



Complaints & Feedback Policy & Procedure PP9

Policy statement

Grow Support Inc. (GROW) values feedback and complaints from our participants, advocates, families, carers, service providers and funding bodies to ensure people are treated fairly when they use our services.

Complaints and feedback are an important source of information and are used to improve our services wherever possible.

This policy & procedure supports GROW to apply and meet the Service Practice Standard 2. Provider Governance & Operational Management.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, contractors, service partners and the Management Committee This policy is owned by the GROW Management Committee.

Principles

- Everyone has the right to give feedback or complain.
- Participants making complaints should be supported to access the feedback & complaints processes.
- Complaints processes should be sensitive to any cultural requirements.
- Robust complaints processes and systems are an important part of quality service management and help safeguard participants.
- Complaints identify risks to participants but also visitors and staff and support GROW to meet its occupational health and safety obligations.
- Complaints identify opportunities for GROW to continuously improve its services.

Definitions

Allegation – a claim that an illegal act has occurred. Allegations are always investigated and sometimes an external authority undertakes the investigation such as the police.

Concern – a notification that a participant is worried that something is not working, has gone wrong or is otherwise not as it should be.

Complaint – formal advice that an incident has occurred, something is not working the way it should, something is inappropriate or someone is at risk. A serious incident process is required for legal and contractual purposes when a complaint is about a serious incident.



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Complaints procedure

Complaints or feedback can be received verbally, in writing or another way that suits the person making the feedback or complaint. Families, carers and advocates can also complain on behalf of the participant that they support.

If someone talks to a staff member to make a complaint, that staff member is responsible for writing it down and following procedures. Complaints should be documented on the Participant Feedback /Complaints Form C7 within 24 hours of being made. It is important that the staff member checks with the person making a complaint that complaint has been recorded accurately. The complaint will also be lodged on the Feedback & Complaints Register.

Complaint information is private and must not be shared with people outside of the complaints process.

The Operations Manager will contact the person lodging the complaint within five working days to discuss the matter. Details of the complaint and any response will be documented. The Operations Manager and relevant staff will work with the person lodging the complaint to identify desirable outcomes in an effort to resolve the complaint within three weeks (21 days).

If the complaint is against a staff member that person will not have contact with the complainant while the complaint is resolved.

At any stage of the complaints process, the complainant can get support from an independent advocate.

Where a matter needs to be referred to an outside agency or otherwise investigated, all staff will cooperate with the inquiry and produce material requested.

There are systems and reporting requirements for

- serious incidents
- allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- theft
- accidents, injuries or death.

The Operations Manager will decide whether other policies and procedures apply such as Safeguarding, or Risk Management policies and determine whether measures need to be included in a positive behaviour or risk management plan.



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Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for the implementation of the feedback & complaints procedure. This includes encouraging and supporting participants accessing GROW services to raise any concerns or complaints they have on any issue.

The Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring complaints are recorded and actioned.

The Operations Manager is responsible for communicating with people with disability, family, carers and other key stakeholders during a complaints process.

Reporting

All staff will report all serious incidents to the Operations Manager immediately. Please see the Incident Management Policy & Procedure for more information.

The Operations Manager will contact police where there is an allegation of a criminal offence.

De-identified complaint activity is routinely reported to the GROW Management Committee as part of ongoing quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Review and evaluation

GROW will communicate with service participants about quality evaluations and encourage their participation in evaluating GROW services.

At least twice a year the Operations Manager will analyse feedback and complaints data to determine service gaps, issues or trends in practice, procedures or policies that need to be amended to better safeguard participants accessing GROW and improve services as part of the Continuous Improvement Policy & Procedure.

Recommendations will be included within the Operations Managers Quarterly Reports for Management Committee review and approval of actions.

Key contact

Questions about how to implement this procedure should be directed to the Operations Manager.



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Related Documents

- Participant Feedback /Complaints Form C7
- Incident Register R7
- Continuous Improvement Plan K7
- Participant Feedback & Complaints Register R8
- Code of Conduct Form HR5

Related policy and procedures

- Continuous Improvement Policy & Procedure PP12
- Code of Conduct Policy & Procedure PP3
- Participants & Responsibilities Policy & Procedures PP4

Related legislation and standards

- Practice Standard 2. Provision of Supports

Approvals

Date of approval: 25th July 2020

Date of review: July 2021

Signature of Operations Manager:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.