



Complaints Management Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Care Solutions Victoria manages feedback, including complaints, compliments and ideas for improvement, from people with disability engaged with the service, their families, carers or other representatives, and any other Care Solutions Victoria stakeholder.

2. Scope

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all workers engaged with Care Solutions Victoria, all participants, their families, carers or other participant representatives, visitors, supporters, sponsors, and any other Care Solutions Victoria stakeholder.

3. Definitions

<i>Participant</i>	For the purposes of this policy, the term participant also includes participants' families, carers or other representatives such as advocates or legal guardians.
<i>Complaint</i>	Any expression of dissatisfaction made to Care Solutions Victoria, related to its supports, services or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
<i>Engaged</i>	A person is engaged, including volunteers, by an NDIS provider when both the involved person and the organisation have agreed that the person will provide supports or services for people with disability.
<i>Feedback</i>	Information provided by people engaged with a service into the running of that service.
<i>NDIS Commission</i>	The National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission.
<i>Key personnel</i>	The group of persons including the Director and senior staff appointed by the Director to be responsible for the executive and management decisions of Care Solutions Victoria.



Administration Team The group of persons who is responsible for the administrative functions of Care Solutions Victoria.

Worker Any person employed, or otherwise engaged, by Care Solutions Victoria, including employees, contractors, agents, and volunteers.

4. Procedure

All workers engaged with Care Solutions Victoria must use all relevant opportunities to welcome and encourage feedback, and manage any feedback received in accordance with this policy.

4.1 Opportunities to provide and receive feedback

A person wishing to provide feedback to Care Solutions Victoria or make a complaint may do so through the following avenues:

- Via Care Solutions Victoria website:
- Via email:
- In writing to:
- In person to any worker engaged with Care Solutions Victoria, face to face or by telephone.

Participants may also lodge a complaint about their service directly to the NDIS Commission which is an independent statutory authority providing an impartial resolution service for complaints relating to NDIS services provided nationwide. A complaint can be made by:

- Phoning: 1800 035 544 (free call from landlines) or TTY 133 677. Interpreters can be arranged.
- National Relay Service and ask for 1800 035 544.
- Completing a complaint contact form.

4.2 Promoting and Encouraging Feedback

4.2.1 Communication requirements

On commencement of their service all participants must be given details of all methods for providing feedback and how feedback is handled by Care Solutions Victoria. These details will be provided again during annual individual plan reviews.

During staff orientation, induction and ongoing supervision, it is essential that workers are made aware that they are required to encourage and promote regular feedback from participants and other stakeholders.

Regular communications must promote Care Solutions Victoria's policy to welcome and act upon feedback received, as well as provide information on how feedback can be provided and assurance that complaints will not result in negative consequences for the complainant.



The complaints management process must be clearly documented and provided in an accessible format. Information on how to make a complaint, and the process for resolving complaints, must be readily available in common areas such as entry foyers and notice boards.

4.2.2 Supporting advocates

Participants who wish to provide feedback or make a complaint must be supported to access an advocate to assist them, if desired. Workers should support participants wishing to provide feedback or make a complaint to use the Disability Advocacy Finder at <https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>

4.3 Receiving Feedback

4.3.1 Receiving verbal feedback

Workers must demonstrate a positive manner and be receptive to all compliments, complaints and ideas made to them.

- All workers must:
 - Listen carefully and take notes either during or immediately after the conversation.
 - Confirm details with the complainant by repeating back information and gaining agreement from them.
 - Explain what will happen next:
 - What actions will be taken
 - What will happen to the information provided
 - Timeframes, if known, for actions
 - If there is an issue that needs resolution, agree on a resolution to the issue, where possible, considering Care Solutions Victoria's policies and duty of care issues.
 - If immediate resolution is not possible, contact a supervisor to determine further actions.
 - Record details of feedback on Complaints Form, for input into records system.

- Supervisors must:
 - Review feedback provided and resolved issues.
 - Where necessary, discuss feedback with relevant workers.
 - Follow up on feedback and, for unresolved issues, determine actions to take, create an action plan to address them, and follow up until it is resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.
 - Inform complainants of the progress of unresolved issues, including planned actions and expected timeframes for resolution.
 - Where feedback pertains to a whole service area of Care Solutions Victoria, forward feedback to the senior staff member of that service for action.



4.3.2 Receiving written feedback

Feedback received in writing must be directly forwarded to the senior staff member responsible for the service area the feedback pertains to.

The senior staff member must:

- Assess whether action is required to resolve issues.
- Follow through with any agreed actions immediately, where required.
- Record details of feedback for input into records system.
- For complaints:
 - Review complaint with the Director.
 - Determine what action, if any, needs to be taken.
 - Unless complaint was made anonymously, contact complainant, in person or by writing, within 5 days of receipt of complaint, informing them of actions to be taken and expected timeline for resolution.

4.3.3 Severity of Complaint

Workers who receive complaints whose nature is serious must use their judgement as to whether they should immediately contact a senior staff member to deal with the situation. Complaints considered serious enough for escalation may relate to alleged abuse and/or neglect of participants, misappropriation of money, drug use or other matters which have the potential to hurt participants or workers if immediate action is not taken.

The Incident Management Policy must also be followed in cases where feedback can also be classified as an incident. Where complaints or concerns have legal, media or political implications, the Director must be alerted immediately. The Director must be advised in cases where the complaint comes from, or has been made to, the office of the Minister for Disability or the NDIS Commission.

4.4 Confidentiality and Referral

4.4.1 Confidentiality

Persons providing feedback to Care Solutions Victoria may do so anonymously. All complaints are dealt with internally, with confidentiality, on a need to know basis. Information about the complaint and its resolution will be recorded and stored. Any information stored this way will be kept confidential.

4.4.2 REFERRAL

At times, feedback may involve input and support from within Care Solutions Victoria. When a senior staff member refers feedback to others, they will ensure that complainant information is kept confidential. The senior staff member receiving feedback may involve:



- Another manager
- Health and safety personnel
- Key personnel, including the Director
- The NDIS Commission complaints office

4.5 COMPLAINTS ABOUT SPECIFIC WORKERS

Complaints about specific workers must be handled through the same process as all other complaints. When appropriate, disciplinary action against workers must follow the Human Resources policy.

4.6 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

Supervisors and senior staff members who enact service improvements as part of actions to deal with feedback must ensure that these improvement outcomes are implemented and incorporated into relevant policies and procedures, where required.

4.7 RECORDS AND REPORTING

4.7.1 MAINTAINING RECORDS

All workers who receive feedback must ensure that details of the feedback are recorded and forwarded to the administration team for input into the records system. Required details for records include:

- Details of the person providing the feedback, where known.
- Details of the service area to which the feedback pertains.
- The nature of the feedback.
- Actions taken to address feedback.
- Outcomes of any actions taken.

The administration team must ensure all details are entered into the records system correctly and reviewed for accuracy prior to uploading.

Records of feedback must be maintained for 7 years from the date the record was made.

4.7.2 REVIEWING AND REPORTING FEEDBACK

When issues raised by feedback have been addressed, workers involved must reflect on the feedback process and any outcomes of actions taken. This reflection should consider the effectiveness and accessibility of the feedback process, information provided through feedback



that improved services, any changes that need to be made to services or the feedback process, and whether any workers involved require further training.

The review process should involve following up with the person who provided the feedback, to get their input on the outcome of their feedback, and their response to further actions.

Senior staff members must review feedback data related to their service areas regularly and examine trends in feedback to identify and address any systemic issues identified through the complaints process. A statistical analysis of feedback received, by service area, should be undertaken regularly.

Key personnel must conduct a review into the feedback system annually. This review must address any identified systemic issues raised, as well as examine and improve the effectiveness of the feedback management system.

Records of feedback, including statistical data, must be made available to the NDIS Commission or auditors upon request.

Feedback that raises issues concerning other bodies, such as government agencies or law enforcement, must be referred to those bodies if required by law. Feedback that raises issues concerning possible commitment of a criminal offence must be referred to law enforcement immediately.

5. Worker Responsibilities

All workers engaged with Care Solutions Victoria are advised that they will receive support through the feedback process. No negative consequences will be applied for making a complaint. It is the policy of Care Solutions Victoria, that records of feedback, including details of workers reporting the incident, are kept confidential, and not disclosed to third parties unless permission is provided, or the disclosure is to a government or law enforcement agency. All workers can make a complaint on behalf of a person with disability to Care Solutions Victoria or the NDIS Commission.

All workers engaged with Care Solutions Victoria are required to comply with the Complaints Management Policy for the handling of complaints and other feedback. Workers who receive feedback have a responsibility to follow these procedures in order to ensure feedback is handled appropriately. Regular training will be conducted into the roles and responsibilities of workers regarding these procedures.

6. Continuous Improvement

All persons with disability and workers engaged with Care Solutions Victoria are encouraged to provide feedback on the Complaints Management Policy. The Director will conduct a review into the policy annually, to ensure it remains relevant and reflects best practice.