

Complaints and Feedback Policy & Procedure

POLICY PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Policy is about the way in which the organisation encourages and collects feedback from services users or other stakeholders and manages complaints about its services or activities.

This policy applies to all staff, participants, stakeholders and the community.

POLICY

Complaints and Feedback is one of the elements in our Integrated Governance Model.

It is the policy of Caddens Care to create an environment where complaints and concerns, compliments, and suggestions (feedback) are welcomed and viewed as an opportunity for acknowledgement and improvement. As a participant exercises choice and control, and is encouraged to do so, we will ensure that individuals always feel they have the right to make comments and complaints and are encouraged to exercise their right.

The culture we create is one of “blame free” and resolution focused culture, respecting an individual’s right to privacy and confidentiality. We ensure a person who makes a complaint, or a person with disability affected by an issue raised in a complaint, is not adversely affected as a result of the making of the complaint.

Please also refer to Whistle-blower Policy for details on protecting those who make complaints about breaches of Code of Conduct.

It is acknowledged that such comments and complaints are vital to review internal performance and processes and to seek continuous improvement of services as we seek to achieve our care commitment. participants, families, and / or other stakeholders may submit compliment, complaint and / or feedback form about Caddens Care supports or services, staff, and / or contractors.

It is our policy to follow the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice and comply with the requirements under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018 and Disability Services and Inclusion (Complaints and Incidents Management) Rules 2023.

DEFINITIONS

| Word | Definition |
|-------------|--|
| Compliment | an expression of praise, encouragement or gratitude about an individual staff member, a team or a service. |
| Complainant | a person who makes a complaint, or has a complaint made on their behalf. |
| Complaint | an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| | expected. ¹ |
| Procedural Fairness | a principal that requires a fair and proper procedure be used when making a decision. |

PROCEDURE

Information for clients and stakeholders

Caddens Care complaints and feedback procedure will be documented for clients and stakeholders in our Complaints Brochure and in Easy Read format for our participants. These are made available and are part of the Welcome Pack on admission.

On admission, all clients will be informed of their rights and responsibilities with regards to complaints and appeals at the earliest possible stage of their involvement with the organisation.

The orientation and Welcome Package material will contain information on the following:

- how to make a complaint or lodge an appeal, including an anonymous complaint
- contact person for lodging a complaint or appeal
- how the organisation will deal with the complaint or appeal, the steps involved and the timelines
- the rights of the complainant to an advocate, support person or interpreter
- how the person will be informed about the outcome of their complaint or appeal
- how to make a complaint to an external body including contact details.

Training procedures

- Staff will be trained on the complaint's management procedures during their induction, and as part of ongoing refresher training.
- Caddens Care will utilise Induction Modules to ensure staff have been orientated to the Complaints and Feedback process.
- From time to time, as resources allow, Managers and relevant staff, will undergo training for complaints management and resolution to support clients throughout the complaint process and appropriately respond to complaints in an empathetic manner.
- This will include open communication strategies such as acknowledging the grievance without being defensive and making apologies while accepting responsibility for what occurred.

Complaint Handling

- When a complaint is received it will be forwarded or handed to the Director (or their delegate)
- The complaint will be registered in the Complaints and Feedback Register
- A letter acknowledging the complaint was received will be sent to the person making the complaint
- The Director (or their delegate) will keep the person making the complaint, in the loop

¹ AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations

on all matters.

- If required, the Director (or their delegate) will organise an investigation into the Complaint.
- The Complaint will be managed efficiently, compassionately and within the time frame specified.
- Prior to a formal response being given to the person making the complaint, the Director (or their delegate) will meet with the person and explain the outcome.
- A formal acknowledgement will at that time, be given to the person making the complaint.
- If the person making the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome information will be provided on the 'next steps' that can be taken in relation to the matter.

If the person making the complaint is happy with the outcome, the matter will be finalised.

Caddens Care will ask for feedback from the person who made the complaint, at approximately 1 month after the matter has closed. This is to ascertain their satisfaction at the way in which the complaint was handled.

Appealing the Outcome of the Complaint an appeal

Clients or their advocates may lodge an appeal if they disagree with a decision made by the organisation, or by a staff member. An appeal should be made in writing on the internet, via email, using the Dropbox or in person.

Procedure for appeals management

Any staff member may be a recipient of a complaint, and is responsible for:

Receiving the complaint:

Listening to the complainant, acknowledging the concern raised, and explaining the next steps to the complainant.

Depending on the type and severity of the complaint, either discussing with the complainant an agreed upon resolution (for smaller matters) or referring the complaint on to Director (or their delegate) for further investigation and action.

The Director (or their delegate) will be responsible for:

Processing the appeal which includes:

- registering the appeal in the Complaints Register as an appeal
- informing the complainant that their complaint has been received and providing them with information about the process and time frame
- At this point the Director (or their delegate) will ask the person making the Complaint what their desired outcome would be.

If the Director (or their delegate) feels this outcome cannot be met, the person making the complaint will be given External complaint mechanisms.

External Complaints Body

NDIS Commission

Ph: 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677.

Help with Interpreter Services

Interpreters can be arranged by calling 131 450 Translating and Interpreters Service **National Relay Service and ask for 1800 035 544.**

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/language-interpreting-services>

Auslan Services Australia Telephone **1300 AUSLAN**

Completing a complaint contact form.

<https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=PRD00-OCF>

Record Keeping

Copies of all correspondence will be kept in a secure location and any sensitive correspondence must be password protected.

The complaints register and files will be confidential, and access is restricted to the Director (or their delegate) or their delegate.

Evaluation and Learning

A statistical summary of complaints and appeals will be created using the Complaints and Feedback Register. This will be reviewed each month. Learnings will inform improvements and staff development topics.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Compliments, Complaint / Feedback Form
- Participant information about making a Complaint
- Complaints Register
- Quality Improvement Plan (Register)
- Service Agreement
- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy / Form
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Incidents, Accidents and Emergencies Policy
- Risk Management Policy

REFERENCES

- Work Health and Safety Act (2011)
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2018
- NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
- Privacy Act (1988)
- Disability Services and Inclusion (Complaints and Incidents Management) Rules 2023

