

Feedback and Complaints Management

Policy Statement

Burke and Beyond embraces a culture where participants, their families, carers, staff, visitors and the community are encouraged and enabled to provide feedback regarding our performance. Feedback, whether a comment, compliment and/or complaint, provides opportunity for us to reflect, acknowledge and make improvements.

Objective

To provide a transparent feedback mechanism which encourages and fosters openness, fairness, opportunity to learn and effective resolution. This process affirms a person's right to provide feedback, especially a complaint or grievance, address the issue satisfactorily, and facilitates the opportunity for us to learn and improve.

Burke and beyond a committed to providing a positive complaints culture, it is a guiding principle of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act) and our belief that people with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to pursue any grievance.

Scope

The procedure covers complaints/compliments provided by participants, their family/representative, staff on behalf of a participant, other agencies, stakeholders and members of the public. Any person providing a complaint/compliment has the right to withdraw their feedback at any time.

It is inclusive of all forms of feedback which may occur through compliments, complaints, comments, satisfaction surveys, meetings, forums and other such mechanisms for receiving feedback.

This process does not cover grievances made by employees about issues related to their employment. These types of issues are managed through Human Resources, respective management and the relevant acts of legislation.

Details

Burke and Beyond welcomes feedback as a means of continuously improving the quality of the services provided. It is important to recognise that any person providing feedback, complaint and/or compliment, has a right to do so without fear of harassment or retribution. All disputes and complaints will be handled in a professional, transparent, confidential and sensitive manner.

Burke and Beyond acknowledges that services may not always meet with everyone's expectations and that not all complaints raised, can be resolved to the satisfactions of all involved.

Burke and Beyond is committed to:

Providing an easy and accessible process for making and resolving complaints;

Ensuring appropriate support and assistance is provided to any person who wishes to make, or has made, a complaint and creating a process that may vary, depending on the nature of the complaint.

Burke and Beyonds complaints system ensures:

- (a) complaints are acknowledged, assessed and resolved in a fair, efficient and timely manner;
- and

- (b) appropriate action is taken in relation to issues raised in complaints; and
- (c) reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any person who makes a complaint to the provider, and each person with disability affected by an issue raised in such a complaint, is advised how that complaint or issue may be raised with the Commissioner; and
- (d) appropriate support and assistance in contacting the Commissioner in relation to a complaint is provided to any person who makes a complaint and each person with disability affected by an issue raised in a complaint.

(4) The system must also require that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that:

- (a) a person who makes a complaint, or a person with disability affected by an issue raised in a complaint, is not adversely affected as a result of the making of the complaint; and
- (b) information provided in a complaint is kept confidential and only disclosed if required by law or if the disclosure is otherwise appropriate in the circumstances.

(5) The system must provide the person making a complaint:

- (a) are appropriately involved in the resolution of the complaint; and
- (b) are kept informed of the progress of the complaint, including any action taken, the reasons for any decisions made and options for review of decisions in relation to the complaint.

(6) The system must provide that a person with disability affected by an issue raised in a complaint:

- (a) is kept appropriately informed of the progress of the complaint, including any action taken, the reasons for any decisions made and options for review of decisions; and
- (b) is kept appropriately involved in the resolution of the complaint.

(7) The system must provide for the following details to be readily available and accessible to the public:

- (a) how a complaint about the registered NDIS provider can be made to the provider;
- (b) how a complaint about the registered NDIS provider can be made to the Commissioner.

(8) The system must also provide for the periodic review of the system to ensure its effectiveness.

Definitions

Feedback	Information sent to an entity (individual or group) about its prior behaviour or performance so that the entity may adjust its current and/or future behaviour to achieve a desired result. It is an ongoing, open two- way communication between two or more parties.
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction with the provision of a service or product, including how a previous complaint was handled, for which a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected
Compliment	An expression of satisfaction and/or acknowledgement of service provision provided by a service, program area and/or staff.

Grievance	A perceived wrong, real or imagined, which could lead to a complaint. Often these are easily resolved at the time raised.
Comment	A remark expressing an opinion or reaction to something which may not be a direct compliment and/or complaint. Often these are information regarding faults, misunderstandings and/or opportunities we can consider and investigate.

Procedure

WHO	WHAT
All Staff	<p>Prior to commencement and during service provision ensure participants, families and/or their carers are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informed and have access to information regarding the feedback processes • Provide information in a format which is suitable and understandable by the person or their representative. • Explain that complaints can be made anonymously but this may make it more difficult for the organisation to fully resolve. • Clarify and re-enforce that by making a complaint this will not adversely affect them or the services provided to them. • As necessary direct a person initiating to provide in written form, complete feedback through website or provide verbally with permission for it to be escalated. Members of staff may complete the form on behalf of participants/ family if requested and consent to do so provided. • Where a grievance, complaint or compliment can be resolved locally and at the time initiated, take relevant actions and seek persons approval. • If written feedback received, forward copy to Coordinator, General Manager Service Delivery (GMSD) and Manager Quality and Risk (MQR). • If a verbal complaint or compliment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage/assist person to provide in writing ○ If not wishing to provide in writing, seek permission to escalate/forward to management for action ○ Explain that if feedback is of a serious nature, staff may need to consult with/escalate to management regardless. • Where a participant, or their representative, requires assistance in providing feedback, staff may either directly assist, or direct the complainant to an external advocate or consumer representative. As required an interpreter, qualified AUSLAN interpreter/ tactile interpreter will be made available to assist them. • If completing feedback on behalf of person, read back information recorded and seek approval from them prior to submission. • Briefly explain the process for feedback to person and/or their representative. • Ensure appropriate privacy, confidentiality and any special requests of person are maintained. • Explain that complaints and feedback can be provided directly to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission through their website.
Coord.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon receiving feedback review seriousness, type and consider relevant actions to be taken. • For complaints, acknowledge and clarify process to be taken with person within 5 working days of receiving complaint using the following guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thank you for providing feedback ○ We apologise for any inconvenience this has caused you ○ We are looking into the matter and someone from Burke and Beyond will be in contact with you within 30 days to provide feedback. • Explain to person that at any stage they may engage a support person to assist them with feedback resolution. • Ensure Manager Quality and Risk (MQR) has received copy of feedback.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult and ensure copy provided to the General Manager Service Delivery (GMSD). • Provide Training and development to staff on how to respond to complaints.
MQR/ GMSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In consultation with person, appropriate staff and as relevant external supports, the Manager Quality and Risk or in his/her absence, the General Manager Service Delivery will investigate circumstances and events around the incident. • Provide support and facilitate feedback process and where an investigation undertaken, ensure investigator is independent of the issues raised. • Escalate serious feedback to CEO. • As necessary, engage internal and/or external supports to assist. • Support and participate in any relevant actions to be taken. • Ensure any improvements comply with the continuous improvement process and consider any effects or opportunities for other service areas. • Within 30 days of complaint opening, communicate outcomes in writing of feedback with person and any actions taken. For serious feedback, these may need to be signed by the CEO or GMSD. • If complaint resolution exceeds 30 days, communicate and discuss with person and CEO. • As appropriate, communicate outcomes with any relevant key stakeholders. • Where required, ensure staff receive appropriate support and assistance. • If a complaint does not reach an agreed resolution, consult with initiator to either develop amicable solution or provision of information regarding alternative external supports available to them; such as the Board of Management or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. • Ensure workers understand and comply with this complaints management procedure, and formally trained in how to receive, manage and resolve complaints.
GMSD CEO	<p>Where a serious complaint is made about our service, it will be registered with The NDIS Commission and Burke and Beyond will ensure the following:</p> <p>We will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complaints are acknowledged, assessed and resolved in a fair, efficient and timely manner, • appropriate action is taken in relation to issues raised in complaints, • participants will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ any action taken, ○ the reasons for decisions made, and ○ any options to have decisions reviewed. • Keep the participant appropriately involved in the resolution of the complaint • Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any person who makes a complaint, and any affected person with disability, is advised how to make a complaint to the NDIS Commission. • Appropriate support and assistance in contacting the NDIS Commission in relation to a complaint is provided to any person making a complaint, and any affected person with disability. • Ensure compliance with mandatory reporting obligations under Australian Law. • Any complaints alleging a potential criminal offense are forwarded to the relevant law enforcement authorities.
MQR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as Complaints Liaison Officer/ Complaints Manager • Attend to all written feedback forms in line with this policy and procedure

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log all complaints and compliments received on a register and monitor timelines for completion. • As requested, provide support and assistance with managing and coordinating feedback, any actions taken and/or resolution processes or reviews of decisions. • Provide relevant reports and updates to internal and external stakeholders. • Securely store any feedback and ongoing investigation information received. • Periodically review the effectiveness of complaints management systems. • Review policy and procedure related to all complaints in line with Continuous Improvement policy.
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Requirements of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (the Act) and National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018 (the Rules)

In Victoria, the Disability Act 2006 requires disability service providers to implement an internal system for complaints management. All NDIS providers have a responsibility to ensure that they are delivering safe and quality supports and services to people with a disability.

Complaints and feedback can also be provided directly to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission through their website.

Implementation and Review

Improvements to this document can be made by completing a suggestion and improvement and forwarding to your manager and/or the Manager Quality and Risk. This policy will be available on SupportAbility and publicly available on the website, the information in this policy is made accessible to participants on the website, in the client handbook and via weekly meetings. This document will be reviewed every three years, when legislation or guidelines change or during the continual improvement process.

Administration

Standards related to:	Governance and operational management – Feedback and Complaints
Legislation or external reference documents:	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018 https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2018L00634/latest/versions NDIS Code of Conduct National Disability Insurance Scheme (Procedural Fairness) Guidelines 2018 https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2018N00155/latest/text NDIS (Procedural Fairness) Guidelines 2018 Privacy Act 1988 Disability Services Act 1986 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Work Health and Safety Act 2011 Disability Advocacy Network Australia www.dana.org.au/find-an-advocate/
Related Policies or Procedures:	Participant Handbook Continuous Improvement Policy Incident Management Procedure Complaints Register Participant Handbook Staff Handbook
Reviewing and approving this policy	

Frequency	Person responsible	Approval
Every 3 years	Manager Quality and Risk	CEO

Indexing:

Policy review and version tracking			
Review	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1	21/09/2020	Bruno Cyr	2023
2	06/05/2024	Lisa Sawatzky	2027