

Customer Feedback



Purpose

To cultivate a positive culture within the organisation which welcomes, encourages, and supports the receipt of complaints, feedback and suggestions.

To acknowledge that all customer feedback is an important source of information and is invaluable to quality improvement.

To ensure that customer feedback management is compliant with relevant community expectations and the Aged Care Quality Standards and National Standards for Disability Services.

To ensure that customer feedback is used to improve service experience and outcomes for Meals on Wheels SA (MoWSA) customers.

This policy relates to

Service standards	ACQS Std 6, 8(3)(c) National Standards for Disability Services
Legislation and other requirements	Aged Care Act 1997 NDIS Act 2013 Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004 (SA) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018
Contractual requirements	

Scope

This policy covers the MoWSA Board, voluntary and paid workers.

Policy Statements

- Customers have the right to give positive and negative feedback and suggestions about services provided by MoWSA at any time.
- Customers and any persons affected by the organisation will receive information about ways to provide feedback or lodge a complaint.
- MoWSA will manage customer feedback with person centred processes which follow the principles of equity, transparency, procedural fairness and natural justice.
- Customers will not be negatively impacted by providing feedback.
- MoWSA will communicate openly and with transparent processes including acknowledging and apologising when it has made a mistake using the principles of Open Disclosure.
- MoWSA will record customer feedback, response management and outcomes to enable systems analysis and organisational response to risks and trends, and recognition of positive achievement.

Principles

Customers have the right to:

- complain free from reprisal, and to have complaints dealt with fairly, promptly impartially and non-judgementally
- have a person of their choice, including an advocate, support them or speak on their behalf
- be listened to and understood

Customers will be advised during assessment for services of their right to give feedback about their service directly to MoWSA or to any relevant external bodies such as the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, or the SA Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner.

Information will be provided about ways to do this, and customers will be reminded of this information periodically and as required.

MoWSA will provide an inclusive range of ways for feedback to be given, both on the customer's initiative or by invitation, such as through surveying, recognising the diversity and capacity of customers. MoWSA understands that some customers may find it difficult to provide feedback without help, and staff and volunteers will assist directly or encourage the assistance of a friend or family member where relevant, and/or provide information about independent advocacy agencies.

Customer feedback may be received directly from a customer or via a third party on their behalf.

Feedback may be provided in any form that suits the customer – face to face, phone, email or written, or using the MoWSA Feedback Form.

Information provided in a complaint will be kept confidential, but customers will be advised that in some circumstances there may be limitations to confidentiality where MoWSA has a legal obligation to report to another authority.

Feedback will be categorised by type, risk, urgency and customer expectation, and will be managed as required by relevant staff or managers.

Complaints/feedback management processes will meet the guidelines for the Aged Care Quality Standards and the National Standards for Disability Services with an intent of Open Disclosure to relevant parties.

Feedback information will be documented in the Feedback Management System and summary data and systems analysis will be reported periodically to the MoWSA Leadership Team, Stakeholder Engagement Committee, the Quality and Continuous Improvement Committee and the Board.

Definitions

A **complaint** is a statement of dissatisfaction or grievance with the way a service has been delivered or an aspect of the standards, practices, or policies of the organisation.

An **incident** is any act, omission, event or circumstance that occurs in connection with the provision of care or services that has (or can be expected to have) or is alleged to have caused harm to a customer or another person.

Procedures

Incidents are recorded in a separate pathway in FMS.

Some specific serious incidents may be reportable to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission under the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS).

Informal ad hoc Customer Feedback (positive or negative) is generally received and resolved at the point where it is raised, resulting in all parties reaching agreement and satisfied with the outcome. All feedback will be recorded in the MoWSA Feedback Management System (FMS) and linked to the customer's database progress notes.

A serious complaint or negative feedback which is identified as high risk or is unable to be resolved to the satisfaction of the organisation or the customer will be managed by a senior staff member or manager who will undertake relevant actions including to:

- seek further information and investigate
- plan a resolution strategy, which may include:
 - change or cancel services
 - recommend or undertake staff training/education
 - recommend or undertake volunteer training/education
 - initiate procedure and practice review
 - individual or organisational risk assessment and management
 - systems review and change
 - policy or procedure review and change
 - performance management.
- respond to the complainant, informing them of decisions and actions planned or undertaken, check satisfaction with the outcome,
- offer advocacy service information,
- determine the need for a formal Open Disclosure process to relevant parties,
- document the progress and resolution of the complaint in the Feedback Management System and link to the customer's database progress notes.

Notifications and investigations may proceed without identifying the complainant if the complaint is given anonymously.

Complaints will be referred or notified to any other bodies in accordance with any requirements under relevant Commonwealth, State or Territory laws.

Complaints involving Voluntary and Paid Workers

- A volunteer will be notified about any customer complaint involving them in order to conduct a fair and just investigation and establish the facts from all perspectives.
- A paid worker will be notified by their Manager/Supervisor about any customer complaint involving them in order to conduct a fair and just investigation and establish the facts from all perspectives (Policy Workforce Grievances).
- Notifications and investigations may proceed without identifying the complainant if the complaint is given anonymously.

Training

- All paid and voluntary staff will receive customer feedback training appropriate for their roles.
- Training will include the organisational process for receiving and responding to feedback as well as how to ensure clients feel safe and comfortable to raise their issues and how to address barriers that make it difficult for clients to make complaints.

- All organisational procedures, induction and training will foster a positive complaints culture.
- Relevant staff will be trained in the use of the Feedback Management System to document complaints, complaints management and outcomes.

Monitoring and Reporting

- The General Manager Business Systems (GMBS) will oversee the Feedback Management System (FMS) to monitor feedback types, suggestions for improvement, unresolved customer complaints, complaints management practice, customer feedback and complaint trends, and systems analysis.
- A regular report from the FMS identifying risks, trends and themes will be provided to the Leadership Group, Quality and Continuous Improvement Committee and Stakeholder Engagement Committee, and a summary report will be provided to the Board.
- These bodies will recommend policy change, risk management and quality improvement actions as required.

Policy Responsibilities

Responsible for monitoring	GMBS
Responsible for implementation	Senior Staff, ELT

Policy Delegations

Review of policy and policy compliance	GMBS
Approving policy and policy changes	CEO

The Policy will be tabled for review at the Stakeholder Engagement Committee.

Documents and Resources

MoWSA Feedback Management System (FMS)

Customer Feedback Management Flowchart

Policy: Customer Incident Management

Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au>

