**Expected Outcome**

The Service Stakeholders will be aware of the importance the Service places on Service User input to service. Team Members will be aware of the correct procedure to encourage input and complaints.

**Training Requirements**

All Team Members.

**Procedure**

Feedback from Service Users is important in ensuring that services are continuing to meet Service Users’ needs, and for planning appropriate services.

**Compliments**

Compliments are an important part of Service User feedback and can assist the Service to identify:

* if service development actions have been successful;
* if Team Members are providing quality services;
* trends in feedback;
* successes in enablement approaches to service; and
* qualitative as well as quantitive data for use in planning.

Compliments will be recorded on a Quick Compliments & Suggestion form or entered directly into the Compliments, Complaints & Suggestion Register on the computer system. As much as possible the Service User’s own words should be used.

**Complaints/Suggestions**

An important source of feedback is Service Users’ complaints, and these are welcomed and encouraged by the Service.

All Service Users will be made aware of their right to complain, and the use and availability of advocates. Service Users will be assured that they have a right to complain about the Service they are receiving without fear of retribution,and that they can expect complaints to be dealt with promptly. The process for making a complaint is included in the Service User’s Information Handbook which is presented and explained to Service Users at the time of assessment. The Manager will take steps to ensure that Service Users feel comfortable to continue accessing the Service after making a complaint by following up any actions with the Service Users to make sure they were happy with the process.

The Service User has the right to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf with Team Members of the Service. This may be a family member or friend, or an agency such as the Older Person’s Rights Service or Disability Rights Service.

Service Users will be reminded of the complaints procedure at the time of reassessment, reviews, and through service Newsletter. An Anonymous Complaint form is also included in the Introduction package.

Team Members will be trained to take note of Service Users concerns and act promptly so that they are addressed as part of service monitoring, and before concerns become a complaint.

Person/s affected by the complaint will be fully informed of all facts and given the opportunity to put their case.

Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions can be made through:

* Completing a Quick Compliments & Complaints form;
* Completing a Complaints Record form;
* Contacting the Manager verbally or in writing;
* Responding to questionnaires and surveys;
* Attending Service User forums, meetings or planning days; or
* Contacting external complaints agencies such as the TfNSW, NSW Ombudsman, the Older Person’s Rights Service, or Disability Rights Service.

**Informal Complaints**

Informal complaints should be dealt with by the Manager or Governance Body as appropriate feedback, unless it involves acts of misconduct, negligence or potential breach of the Service Duty of Care to the Service User. As much as possible, Service Users’ requests for an informal complaint not to be taken further should be respected. At times, an informal complaint may wish to be discussed as a suggestion. Informal complaints/suggestions are recorded on a Quick Compliments & Suggestions Record Form and entered into the Compliments, Complaints & Suggestions Register.

**Formal Complaints**

Formal complaints are recorded on a Complaints Record form and entered into the Compliments, Complaints & Suggestions Register. The record form is to be completed by the person receiving the complaint. Service Users are encouraged to raise their complaint with the Team Member concerned in the first instance.

Team Members that have had a concern or complaint expressed to them must document the matter on a Quick Compliments & Suggestion form or Complaints Record form and enter it in the Compliments, Complaints & Suggestions Register, and also discuss the matter with the Manager/Supervisor. The Manager/Supervisor or appropriate person will enter the matter into Service User’s file (electronic and/or hard copy).

If the Service User is not satisfied with the outcome negotiated with the Team Members, or they are not happy to discuss the issue with the Team Members member/volunteer concerned, they may contact the Manager, or use an advocate to negotiate on their behalf. The Service User complaint will be dealt with within 10 days of the complaint being made, and the Service User informed of the outcome of their complaint, and asked for their feedback on the complaints procedure.

If the Service User is not happy with the outcome, the Service User may raise the issue with the Chairperson on the Governance Body. The Chairperson will take the complaint and investigate accordingly, keeping the Service User updated regarding progress (each 5 days). The Chairperson will inform the Executive of his/her investigations, and the Executive will make a determination. That determination will be advised in writing to the Complainant within 14 days of the complaint being received by the Chairperson.

If, after approaching the above people, the issue is still not resolved, the Service User will be referred to the TfNSW, NSW Ombudsman.

**Confidentiality of Complaints**

As far as possible, the fact that a Service User has lodged a complaint (and the details of that complaint) will be kept confidential amongst Team Members directly concerned with its resolution. The Service User’s permission will be obtained prior to any information being given to other parties that it may be desirable to involve, in order to satisfactorily resolve the complaint.

**Dispute between Service Users and carers**

If Team Members become aware of a dispute between a Service User and their carer they will refer the situation immediately to the Manager who will either:

1. If the dispute concerns services provided:

* Encourage honest, open discussion regarding the issue between the carer, Service User and the Service;
* Provide the Service User and carer with clarifying information and attempt to negotiate a solution; or
* With the Service User’s permission, refer them to a mediation service.

1. If the dispute does not concern services provided:

* Provide support/referral to access counselling/mediation or other appropriate service, such as the Aged Care Assessment Team or Social Worker, who will make an assessment and offer support, or another mediation service.

**Documents to be completed and/or related to this procedure**

* [DOC 3.07-1-1](../Documents/DOC%203.07-1-1%20Complaint%20Record%20Form.dotx) Complaint Record Form
* [DOC 3.07-1-2](../Documents/DOC%203.07-1-2%20Quick%20Compliments%20&%20Suggestions%20Form.dotx) Quick Compliments/Suggestions Form
* [DOC 3.07-1-3](../Documents/DOC%203.07-1-3%20Complaints%20Flowchart.dotx) Complaints Flowchart
* [DOC 3.07-1-4](../Documents/DOC%203.07-1-4%20Compliments,%20Complaints%20&%20Suggestion%20Register.dotx) Compliments & Suggestion Register
* DOC 3.07-1-2b Complaints and Negative feedback Register
* DOC 3.07-1-2a Anonymous Compliments/Suggestion/Complaint Form
* Guidelines for the Aged Care Complaints Scheme

**Corresponding Policy**

* [POL 3.07](../Policies/POL%203.07%20Compliments,%20Complaints%20&%20Suggestions.dotx) Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions

**Relevant Standard**

**Home Care Standards**

1.2 Regulatory Compliance

1.5 Continuous Improvement

3.3 Complaints & Service User Feedback

**Disability Service Standards**

1. Rights

2. Feedback and Complaints

**Procedure History**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No: 3.07-1** | **Service User Compliments, Complaints & Suggestions** | | **Date Approved** | **28/02/14** | |
| Date Procedure due to be reviewed | Date Procedure Reviewed: | Amendments | Positions informed/trained regarding amendments | Method | Date |
| 28/02/15  27.02.16  10.02.17 | 27.02.15  10.02.16 | Dominic Chircop, Paul Haysom, Ray Wilson, Leonie Schumacher |  |  |  |