

CLIENT POLICY 5 – CUSTOMER GRIEVANCE AND FEEDBACK



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Introduction

Autism SA is committed to providing quality services and encourages customers to provide feedback on our services so we can identify positive aspects of the services that we provide and the areas in which we need to improve.

Any person who is dissatisfied or has a grievance/complaint may bring the matter to the attention of Autism SA and endeavour to have it resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

This policy sets out the procedure for resolving any grievance raised with Autism SA and applies to a broad range of customers including clients, family members, legal guardians, carers and advocates. This policy also provides a process for providing Autism SA with positive feedback.

Definition

A grievance or complaint may arise in relation to services provided by Autism SA, or the behaviour of an employee, volunteer or another person using the service.

Policy

Autism SA respects the rights of all our customers to be heard, informed, and involved in decision making. Autism SA encourages customers to lodge a verbal or written complaint/grievance or other feedback which will receive full consideration without prejudice or predetermination of the outcomes. Autism SA is committed to resolving all grievances in a timely and appropriate manner.

Implementation

As a customer of our service, you will be informed of Autism SA's grievance and feedback procedures at the time of intake. In some situations, you will be provided with formal terms and conditions that will specify your rights and responsibilities as a customer.

When you want to make a complaint or provide feedback:

- The customer may discuss the complaint and/or feedback with either the person involved (where the grievance relates to an employee's or volunteer's behaviour) or the Manager in the first instance
- Customers can have a representative or support person assist them in raising an issue or providing feedback
- Because of the communication difficulties that are part of Autism Spectrum Disorders, employees need to be particularly sensitive to any attempts by a client to express their needs or concerns
- When an employee believes that a client is indicating unhappiness about some aspect of Autism SA, he/she shall inform the appropriate Manager at the earliest opportunity. The Manager will work with the client and his/her parent/ guardian/ advocate to resolve the issue
- The client, family member, guardian or advocate will be made aware of the process for making a complaint or giving feedback, the "Customer Feedback Form" (Autism SA Client Form 5) and the and the feedback page on the Autism SA website.

Steps for the customer (or his/her representative) to take to resolve an issue:

- Talk to the employee involved (if grievance relates to employee or volunteer behaviour)
 - Autism SA encourages customers to commence dealing with an issue at the earliest opportunity. This is the best way to resolve minor grievances or complaints.
- Talk to the Manager

- If the grievance remains unresolved, or the customer would feel more comfortable talking to the Manager, or the matter does not involve an employee, the individual and/or employee may approach the Manager who will attempt to resolve the matter at the earliest opportunity.
- Talk to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
 - If the grievance still remains unresolved, or the customer would feel more comfortable talking to the CEO or the matter involves a general policy, the individual and/or others involved should contact the CEO
- Talk to a member of Autism SA Board
 - If the grievance still remains unresolved, or the customer would feel more comfortable talking to a Board member, or if the matter involves the CEO, contact should be made with a member of the Board. The Board member will attempt to resolve the matter at the earliest opportunity.

Autism SA will ensure that customers and/or their representatives are able to access the above listed employees and/or Autism SA representatives (such as Board members) by providing access to current contact details via the Autism SA website, the Autism SA Infoline and the Autism SA main reception.

Autism SA shall acknowledge the complaint in writing within two working days. Autism SA will investigate and respond to the issue within 10 working days.

Autism SA will ensure that every effort is taken to resolve an issue (for example, a verbal or written apology, or changing a behaviour, policy or practice).

It should not be expected that every grievance raised will be resolved to the satisfaction of the person(s) raising the grievance.

Autism SA will inform people who have an unresolved grievance where they can obtain independent assistance.

Independent assistance

At any time any of the parties involved can request independent assistance by an advocacy organisation (refer to list at end of this policy) or a mediator.

Autism SA's responsibilities

- Maintaining confidentiality of all processes and documents at all times
- Any grievance raised by a customer (i.e. client, family member, or another person on his/her behalf) will be treated confidentially
- A client's right to receive services from Autism SA will not be affected by providing feedback or raising a complaint
- Autism SA employees and volunteers are informed about the rights of complainants and are aware of the legal implications of any victimisation or inappropriate behaviour towards any person who has or is in the process of making a complaint
- Significant complaints and grievances will be reported to Autism SA Board with regard to the confidentiality of people involved
- When legal implications arise, Autism SA will inform people of their right to make a complaint to the Police and/or to seek legal advice.

Advocacy Organisations

Citizen Advocacy South Australia Inc

20 Myers Street, Adelaide SA 5000

PO Box 6804, Halifax St, Adelaide SA 5000

Ph: 8410 6644 Fax: 84100388
Email: office.citizenadvocacy.com.au
www.citizenadvocacy.com.au linked 9/5/2014

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc (DACSSA)

470 Marion Road, Plympton Park SA 5038
Ph: 8297 3500 Toll Free: 1800 088 325 Fax: 8297 1155
Email: admin@dacssa.org.au
www.dacssa.org.au linked 9/5/14

Central Community Legal Service

2/59 Main North Rd, Medindie Gardens SA
Ph: 8342 1800 or 1300 886 220

Independent Advocacy SA Inc

99 Frome St, Adelaide SA 5000
Ph: 8232 6200 Freecall: 1800 999 884 Fax: 8232 6255
Email: indepadv@internode.on.net
www.independentadvocacysa.org.au linked 9/5/14

Advocacy for Disability Access and Inclusion Inc (formerly 'Family Advocacy')

Central: 5 Ninth St, Bowden SA 5007 (check website for Northern Office details)
Ph: 8340 4450 Freecall for country callers: 1800 856 464 Fax: 8340 4452
Enquiry form available on website under 'Contact'.
www.advocacyfordisability.org linked 22/4/15

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Toll Free Hotline 1800 880 052 TTY: 1800 301 130 National Relay Service: 1800 555 677 Telephone
Interpreter Service: 131 450 Fax: 02 8412 7199
Email: hotline@workfocus.com
www.disabilityhotline.net.au linked 9/5/14

Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner

PO Box 199
Rundle Mall
Adelaide 5000
Ph: 8226 8666 Toll Free: 1800 232 007 Enquiry: 8226 8666
Email: info@hcscc.sa.gov.au
www.hcscc.gov.au linked 9/5/14

Supporting Standard

Standard 4 National Standards for Disability Services: Feedback and Complaints

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

Duty of Care (AUTISM SA CLIENT POLICY 3)
Meeting Individual Needs (AUTISM SA CLIENT POLICY 6)
Client Privacy (AUTISM SA CLIENT POLICY 8)
Consumer Feedback (Autism SA Client Form 5)

Relevant Legislation

Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004