



Client Complaints Policy

Policy	Client Complaint Policy
Applicability	Bower Place
Authorisation	General Manager / Directors
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Policy Owner	Directors

Bower Place Pty Ltd. aims to provide services that meet the needs of our clients and strive for a high standard of care at all times. Bower Place welcomes suggestions from clients, their families, and from our staff about the safety and quality of care we provide.

Bower Place is committed to an effective and fair complaints system and we support a culture of openness and willingness to learn from incidents, including complaints.

Procedures

Clients and their families are encouraged to provide suggestions, compliments, concerns and complaints, either verbally, in a letter or through the 'Client Feedback Form'. Bower Place also has a formal complaints procedure for addressing any grievances clients may have regarding the service they receive. All complainants will be treated with respect, sensitivity and confidentiality. All complaints are handled without prejudice or assumptions about how minor or serious they are. The emphasis is on resolving the problem. Clients, their families, clinicians and staff can make complaints on a confidential basis or anonymously if they wish and be assured that their identity will be protected.

Everyone's Responsibility

All Bower Place staff are expected to encourage clients and their families to provide feedback about the service, including complaints, concerns, suggestions and compliments. Bower Place staff are expected to attempt resolution of complaints and concerns at the point of service, wherever possible and within the scope of their role and responsibility. Clients and their families are strongly encouraged to express their complaints or concerns directly to the staff so that the staff have the opportunity to resolve those issues.

If the complaint is not resolved

Complaints that are not resolved at the point of service, or that are received in writing and require follow up, are regarded as formal complaints. If the complaint is not resolved at the point of service, Bower Place staff are expected to acknowledge to the complainant that a formal complaint has been received and will be acted on. This may take the form of prompt personal contact with the complainant or contact with the complainant soon after the problem has been addressed.

Assessing Resolution Options

Formal complaints are normally resolved by direct negotiation with the complainant, but some complaints are better resolved with the assistance of an independent authority.

The Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner is an appropriate independent authority that clients and their families may approach if the complaints could not be resolved by direct negotiation.

The Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner can be contacted:

HCSCC Enquiry Service

Monday to Thursday 10am to 4pm

Telephone 8226 8666 toll free SA country 1800 232 007

Email direct from www.hcsc.sa.gov.au

Fax 8226 8620

Write PO Box 199, Rundle Mall, Adelaide, SA 5000.

As per the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018, NDIS clients may also lodge complaints to the NDIS Commission using the following details:

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

Telephone 1800 035 544

Download an NDIS Complaint Form from <https://www.ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints>, complete it and return it via one of the following methods:

- Email: feedback@ndis.gov.au
- Post: National Disability Insurance Agency, GPO Box 700, Canberra ACT 2601
- Drop your form off at any National Disability Insurance Scheme Office
- Online at <https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=PRD00-OCF>

Timeframes

Formal complaints are acknowledged in writing or in person promptly. We aim to resolve complaints within 30 days of receipt of the complaint. Complainants will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint including any action taken, explanations for any decisions made, and further options to have decisions regarding the complaint reviewed.

Records and Privacy

Complaints records will be maintained in a complaints register, with records of informal feedback and formal complaints. Personal information in individual complaints is kept confidential and is only made available to those who need it to deal with the complaint. Clients can anonymously lodge a complaint in writing via post to Bower Place. Individual complaint files are kept in a secure filing room and in a restricted access section of the computer system. Clients are provided with access to their clinical records (in accordance with the privacy policy). Family members and others requesting access to a client's clinical records as part of resolving a complaint are provided with access only if the client has provided authorisation (in accordance with the privacy policy).

Open Disclosure and Fairness

Complainants are initially provided with an explanation of what happened, based on the known facts. At the conclusion of an inquiry or investigation, the complainant and relevant clinicians and staff are provided with all established facts, the causal factors contributing to the incident and any recommendations to improve the service, and the reasons for these decisions.

Investigation and Resolution

The person investigating the complaint seeks to identify what happened, the underlying causes of the complaint and preventative strategies.

Information is gathered from:

- Talking to clinicians and staff directly involved
- Listening to the complainant's views
- Reviewing clinical records and other records
- Reviewing relevant policies, standards or guidelines.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The principal consultant continuously monitors the amount of time taken to resolve complaints, whether recommended changes have been acted on and whether satisfactory outcomes have been achieved. The principal consultant annually reviews the complaints management system to evaluate if the complaints policy is being complied with and how it measures up against the indicators in the Better Practice Guidelines on Complaints Management for Health Care Services.

