



The Aged Care Complaints Scheme: what can it do for you?

This fact sheet outlines the Aged Care Complaints Scheme and what it can do for aged care consumers, providers and stakeholders.

At a glance

The Aged Care Complaints Scheme (the Scheme) has a range of options to deliver an accountable, transparent and customer-focused complaints service. We are working towards our vision: *To improve and protect the safety and wellbeing of aged care recipients.*

The Scheme offers:

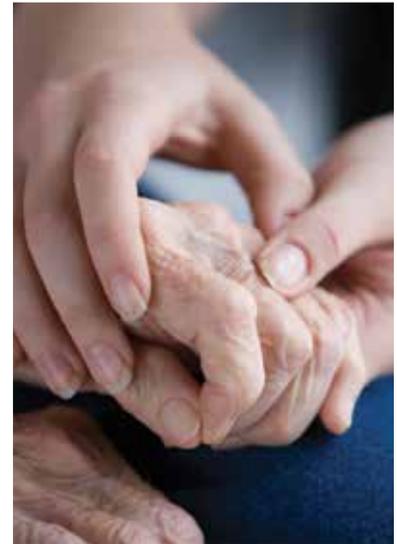
- support for resolution by the service provider where possible
- a focus on timely and proportionate resolution of concerns
- a flexible approach to resolving concerns using a range of techniques
- risk assessment of individual complaints throughout the process
- evidence-based decisions where all parties are afforded natural justice
- regular consultation with parties throughout the process
- explanations of advice and outcomes in the final letter to complainants and services
- access to avenues of review information about our processes for consumers and providers
- transparency and consistency in how we operate through a national approach

Encouraging resolution within the service

We encourage people to resolve their concern directly with the service provider. Working with service providers can achieve a faster and more sustainable outcome for care recipients through building relationships between all parties. Many concerns can be resolved quickly, without needing further action.

Timely resolution and a flexible approach

Not all complaints can or should be resolved through a formal investigation process. The Scheme framework offers a high degree of flexibility in deciding how to resolve concerns, allowing us to select relevant, practical and efficient approaches. We aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible. However, complex or more formal resolution processes may take longer.



We have implemented a range of measures to deliver an accountable, transparent and customer-focused complaints service.



A risk-based approach for managing complaints

We look at the level of risk in every complaint to ensure we manage it appropriately. We consider factors such as safety, dignity and choice of the care recipient; the quality of care and services being delivered and the service provider's responsiveness to the complaint.

Natural justice through improved procedures

Our national processes ensure that the principles of fairness, responsiveness, efficiency, sound judgment, accessibility and accountability are applied to every case. All parties to a complaint have the opportunity to provide information and be heard, and we make decisions based on available information.

Review rights

The parties to a complaint have several rights of review. We can conduct an internal review and undertake a new resolution process. Parties can also request the Aged Care Commissioner to conduct an independent review of our decision and the Commonwealth Ombudsman may also be asked to conduct a review.

Communication

We are committed to keeping parties informed throughout the complaints process. This includes early written confirmation of the issues being examined, consultation at regular intervals, and regular opportunities to provide more information. We will write to both parties at the end of the process to advise the outcome, any required actions and their review rights.

Ongoing information and support for industry, including 'Industry Feedback Alerts', 'What Can We Learn?' Reports and a Better Practice Complaint Handling Guide are available on our website at **agedcarecomplaints.govspace.gov.au**



Aged Care Complaints Scheme

Phone 1800 550 552*

Write

Aged Care
Complaints Scheme
Department of
Social Services
GPO Box 9820
In your capital city

Online

agedcarecomplaints.govspace.gov.au

All information in this publication is correct as at June 2014.

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* 1800 calls are free from fixed lines; however calls from mobiles may be charged.