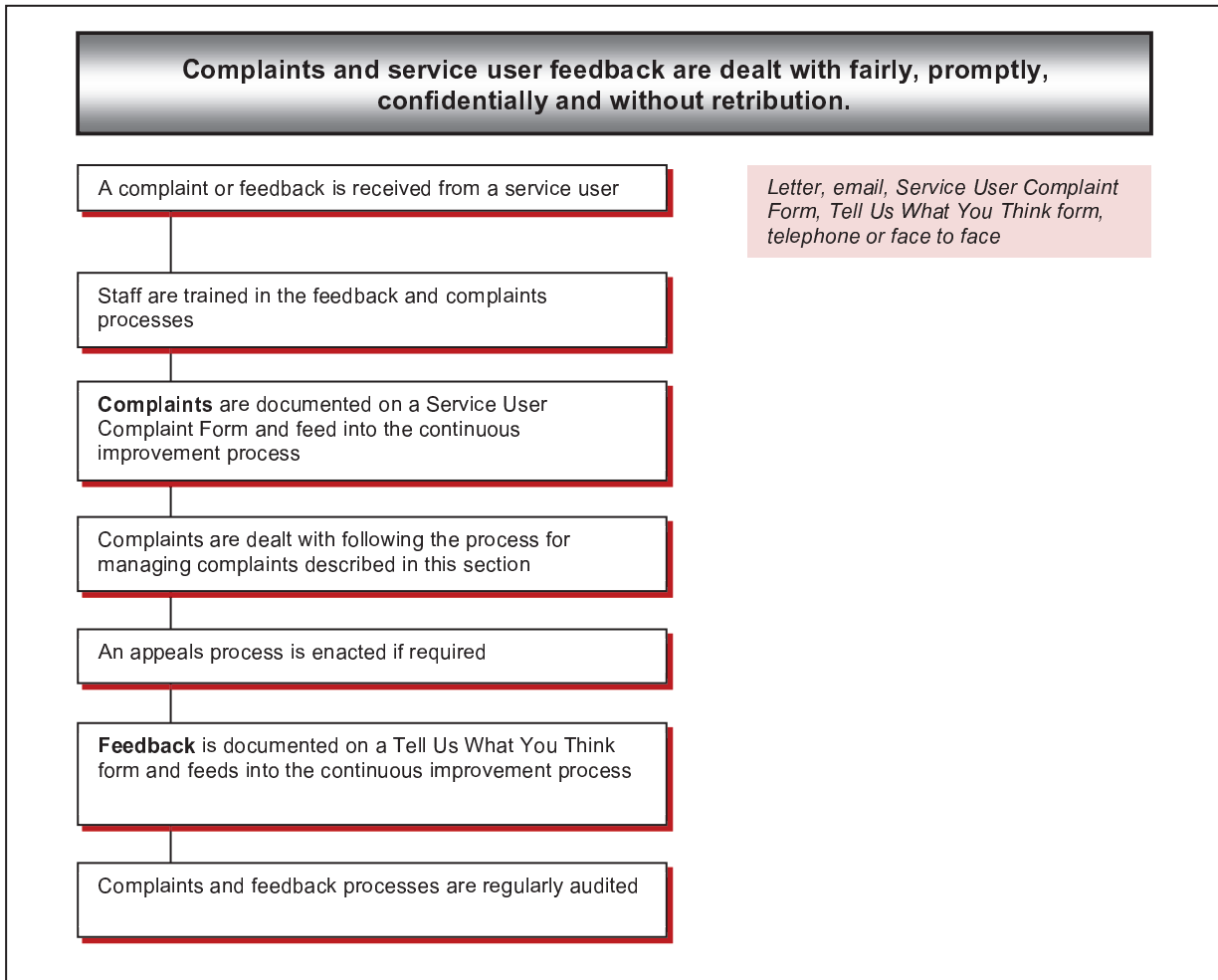


Complaints and Service User Feedback



Forms and Records

Service User Handbook	Shared Drive
Service User Complaint Form	Coordinator
Tell Us What You Think Form	Team Leaders

9.1 Service User Complaints

A complaint is serious dissatisfaction with some aspect of Auburn Diversity Services service provision. Service users are encouraged to express their complaints to enable us to improve the quality of our support.

Service users are made aware, through the [Service User Handbook](#), of their right to complain without fear of retribution, the complaints process and their right to use an advocate in making a complaint. This information is explained to service users at the time of assessment and review. Copies of Complaint Form and Pictorial Complaint Form are included in the Service User Handbook. More copies are provided upon request.

Service users can expect complaints to be dealt with fairly and promptly and for staff to take steps to ensure that service users feel comfortable to continue accessing the service after making a complaint.

Service users determines how, when and where the complaint will be made. Each person has the opportunity to nominate the person they want at the service as the key contact regarding the complaint.

Each person is kept informed at all stages of the decision making process concerning their complaint and the reasons for those decisions

9.1.1 Who Can Make a Complaint

Any person can make a complaint:

- The person who experienced the problem
- The spouse, partner, carer/guardian or family of the person experiencing the problem
- A representative chosen by the person concerned
- Visitors, suppliers or providers
- A community services professional, other support service provider or concerned person

9.1.2 Process for Managing Complaints

Step	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complaint is received via a Support Worker or directly from a service user/representative via letter, email, face to face or telephone. 	On day complaint is received
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person receiving the complaint completes a Service User Complaint Form and the complaint is reported to the program Manager and CEO who agree an action plan 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Manager reviews the complaint and relevant information and records proposed action. The Complaint is recorded on the Complaint Register. 	Within 2 working days of receipt of complaint
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The manager contacts (by telephone or letter) the service user to advise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the complaint is being assessed ○ the process that is followed ○ the timeline ○ how they will be kept informed at decision points through the complaint process ○ their right to an advocate and advocacy agency support • (see Section 17: Advocacy) 	Within 3 working days of receipt of complaint
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CEO is updated about the investigation progress and complaint outcome at the next Leadership Meeting and/or work planning session. 	Within 15 working days of receipt of complaint
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action is carried out. Person/s affected by the complaint are fully informed of all facts and given the opportunity to provide further information. 	

Step	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service user is advised of the actions taken to address the issues raised and the outcome of the complaint verbally as well as in a letter. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the service user is not satisfied with the outcome they are advised of the complaints appeal process (see Section 17: Advocacy). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the service user wishes to appeal, the complaint is reviewed by the CEO, whose decision is final 	Within 25 working days of receipt of complaint
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service user is advised of the CEO's decision and of their option to go to an advocacy agency (see Section 17: Advocacy). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the complaint is finalised a staff person is identified by the Manager to make sure that the service user feels comfortable to continue accessing the service and to obtain feedback on the complaints procedure. The complaint is then closed out. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO provides the Board of Directors with a summary of complaints received and their outcome. 	At next Board Meeting

9.1.3 Reports to External Bodies

While complaint handling is generally integrated into the core business of the agency there are times when external agencies should be involved. For example criminal allegations should be reported to the Police. Reportable conduct must be reported to the NSW Ombudsman within specified timeframe. In such instance advice will be obtained from relevant external agencies how the complaint should be best managed so that evidence is not compromised.

9.1.4 External Complaints

If a service user chooses to complain to an external agency they are free to do so and ADSi will support them as required. Agencies that service users can lodge a complaint with include:

- NSW Ombudsman
Level 24, 580 George Street Sydney NSW 2000 | Phone: 02 9286 1000
- Health Care Complaints Commission
www.hccc.nsw.gov.au
- Aged Care Complaints Commission:
<https://www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au/raising-a-complaint/lodge-a-complaint/>
- Other contacts detailed in Section 17 Advocacy.

9.1.4 Training

All Staff and volunteers are trained in complaint handling and demonstrate understanding and capacity to implement complaint handling.

Managers will receive training in complaint handling management.

9.2 Service User Feedback

Feedback can be positive and negative. Negative feedback is defined as minor dissatisfaction or a minor issue that can be easily resolved and/or the service user does not want to make a formal complaint. For example, feedback on an occasion of late service provision or dissatisfaction with a provided meal. Positive feedback is a compliment or praise regarding service delivery, staff or the organisation. Feedback can be formal or informal.

9.2.1 Formal Feedback

Formal feedback is given with the intention of providing feedback such as a service user completing a [Tell Us What You Think](#) form or specifically informing a staff person about their dissatisfaction with day centre activities.

When feedback is not written on a Tell Us What You Think form the staff person receiving it completes a form and attaches any documentation. The procedure outlined in 5.2.1 Tell Us What You Think Form is followed.

9.2.2 Informal Feedback

Informal feedback is made in the course of interaction, for example, a service user quipping to the bus driver that the outing location was unsatisfactory.

Informal feedback is recorded by the staff person on a Tell Us What You Think form. The procedure outlined in 5.2.1 Tell Us What You Think Form is followed.

9.2.3 Disputes between Service Users and Support Workers

ADSi employees are required to report immediately to their Manager any dispute with service users, regardless of how small. Disputes are reported verbally in the first instance. The Manager then decides:

- Whether the service user should be contacted
- If a written report is required
- The format of the report
- Any other action to resolve the dispute as early as possible.

The Manager may offer the service user the opportunity to make a formal complaint. If the service user accepts this offer the Manager completes a [Service User Complaint Form \(Standard\)](#) or a [Service User Complaint Form \(Simplified\)](#) with them and the complaints process is followed.

9.2.4 Use of an Advocate

Service users are advised that they can use an advocate at any point in the feedback or complaints process or if they feel their feedback or complaint was not satisfactorily resolved. They are also advised of relevant agencies as described in Section 10: Advocacy.

9.3 People with Special Needs

Where service users may have special needs, such as people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Manager ensure that any cultural aspects are considered when reviewing a complaint or dispute and ensures the person feels comfortable in discussing a dispute. The presence of a family member or friend or the support of an interpreter may be required.

The Manager will ensure that accessible information is available to people on their right to complain. This may include the provision of pictorial complaint form.

The Manager also ensures that any actions, interventions or referrals are appropriate to people from special needs groups. This may require the involvement of organisations with expertise in special needs groups either in providing advice or assisting in actions.

9.4 Confidentiality of Complaints and Disputes

As far as possible, the fact that a service user has lodged a complaint and the details of that complaint are kept confidential amongst staff directly concerned with its resolution. The service user's permission is obtained prior to any information being given to other parties that it may be desirable to involve in order to satisfactorily resolve the complaint or dispute.

9.5 Monitoring the Complaints and Service User Feedback Process

Feedback and complaints processes and systems are regularly audited as part of the ADSi audit program and staff, service users and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback on issues and areas where improvements can be made (see Corporate Calendar and Section 5: Continuous Improvement).

Complaints are analysed and trended across the organisation by the Corporate Services Manager on at least a 6 monthly basis to drive organisational policy development and continuous improvement. This report will be presented to the next Board meeting after completion.