



## Complaints and Feedback

*Disclaimer: This video is designed to be a conversation starter on the topic of consumer complaints and feedback in a remote aged care context. The facilitator should make use of other resources to ensure the learner continues to develop their understanding and competency in the complaints and feedback system for your service.*

In the aged care setting, complaints and feedback are seen as both good and bad.

While we don't necessarily want to get a complaint, if we act appropriately and promptly when a complaint is made, the service can address the issue and potentially identify ways to improve how services are delivered. Therefore, complaints are also an essential part of an organisation's quality improvement process.

In this video, we explore both complaints and feedback. The senior care team are seen reviewing the feedback and complaints received that month. This is good practice; feedback and complaints should continually be reviewed and analysed and may inform the changes a team will make.

### Feedback

In the video, the senior care team discusses the results of a delivered meals survey.

Feedback is generally information that the organisation actively gathers to gauge how happy the people receiving care are with their services and whether they have any ideas for improving things. When asking for feedback, an organisation may receive complaints and compliments.

There are different ways to gather feedback. This might be through surveys, feedback forms, service user group days or phone conversations with people or their families.

Most organisations will have a consumer advisory body. This body helps people, and their families raise concerns or offer suggestions to the organisation's governing authority (Board or Council) on behalf of all those accessing aged care and services through the organisation.

If staff hear something from a person receiving care, their family or carer, they should be encouraged to contact the coordinator or manager of the service and talk to them about the issue or idea.

- *Talk about how your service gathers feedback from people receiving care,*
- *If you have a feedback box or form, show the staff member where this is.*

### Complaints

In the video, the team talk about a complaint that a person receiving care has made.

In the scenario, we see the care worker apologising for the error; it's important to acknowledge the mistake and identify ways to address the issue.



We also see the worker asking why the complaint needed to be written up, after all the problem had been fixed. However, all complaints need to be documented; this helps management to identify any trends in issues and take appropriate action.

For example, if several people regularly complain that meals are arriving at their place cold, the manager can look at where the problem is. Are meals being prepared too early and going cool, or does it take too long to deliver them? If we know there is a problem, we can fix it.

When a complaint is made, it is usually written up on a complaint form; this might be a paper or electronic form. Staff should also write up any actions to address and fix the immediate problem and any suggestions on how a system or process could be improved.

- *Show the staff member how a complaint is recorded in your organisation.*

### Plan for Continuous Improvement

Aged Care services use feedback and complaints to make things better and safer for the people receiving care; this is called the continuous quality improvement cycle. Areas for improvement or ideas to fix a problem should be documented in the organisation's Plan for Continuous Improvement.

- *Talk about the organisation's Plan for Continuous Improvement and some recently added actions.*

### Links to additional resources

Aged Care Quality Standards storyboards and user guides, Standard 6 (Feedback and Complaints) – Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission:

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/resources/aged-care-quality-standards-storyboards-and-user-guide>

Consumer Advisory Bodies – Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission:

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/consumers/consumer-advisory-bodies>

Making a complaint - Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission:

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaint>

SIRS, How to make a complaint with your aged care service – Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission: <https://youtu.be/uQR9Yqxa2tw>

The Charter of Aged Care Rights – Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission:

<https://youtu.be/EcR0ZTpD40Y>

VHA Aged Care Quality Standards 6 – Victorian Healthcare Association:

<https://youtu.be/idjeQI70Aow>