



Policy Statement

It is the policy of St Catherine's Aged Care Services to promote the rights of individuals to raise complaints, concerns and/or suggestions, through the Improvement Log system. Management at St Catherine's Aged Care Services respond positively to complaints and comments and endeavour to continually review and improve the service they provide.

At St Catherine's Aged Care Services, we believe that complaints can be managed effectively through:

- commitment by everyone in the organisation to the right of consumers to complain either directly or through their representatives
- an accessible and open system
- complaints being viewed as positive because they provide important information that can improve the quality of the service
- the provision of support to those people who may need assistance to make the complaint
- the observation of the principles of natural justice
- the protection of complainants against retribution or discrimination
- the prompt investigation and resolution of complaints
- the provision of opportunities for all parties to participate in the complaints resolution process
- the acceptance of the organisation and its' employees being accountable for actions and decisions taken as a result of the complaint
- the commitment to resolve problems at the point of service or through referral to alternatives.

Relevant Legislation

- Aged Care Act 1997
- Health Care Complaints Act 1993 (NSW)

Relevant Guidelines

- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing 2005 - *Standards and Guidelines for Residential Aged Care Services*, AGPS, Canberra
- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing 2002 – *Complaints Handling Kit*

Protocol

1. Residents and staff are informed of the complaints mechanism through:
 - 1.1 Resident and Staff Handbooks
 - 1.2 Information Brochures
 - 1.3 Forums (resident/staff meetings)
2. Complaints, comments and suggestions can be made through:
 - 2.1 Utilisation of the Improvement Log system
 - 2.2 Contacting each Department Manager verbally or in writing
 - 2.3 Responding to questionnaires and surveys
 - 2.4 Attending open forums
 - 2.5 Contacting external complaints agencies:
 - Aged Care Complaints Investigation Scheme(the Scheme)
c/o Department of Health and Aged Care
GPO Box 9848
SYDNEY NSW 2001
Phone: 1800 550 552
 - (letters should be marked confidential)
Health Care Complaints Commission
Locked Bag 18
STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2010
Phone: (02) 9219 7444, Toll-free: 1800 043 159
 - The Accommodation Rights Service
Suite 5, 5th Floor
64 Kippax Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010
Phone: (02) 9281 3600
3. All Improvement Logs will be acknowledged by contacting the person who lodged the complaint within 24 hours of its receipt. All attempts will be made to investigate and resolve the issue within 10 working days after receipt of the Improvement Log.
4. The Director of Care will be responsible to ensure that a comprehensive investigation is undertaken for each Improvement Log.

5. All Improvement Logs will be monitored and their status reported to the CEO on a monthly basis. All serious or unresolved complaints will be advised to the CEO as soon as practicable.
6. The complainant may also be referred to the external agencies, listed at item 2.5.
7. Complaints will not be discussed with anyone who does not have a genuine responsibility for resolving the issue.
8. Complaints resolution will be monitored according to the continuous improvement program. Improvement Logs will be forwarded to the appropriate forum relevant to the issue raised.
9. Feedback will be provided directly to the complainants either personally and/or in writing