



POLICY

Document Name:	GOV-007 Feedback, Compliments, Complaints and Areas for Improvement
Approved By:	Anita Veivers
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the organisation's commitment to ensuring feedback, compliments, complaints and suggestions for areas for improvement, are carefully considered, reviewed, and any appropriate actions are implemented in a timely manner. For complaints that are received, procedural fairness will be demonstrated, together with:

- fair, accountable, transparent and responsive management.
- ensuring they are reviewed and investigated where appropriate without delay.
- effective monitoring.
- identification and implementation of continuous improvement opportunities.

SCOPE & AWARENESS

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and individuals who enter into specific relationships with Centacare FNQ for any period of time, e.g. student placements and work experience. Centacare FNQ supports employees to meet the obligations set out in this policy through training and education, work instructions and other forms of communication. Staff requiring further explanation, information or assistance in understanding aspects of this policy, throughout their employment, shall seek clarification from their Supervisor.

POLICY

Centacare FNQ will demonstrate open disclosure. This is in line with up-to-date practices of open communication and transparency. Centacare FNQ recognises that clients have the right to raise concerns and make comments about the care and services they receive from the organisation. Centacare FNQ has in place complaint handling and resolution systems that facilitate and support clients to raise concerns. Once made, the system follows principles of procedural fairness and natural justice and is managed in line with better practice guidelines.

Centacare FNQ will encourage and support clients and their representatives to provide feedback, compliments, or suggestions for areas for improvement, about the care and services they receive. This is based on clients' trust and confidence that there won't be negative consequences if they raise feedback, concerns or issues. Centacare FNQ acknowledges that an efficient *Feedback & Complaints Policy* must be accessible and acceptable to clients, their advocates and carers, employees and the general public to help ensure fair treatment and assist in the resolution of any feedback or complaints.

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Centacare FNQ welcomes feedback, compliments, complaints and suggestions for areas for improvement, about the programs and services we provide and the employees who deliver these services, and encourage all clients, their families and representatives to make their submissions as appropriate.

PRINCIPLES

Centacare FNQ is committed to the following feedback, compliments, complaints, and areas for improvement, management principles:

- *provision of a free and accessible complaints process, that supports natural justice and procedural fairness for all persons with no reprisals or detriment because of raising a concern.*
- *people have the right to be supported by a friend, an advocate, an interpreter or a community elder.*
- *provision of information about where to lodge a complaint, how to make a complaint and how complaints will be managed, including referring concerns to external agencies, where required.*
- *opportunity for complaints to be made anonymously, with clients advised of the limitations of an anonymous complaint.*
- *provision of clear information about what can or cannot be achieved by a complaint process and aiding anyone who wishes to raise a complaint.*
- *responding to clients in a respectful, fair, objective and timely manner, that respects the confidentiality of personal information in line with Centacare FNQ's Privacy Policy (GOV-005), Dealing with Personal Information Work Instruction (GOV-005.04) and the Australian Privacy Principles (Reference Document).*
- *communicating with parties about the progress of their complaint.*
- *providing a clear explanation of the final decision, any recommendations, review options and any available external review mechanisms.*

Centacare FNQ strives to deliver high quality services to clients and the community. Professional standards are established for all employees to provide and maintain high quality and consistent approaches, support, service and protection to clients that are attentive to client needs and strengths and are reflective of our commitment to Centacare FNQs' values - *Human Dignity, Common Good, Solidarity and Subsidiarity*.

Clients that use Centacare FNQ's services should be confident that their needs and issues have been understood, that there is a clear plan for the services they will receive from Centacare FNQ and that where needed employees will build relationships with other services that may be appropriate to client needs.

Clients and/or their Representatives are to be advised of this Policy and Centacare FNQs' *Feedback & Complaints Procedure* (GOV-007.01) as part of their initial contact information. They must be advised they are entitled to make any complaints about the provision of services pursuant to any agreement. If they are unhappy about the service they are receiving, in the first instance, they can address this with the employee concerned if they feel comfortable in doing so. If the client decides to lodge a complaint, the organisation is committed to handling and resolving any client complaint in a confidential, fair and timely manner.

This policy also applies to any person or service who makes a complaint about an employee. The policy and procedures do not attempt to address all possible situations that may arise through contact with Centacare FNQ. The relevant procedures provide a framework to guide employee and management in situations where complaints arise.

This policy does not exclude or replace any rights and obligations of employees under common and statute law.

This policy aims to ensure that client/stakeholder complaints:

- Are treated seriously and sensitively, having due regard to procedural fairness and confidentiality.
- Achieve a satisfactory resolution in an ethical, consistent, appropriate and timely manner.

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- Address and ensure no recurrence of behaviours or conduct that breach organisational, community and legislative standards.
- Have no reprisals against clients or stakeholders for complaining.
- Comply with appropriate legislation.
- Ensure continual improvement of service delivery; and
- Ensure organisational accountability.

REVIEW PROCESS

When the legislation or standards affect this policy reviews will be conducted as required. Information that will inform this review includes:

- Practical application of all procedures.
- Feedback from employees.
- QMR reviews and Corrective Action Plans.
- Audits (internal or external).

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