

Procedure

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Section	Quality Management
Topic	Complaints and Feedback
Distribution	Board, Staff and Volunteers
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Definitions

A 'complaint' is the expression of dissatisfaction with a decision, service or product. Complaints can take many forms, including:

- Dissatisfaction about the service and how it is being delivered.
- Disagreement with a decision made by the provider.
- A claim that a situation or decision should never have happened or been made.
- An issue that requires explanation or resolution.

The 'complainant' is the person making the complaint.

Implementation

Down Syndrome SA will make every effort to establish an atmosphere of trust, and open communication so that grievances are dealt with promptly in a constructive manner which is satisfactory to those involved.

Individuals will be encouraged and supported to understand when and how to make a complaint using a variety of methods to overcome any barriers.

Complaints are to be kept confidential and only necessary people are to be informed or involved, in line with the Privacy Policy and Australian Privacy Principles.

Records will be of all complaints raised and steps taken to resolve the grievance.

Complaints records will be kept securely.

Down Syndrome SA will monitor, review and analyse complaints regularly for trends and continuous improvement purposes using the Down Syndrome SA Complaints Register.

Communicating the complaints process

Staff and volunteers will be provided with the Down Syndrome SA complaints policy, complaints procedure and communication record form, and updated on any procedural changes.

Complaints handling will be included in the induction and orientation for all new staff and volunteers.

The Down Syndrome SA CEO will be responsible for maintaining the complaints register and reporting complaints, as required, to the Board.

Individuals have the opportunity to regularly review the service and service provision at each client/family consultations with staff and via feedback forms after service delivery.

Information on Down Syndrome SA's complaints policy and procedure will be communicated to individuals:

- upon commencement;
- via the family handbook / information booklet;
- via the website;
- via newsletters on regular occasions; and
- during Individual client/family meetings.

How to make a complaint

Individuals can talk to our staff about any concerns or complaints in person, or via phone or email.

Phone: 08 82454600

Email: info@downssa.asn.au

If English is not your first language, a professional translation service and / or translator can be sourced to facilitate complaint handling.

Individuals are encouraged and assisted to raise any concerns without fear of retribution.

Advocates are encouraged to participate, where requested, by families.

When communicating with Down Syndrome SA a specific staff member can be elected to be the contact person.

Ideally the individual or an advocate should speak directly to the person involved – positive solutions may be able to be worked out together. If not comfortable talking to the person involved, another staff member or member of Management can be asked.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will always to be treated seriously provided that there is sufficient information to warrant an investigation. Some effort will need to be taken to determine that the complaint is genuine and is not made frivolously or vexatiously

What to expect if making a complaint

You will be consulted before actions are taken.

You will be communicated with regularly during the process.

You will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against.

Making the complaint will not result in any adverse actions or retribution.

We will respond promptly and sensitively and treat your complaint seriously.

We will attempt to find a reasonable and fair solution within 48 hours.

We will act in confidence and respect your privacy. Only those people who are required to be involved in its resolution will be involved. Complaints will be treated confidentially in the manner necessary under the Australian Privacy Principles.

Permission will be sought to involve any other parties in the resolution of the complaint.

We will investigate your complaint to gain an understanding of what took place and establish the facts.

Any situation which involves the breaking of the Law will be referred to the appropriate external agency.

If the complaint is of a serious nature, any employee involved in the complaint may be temporarily reassigned duties or suspended while the investigation is undertaken. Any such action does not signify a perception of guilt.

A response to a complaint will be completed within five (5) working days . Where this is not possible because of extenuating circumstances, the complainant will be kept up to date regularly and at least every ten (10) working days on the status of the investigation process.

A resolution letter will be sent to you within 21 business days of receiving your complaint.

If you are not satisfied with the initial resolution

If you are not satisfied how your complaint was handled, we can arrange an internal review of your complaint. Please email or phone us in this instance.

If the concern or issue raised is still not able to be resolved through the internal complaints system of Down Syndrome SA you can contact:

- The Office of the Public Advocate
- Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of SA
- National Disability Insurance Agency
- Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner
- Australian National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Review

This policy shall be reviewed by Down Syndrome South Australia Board as per schedule.