

Feedback and Complaints Important Information for Clients



This sheet is written in an easy to read format so that most people understand the words

You can ask for help to read the *Feedback and Complaints Policy*. A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

Spectrum Therapy Australia want to know what you think to help us:

- Make services better
- Understand problems

This policy is for people who want to make a complaint or give us feedback. We like to hear feedback from everyone including:

- Children and teenagers
- Parents
- Carers
- Staff
- Visitors
- Community members

Policy

The main ideas behind our policy

Spectrum Therapy Australia takes all complaints seriously. We will also make sure the feedback process is:

- Fair
- Easy to follow
- Stays the same

We will make sure that people who visit Spectrum Therapy Australia know how to give feedback. We will give people a chance to talk and have a support person help if needed.

We will not make fun of you or treat you unfairly when you make a complaint.

We will try our best to understand what everyone wants.

We will try to sort through the complaint completely and as quickly as we can.



We will aim to solve each complaint in the fairest way we can.

We will make sure to keep you up to date with any progress during the entire complaints process.

If there is a formal complaint, we will send you a letter to let you know what is happening and the decisions we have made.

A formal complaint is a very serious complaint that might involve the law.

We promise to keep the information you give us private and to follow the law when it comes to collecting your personal information.

Spectrum Therapy Australia will make sure that we have all the important information about a complaint before we make any decisions about how the problem can be fixed.

We will make sure that our staff are trained to deal with complaints properly.

We will keep a record of the complaints process and regularly check to make sure that we are following the rules properly.

Spectrum Therapy Australia will make sure that all complaints go to the General Manager and Program Manager.

This is done by recording all the complaints on the Feedback and Complaints Management Log.

Giving Feedback

Feedback is when you tell us what you think.

It might be when you tell us about something that is going well.

Or, it might be when you tell us something that you think could be better.

The feedback could be about a practice, a service or a support. It may also be about one of our staff.



If you give us a good feedback, Spectrum Therapy Australia will respond and let the staff involved know that they did a good job. Our staff are celebrated for doing a good job and your feedback helps us decide who is awarded Staff Excellence Awards.



Do you have a
compliment,
suggestion or
complaint?

Making a Complaint

Complaints can be made if you are unhappy with:

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- "Tell us what you think"
- How services and activities are provided
 - How you were treated by a Spectrum Therapy staff member
 - If you believe that you were treated differently because of your disability, background or gender
 - If you think that we have not kept our promise about our vision, values and responsibilities

There are 3 ways that we respond to a complaint.

Level 1 – Service Level Complaints Resolution

- Most complaints are solved at this level
- These complaints are not very serious. Spectrum Therapy Australia Staff will usually deal with complaints at this level so that they do not become bigger problems

Level 2 – Management Level Complaints Resolution


- When complaints could not be solved at Level 1
- These complaints are serious. These complaints are sent to the General Manager to try and solve

Level 3 – External Complaints Resolution

- When the complaint could not be solved at Level 1 or 2/
- This level is used if you are still unhappy, even after you have followed the complaints process

Sometimes a complaint needs to go straight to the General Manager.

For example:

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- If you are making a formal complaint
 - The complaints if about a staff member who might see the complaint form
 - The issue is too serious for Level 1 or 2
 - It is a very serious complaint that might involve the law, the media, or someone is at risk of being hurt. You can also contact these managers directly if you are not comfortable giving your complaint to a staff member or you feel like you are being ignored.

Managing Complaints



At Spectrum Therapy, we have a set of rules about managing complaints. These rules are called the **Complaints Resolution Guidelines and Procedures**.

Sometimes, complaints are so serious that we must tell the police or lawyers.

Our set of rules does not affect the way the law applies. The law always takes priority over our rules.

Our rules also say that we will keep all our information private.

Serious Complaints

If a complaint is serious, the General Manager will decide who the best person to deal with the complaint is.

This person will set up a plan to properly look into the complaint.

They will fill out a Complaint Resolution form to make sure that the right things are being done to solve this problem.

The General Manager might want to talk to everyone who is involved in the complaint including the person who has made the complaint, the staff or anyone else that they think can help them solve the problem.

When they have completed this form, it will be sent to the General Manager within 7-14 days of the complaint being made.

After reading the form the General Manager will:

- Decide the best way to fix this problem
- Put plans in place to make sure it doesn't happen again
- Regularly check things are going according to these plans



Complaints that are not serious

If a complaint is not serious, a supervisor will create a plan to:

- Discuss the issue with you
- Investigate the issue
- Create and put into place action plans
- Check staff development needs
- Inform the person who made the complain about what will happen. A complaint form should still be completed in this situation



Talking to the person who made the complaint

Spectrum Therapy Australia will let you know how your complaint is going.

We will let you know what the end result of the complaint is.

If you have made a formal complaint, we will send you a letter that will explain the end result.

If will include information about what to do if you do not agree with the decision we have made.

What to do if you don't agree with a decision

If you don't agree with our decision, you can make an appeal.

For example, you can make an appeal if you think that we did not follow the Complaints and Feedback rules properly.

You can make your appeal to the next higher level of management for them to review.

If you make a complaint and are still unhappy with how the problem was fixed by Spectrum Therapy Australia, there are other organisations who may be able to help you.



These are:



- The State Commissioner for Equal Employment Opportunity
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Board
- NSW Ombudsman
- Australian Human Rights Commission (previously known as the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission). You are able to contact these organisations at any time during the appeal process

Advocacy and Legal Support

We understand that your family might receive support outside of Spectrum Therapy Australia.

This support may be to help while you are working with us.

This help might come from:



- Friends and family
- Staff members
- Translators
- An **Advocate** – someone who speaks up for the rights of people with disability
- Anyone else that you and your family trusts as a support provider

If we believe that you need support from outside of Spectrum Therapy Australia, we can help you find an advocacy service if your family agrees.

Letting you know about the Spectrum Therapy Feedback and Complaints policy

A copy of this policy can be found in these places:

- Spectrum Therapy Australia website
- Waiting room