



South Burnett Care Feedback Form

Date: Lodged by:

If you wish to remain anonymous or do not want to be contacted with progress reports about your comments leave the "Name" and "Address" section below blank.

Name:

Address:

Phone: Email:

Detail of your compliment, comment, complaint or suggestion (please ask for assistance if required)?

What would you like to happen as a result of sharing this information with us?

SUBMIT

COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

Client Services Policy # 007.5

References:

- Australian/New Zealand Standard *AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations*
- Information Management Systems Policy #006.4 *Client Information Systems*
- Information Management Systems Policy #006.9 *Data Collection and Analysis*
- Client Services Policy #007.6 *Advocacy and Client Support*
- Client Services Policy #007.8 *Translating and Interpreting*
- Client Services Policy #007.11 *Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation*
- Client Services Policy #007.15 *Tenancy Management*
- Continuous Improvement Register

Attachments:

- Client Agreement
- Client Service Plan
- Client Satisfaction Survey
- CG D102 – V3 Ethics Statement and Code of Conduct
- SBcare Feedback Form
- Continuous Improvement Action Request (CIAR)
- Executive Team Terms of Reference
- QMS Registers Instruction Guide
- Induction Checklist

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to establish an effective and consistently applied framework for the management of complaints and feedback so that SBcare services, activities, systems and processes can be continuously improved.

Underpinning our Complaints and Feedback Policy and our procedures for resolution are principles of natural justice, and we support the right of clients and stakeholders to raise their concerns in a constructive and safe way, equal and fair treatment, to protection of confidentiality, to promptness of response, to have complaints investigated fairly and to have appropriate steps taken to resolve issues of concern and access to advocacy support.

This policy sets out our approach to managing any complaints we receive and comprises the systems and internal procedures supporting the implementation of the policy.

2.0 PHILOSOPHY

Our organisational values confirm our commitment to quality in client services. Quality is ultimately determined by the client, and it is therefore critical that we encourage feedback from clients, and that the information received is linked into action planning cycles for continuous improvement. Any complaints, concerns or suggestions regarding the planning and operation of our service will therefore be welcomed as opportunities for improvement.

3.0 SCOPE

SBcare considers a complaint to be:

An expression of dissatisfaction made to SBcare related to our services, decisions, actions or the actions of our people, or the complaint management process itself, which SBcare has been unable to resolve in the first instance, where a response is expected.

This is distinct from a request for service. However, a request for service may develop into a complaint where the complainant considers the provision or timeliness of the service to be unsatisfactory.

This policy does not extend to requests for a review of an SBcare decision or action where the right to do so is granted by law. These reviews will be conducted in accordance with the applicable legislation.

This policy does not extend to complaints or allegations about third parties unrelated to SBcare.

This policy is to be followed by employees, volunteers and Board of Management members for all feedback, complaints or concerns received in relation to SBcare

4.0 PRINCIPLES

The complaints handling and dispute resolution processes at SBcare will be in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard *AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations*. This policy is based on seven principles:

Commitment

We are committed to resolving complaints and have a culture that recognises an individual's right to complain. We value complaints and feedback and recognise them as being part of our business of serving our communities and improving service delivery.

Accessibility

People with a range of needs can easily complain and staff actively assist them to navigate the complaints process. Information is in plain language.

Transparency

We make it clear how to complain, where to complain and how the complaint will be handled. The steps taken to respond to a complaint are recorded and will stand up to scrutiny.

Objectivity and fairness

Complaints are dealt with courteously, fairly and impartially, within established timeframes and are assessed on merit. The principles of natural justice will apply.

Privacy

Complaint information is handled according to privacy laws and other relevant legislation. We provide clear information about how we handle personal information. Complaint data is de-identified if reported on more widely.

Accountability

We are accountable internally and externally for our decision making and complaint handling performance. We provide explanations and reasons for decisions and ensure that our decisions are subject to appropriate review processes.

Continuous improvement

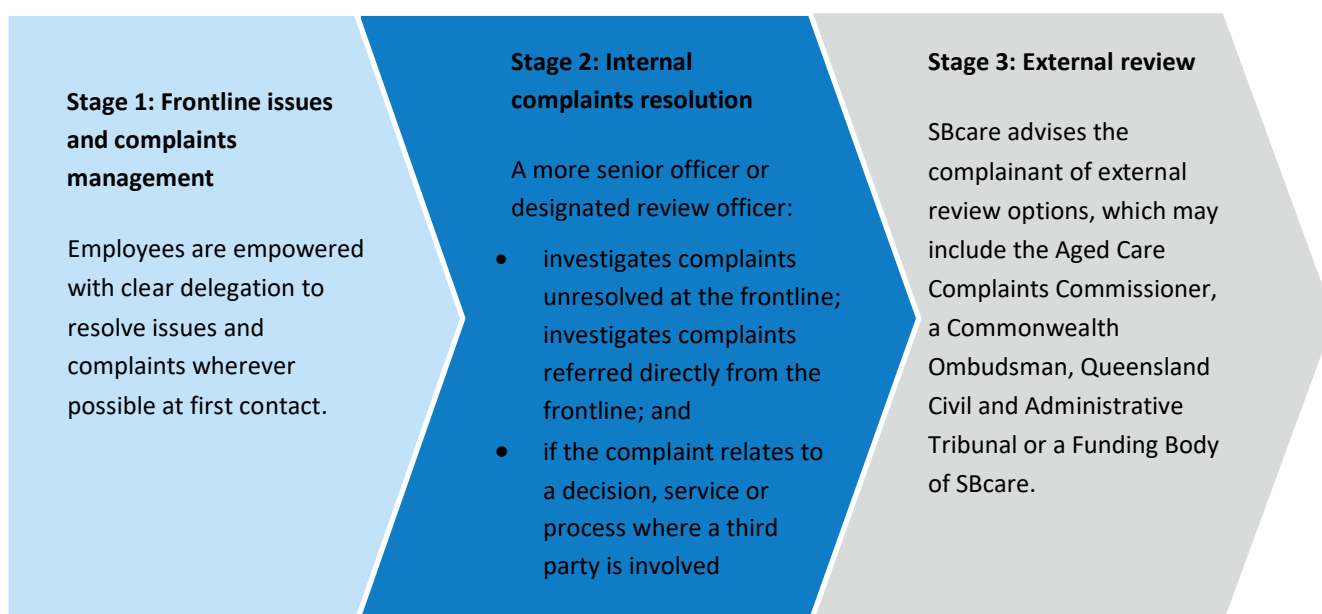
Acting on, learning from and using complaint data helps us identify problems and improve services.

5.0 APPROACH TO COMPLAINTS/FEEDBACK

Stages of the complaint management process:

SBcare handles most complaints in accordance with the model in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Complaint management model



The aim of the SBcare approach to complaint management is to resolve the majority of complaints at the first stage. At stage 1, employees are encouraged and empowered to resolve issues wherever possible when a complainant first raises them.

Complainants are encouraged to:

- a) try to resolve their issue with the organisational contact for their service that they have been dealing with;
- b) if they are not satisfied, talk to that person's manager; and
- c) if they are still not satisfied, consider lodging a formal complaint through SBcares complaint channels which may include escalation to the Board of Management.

Once a complaint reaches stage 2, a complaint can be actioned through:

- a) a complaint investigation; or
- b) an internal review of a decision or action, where SBcare will conduct an internal review.

In a complaint investigation, the focus is:

- a) an assessment of the complaint to determine if organisational policies and procedures have been applied correctly and that and fairness in the process has been observed;
- b) determining what resolution (if any) may be appropriate, including whether further information should be provided to the complainant about SBcares position; and
- c) determining whether there are any opportunities for services and system improvement.

Where SBcare has determined that an internal review should be conducted for or in relation to an SBcare decision or action, only people directly affected by the decision can request such a review.

SBcare will inform those people of their rights in the review.

In these circumstances, the reviewers:

- a) are independent of, and no less senior than, the original officer;
- b) have the necessary expertise to review particular matters; and
- c) have access to all relevant material and the full cooperation of the organisation at all levels.

Stage 3 is a reiteration of the rights and responsibilities of both parties and the provision of information of the appropriate external complaint mechanism

5.1 Visibility and access

Complainants may make complaints by telephone, fax, mail, email or online. SBcare will assist complainants with specific needs to make complaints, including the provision of an interpreter or hearing-impaired services.

While we accept anonymous complaints, we will be limited in the extent to which we can address these without the ability to obtain further information or make further inquiries of the complainant.

Information on the complaint management process appears on SBcare's website and is available in print form. SBcare officers handling complaints over the telephone will explain the process and direct potential complainants to where they can access further information.

5.2 Responsiveness

We will:

- a) acknowledge complaints promptly; generally, within 24 hours of receipt;
- b) inform complainants of the progress of their complaint;
- c) assess and finalise each complaint as quickly as possible; generally, within 10 working days of receipt;
- d) resolve complaints at the first point of contact wherever possible.

5.3 Categories of complaint

We will:

- a) categorise and prioritise complaints in accordance with their urgency, seriousness and complexity;
- b) address each complaint in a sensitive, equitable, objective, unbiased and professional manner throughout the complaint management process; and
- c) where appropriate, refer complaints and/or complainants to external agencies on receipt of the complaints.

Complaints are categorised into four types:

1. Service related

In the context of this work, clients, carers, employees, volunteers and members of the public at times may raise concerns about delivery of services. In determining what is a complaint and SBcare will be mindful, among other things, of whether we have met our service charter of rights and responsibilities and the individual agreements in place. In the first instance, we will attempt resolution of service related complaints at the local level or at the first point of contact. However, if we are unable to resolve the complaint at this level, we will escalate it to a more senior employee for review.

2. Regulatory

SBcare considers regulatory complaints to include complaints relating to decisions or actions made in the context of our regulatory/contractual role and responsibilities. Whatever the available course of action, SBcare officers receiving regulatory complaints will explain to complainants their rights and responsibilities and direct them to the relevant escalation point(s).

3. Conduct and performance

Complaints about conduct involve any allegations of unacceptable conduct against an SBcare employee, volunteer, contractor or Board of Management member. We divide conduct complaints into two categories; 'serious' and 'less serious'.

Serious complaints relate to conduct that may materially affect SBcare's regulatory, ethical and rights and responsibilities obligations, our reputation, or the safety or security of our clients or information.

Less serious complaints are those that are not considered to fall within the 'serious' category. They include (but are not limited to) rudeness, poor or inappropriate service, and discourtesy.

4. Other

There are some complaint types that do not fit within the categories above or, under the requirements of the law, must be handled outside SBcare's usual complaint management procedures.

The categorisation of each complaint determines how SBcare will handle the complaint.

5.4 Monitoring effectiveness and continuous improvement

SBcare is committed to continually improving our services and actively monitoring the quality and effectiveness of our complaint management framework.

We communicate any internal problem or opportunity for improvement revealed by a complaint to the area responsible for possible systemic improvement.

We assess complaint management processes to evaluate:

- a) time taken to finalise complaints;
- b) complaint trends and outcomes; and
- c) any systemic issues.

We use the reports to identify opportunities to improve our programs and services.

We undertake quality assurance on the complaint management framework to evaluate our performance, and to provide information on:

- a) process conformity to complaint management procedures; and
- b) process suitability to achieve complaint management objectives.

As an ongoing part of the complaint management process we actively seek feedback from complainants to determine the level of satisfaction with the complaint management process, which may be achieved through the satisfaction recorded in the feedback process, surveys and other means.

5.5 Roles and responsibilities

SBcare has an ethical and contractual responsibility for ensuring that SBcare has a complaint management framework that:

- a) deals effectively with complaints;
- b) uses complaint information to identify issues and drive improvements; and
- c) refers complainants to the appropriate external agency if they remain aggrieved at the conclusion of SBcare's internal complaint management process; and
- d) drive continuous improvement through the tracking and monitoring of recommendations arising through the conduct of complaints and internal reviews.

All SBcare employees involved in the complaint management process, as applicable within their area of responsibility, are responsible for:

- a) ensuring that the complaint management policy is implemented;
- b) liaising with their supervisor;
- c) ensuring that the monitoring of the complaint management process is undertaken and recorded; and
- d) ensuring continuous improvement occurs as a result of feedback from complaints.

All SBcare employees are responsible for responding to complaints in accordance with the complaint management policy.