



# DOWN SOUTH THERAPY

## Complaints and Feedback Policy

Version 1.0  
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# Complaints and Feedback Policy

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## 1.1. Purpose

Down South Therapy aims to provide a high-quality service that is individualised to its clients and their families. However, it is recognised that from time to time a client (and/or carer) might be dissatisfied with a service they receive.

When a client (and/or carer) has a complaint, the issue will be dealt with promptly, fairly and in a non-threatening way, according to principles of natural justice and with due regard to the clients (and/or carer's) rights.

Down South Therapy preference is that grievances will be resolved through the procedures outlined below, but it is understood that on occasions, a client (and/or carer) might choose not to follow this practice. They might prefer to make a complaint through an external agency and use the process of that agency to resolve the matter of concern. In these circumstances, Down South Therapy is committed to working with the client (and/or carer) and whomever they nominate to be their representative.

## 1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all Down South Therapy; Services, Staff, Contractors and Customers and is framed around Standard four (4) of the National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS).

This policy is about Down South Therapy responsive to the needs of clients and their representatives and in resolving the client's grievance.

## 1.3. Awareness of the Complaint Process

Down South Therapy will ensure that all client and/or carers, are provided with information about the Complaints and Feedback Policy when they first access the service, and that they are reminded of the policy and their rights to make a complaint without fear of affecting their service.

Down South Therapy will communicate the Complaint Handling process in the following forums on a routine basis:

- Ongoing training and support to clients in making complaints. Both formal and informal methods may be used to facilitate this goal; and
- Induction of new employees and contractors.
- Via the Down South Therapy website.

## 1.4. Informal Complaint Handling Procedure

When a client and/or carer makes a complaint about any aspect of their involvement with Down South Therapy, the first step will be for the staff member to whom the complaint is made to listen respectfully and non-judgementally to the complaint and attempts to work with the consumer (and/or carer) to resolve it.

- 1) The staff member receiving the complaint identifies and clarifies the person's complaint and the outcomes expected by the complainant;
- 2) Where the issue can be resolved through mutual agreement, then this should be undertaken and the informal complaint has been resolved;

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- 3) If the complaint can not be resolved, the complaint is to be referred to the immediate Team Leader for resolution.
- 4) Where appropriate an Incident Report may need to be completed.

### 1.5. Formal Complaint Handling Procedure

Where the complaint cannot be mutually resolved via the informal complaint handling procedure, the Team Leader will inform the complainant of Down South Therapy complaints handling processes and procedures;

- 1) The person will be provided a 'Complaint Form', which summarises:
  - The complaint;
  - The outcomes expected by the complainant; and
  - Provides contact information for the complainant.
- 2) The Team Leader will assist the person with completing the Complaint Form where needed;
- 3) The 'Complaint Form' will be forwarded to the Director as soon as it has been received. This should occur as soon as possible and by no later than 48 hours after receiving the complaint [if complaint lodged during the weekend].
- 4) The Director will meet with the client and/ or carer, and their advocate if they have one, as soon as possible to review the complaint and endeavour to resolve the situation. The agreed resolution or reasons for non-resolution at this meeting are to be documented, and a copy provided to the parties involved.

### 1.6. If a Formal Complaint can-not be Resolved

If the matter is not resolved with the Director and the client and/or carer remains dissatisfied they will be advised of other agencies they can use to assist them to achieve a resolution. If necessary, they will be assisted to access an external agency. For example;

[Health and Disability Services Complaints Office \(HaDSCO\)](#)

[Australian Competition and Consumer Commission](#)

[Department of Commerce](#)

### 1.7. Service Improvement

The Complaints Register will be reviewed at least once every year to analyse complaints and identify opportunities for service improvement.

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