affect this problem/incident had on you/your health
 - Outline what action you've already taken to fix the problem
 - Ask for a response within a reasonable time (SA Health states you should be contacted within 2 days of making a complaint and the review of your complaints should be completed in 30 days)
 - Attach a copy of any supporting relevant documentation such as a receipt or invoice.
 - Outline what next steps you will take if the health service cannot resolve the problem



What I should expect about how my complaint is handled

- The health service is taking your complaint seriously
- A fair process of complaint handling
- An open and transparent review of your complaint
- Your complaint to be formally acknowledged (in writing or a telephone call from the complaints manager handling your complaint)
- To be given contact details of the complaints manager handling your complaint
- To be kept informed of the complaint handling process as it progresses
- To be treated with respect
- Your privacy maintained (only those involved in the complaint process should be informed)
- The option to make an anonymous complaint
- To be told of the findings and recommendations for action by the health service
Opportunity to discuss the findings and recommendations and whether you are satisfied with them
- A fair outcome

What if I'm not satisfied with the process or the outcome

- You can make an appeal to the health service
- You can submit a complaint to another external complaints organisation
- You can write a letter to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing
- You can speak to an advocacy service

Who to contact about my complaint

In SA Health Services – Ask to speak to a Consumer Adviser or Consumer Engagement Consultant
In other health services ask to speak to a Complaints Manager or Senior Manager

Central Adelaide Local Health Network (CALHN)

- Royal Adelaide Hospital, Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, CALHN Mental Health Directorate & St Margaret's Rehabilitation Centre
- Telephone: 7074 5504 Email: health.calhnconsumerengagement@sa.gov.au

Northern Adelaide Local Health Network (NALHN)

- Lyell McEwin Hospital, Modbury Hospital, Aboriginal Health Services, GP Plus & Northern Mental Health Services
- Telephone: 1300 013 988 Email: NALHNCAS@sa.gov.au

Southern Adelaide Local Health Network (SALHN)

- Flinders Medical Centre, Noarlunga Hospital, Repat Health Precinct, Mental Health Services, Allied, Intermediate Care Services & Aboriginal Health Services
- Telephone: 8204 6197 Email: Health.SALHNConsumerEngagement@sa.gov.au

Women's and Children's Health Network (WCHN)

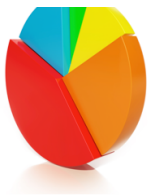
- Women's and Children's Hospital
- Telephone: 8161 6935 or 0466 364 694 Email: Health.WCHNConsumerEngagement@sa.gov.au

South Australian Ambulance Service (SAAS)

Telephone: 1300 136 272 Email: healthsaascustomerfeedback@sa.gov.au

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Contact: Allison Willis Convener Health CAN SA awillis@healthconsumercolab.com.au
Or visit our website <https://healthconsumercolab.com.au/health-can-sa>



Who to contact about my complaint

Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network

- Telephone: 0481 812 576 Email: HealthBHFLHNConsumers@sa.gov.au

Eyre and Far North Local Health Network

- Telephone: 08 7669 1083 Email: HEALTHCHSAPtLincolnMentalHealth@sa.gov.au

Flinders and Upper North Local Health Network

- Telephone: 08 8668 7686 or 08 8647 8844 Email: carmel.daw@sa.gov.au

Limestone Coast Local Health Network

- Telephone: 08 8721 1525 Email: Health.SEHSQualityRiskandSafetyTeam@sa.gov.au

Riverland Mallee Coorong Local Health Network

- Telephone: (08) 8577 9222 Email: penelope.cowley@sa.gov.au

Yorke and Northern Local Health Network

- Telephone: 08 8638 4438 Email: Health.YNLHNConsumerFeedback@sa.gov.au

Who can I contact if I am not satisfied about the outcome of my complaint

You can make a complaint to an appropriate external complaints agency (free service)

Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (HCSCC)

- Online form: <https://www.hcsc.sa.gov.au/making-a-complaint/raise-a-complaint-with-hcsc/>
- Telephone: (08) 8226 6666 or 1800 232 007

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)

If your complaint is about an individual health practitioner's behaviour, practice or ability

- Online form: <https://ahpraorg.secure.force.com/notification>
- Telephone: 1300 419 495

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

- Online form: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/online-complaints-form-open>
- Anonymous form: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/online-complaints-form-anonymous>
- Confidential form: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/online-complaints-form-confidential>
- Telephone: 1800 951 822

Disability Quality and Safeguards Commission

- Telephone: 1800 035 544

Department of Human Services (about services provided by state government)

- Online form: <https://dhs.sa.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints>