

Bayside Speech & Literacy Hub Complaints Management and Resolution Policy

At Bayside Speech Pathology & Literacy Hub, we strive to do our best to help our clients. Unfortunately sometimes, you, or someone else, might not be happy with us. For example, you might not be happy with the service or support we provided or how we delivered it.

- As we provide services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) you have the right to make a complaint about our services and/or supports at any time.
- If you need to make a complaint, we want to help you to make it quickly and easily, and without stress.
- We deal with any complaint fairly and quickly.
- This document explains how to make a complaint to us, and to the NDIS Commissioner and others, about us.
- The NDIS laws make us keep records about complaints so they can check that we are following the law and doing a good job for NDIS participants.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone is allowed to make a complaint.

This includes people who are receiving support or services from us. It also includes family members, carers and other people. Anyone at all can make a complaint about our support or services.

Do you have to give your name to make a complaint?

You are not required to provide your name or contact details to make a complaint. You can make a complaint anonymously.

How can you make a complaint?

We want to make sure it is as easy as possible for you to make your complaint. We will give support and help to anyone who wants to make, or who has made, a complaint, about us. To make a complaint, you can fill in our Complaint and Feedback Form. But you don't need to if you prefer to make your complaint in a different way.

You can make your complaint:

- by talking with us face-to-face;

- by calling us on the phone;
- through your preferred Augmentative or Alternative Communication device or method;
- by email; or
- by text message.

To protect your privacy, we do not recommend using social media like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to make a complaint. But, if you make a complaint this way, we will still treat it as a complaint.

Assistance to make a complaint about us?

You can ask anyone for help with making a complaint.

You can ask a family member, carer, friend, advocate, advisor, or any other person to make the complaint for you.

Does your complaint have to be made in English?

No, you do not need to make the complaint in English. You can make your complaint in your preferred language.

Who should you contact to make a complaint?

So that we can respond to your complaint quickly and fairly, we suggest making or sending your complaint to our Complaints Officer:

Andrea Goding
Practice Manager
Phone: 1300 971 291
Email: hello@baysidespeech.com.au
Web: www.baysidespeech.com.au

If you would prefer not to contact our Complaints Officer for any reason, you can make your complaint to any of our management or other team members.

If you can't contact our Complaints Officer for any reason, you can make your complaint to any of our management or other team members.

Can you report your complaint about us to anyone else?

If you wish to report your complaint to a 3rd party you may report it to the:

- NDIS Commissioner; and/or
- Speech Pathology Australia.

You may also be able to make a complaint to the:

- Victorian Health Care Complaints authority.

If you would like to do this, we will support you. For example, we will show you how to contact the right people at the NDIS, Speech Pathology Australia, and the Victorian Health Care Complaints authority.

What will happen when you make a complaint? How do we ensure the process is fair?

To make sure everyone is treated fairly, we will follow these steps for all complaints about our supports and services:

Firstly, we will send you a message in writing. The message will:

- tell you that we have received your complaint; and
- tell you what we are doing to look into the complaint, when you can expect to hear from us, and who you can contact to discuss the complaint; and
- tell you and any person with a disability affected by the issue in your complaint how to raise the complaint with the NDIS Commissioner; and
- offer to help you to contact the NDIS Commissioner about the complaint.

(Please Note: If you make an anonymous complaint, we will not be able to do this because we won't know who you are.)

Secondly, we will assess your complaint. This means we will look into your complaint by reviewing what happened, talking to you, NDIS participants, and any staff members who were involved, and looking at any documents and any other records we have that might give us information about what happened.

Thirdly, we will work with you to try to resolve your complaint. We will include you in the resolution process as appropriate and we will keep you informed on the progress of your complaint, including any action taken. We will aim to resolve your complaint within 21 business days. If this is not possible, we will let you know why not in writing and give you an estimate of how long it will take for us to respond. (Note: Please note: If you make an anonymous complaint, we will not be able to do this because we won't know who you are.)

Finally, we will respond appropriately to your complaint. Depending on the nature of your complaint; the results of our assessment and attempts to resolve the complaint, this may include a range of responses. For example, our response may be that:

- no further action is required; or
- you are owed an apology; and/or
- you are entitled to a part or full refund of fees; and/or
- we need to change our policies and procedures to ensure similar events don't happen again; and/or
- it would be appropriate for us to support you or an NDIS participant to transfer to a different provider (at our cost for the handover); and/or
- we undertake to ensure the staff involved receive additional training and/or supervision.

We will tell you our decision and the reasons for our decision. (Note: If you make an anonymous complaint, we will not be able to do this because we won't know who you are.) We will also make sure that any recommended improvements or changes are put into place.

At each stage in the process, we will do our best to make sure everyone is treated fairly. This is called “procedural fairness”.

What if you are unhappy about our decision?

If you are not satisfied with our response to your complaint, let us know and our Complaints Officer will try to schedule a time to meet with you to discuss your ongoing concerns with a view to resolving the matter in a mutually agreeable way.

Alternatively, If you are not happy with our response, you have other options. You can take your complaint to:

- the NDIS Commissioner; and/or
- Speech Pathology Australia; and/or
- the Victorian Health Care Complaints authority

If required, we can help you to contact the right people at these organisations.

More information about making a complaint to the NDIS Commissioner or Speech Pathology Australia:

NDIS Commissioner:

<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/contact-us/makeacomplaint>

Speech Pathology Australia:

https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/SPAweb/Resources_for_the_Public/Making_a_Complaint/SPAweb/Resources_for_the_Public/Make_a_Complaint/Making_a_Complaint.aspx?hkey=6b603c7c-33ec-4845-8b3f-d43b22909465

Will your complaint affect how you and others are treated by us?

Your complaint will not affect the way we treat you. Your complaint will not affect the care we give you or anyone else.

Will your complaint be treated confidentially?

Yes absolutely. We will only share the information in your complaint if the law says we must share the information, or if we need to for risk management purposes (e.g. if we need to contact our insurer or a regulator).

For example, in some cases, a complaint may require us to notify a regulator, professional body, and/or an insurer, e.g. if your complaint includes allegations of criminal, or professional misconduct, or leads us to anticipate a claim for compensation or other litigation. This may become clear only after we have completed our preliminary investigation of your complaint.

How long will we keep records of your complaint?

We are required by law to keep appropriate records of all complaints received in our capacity as an NDIS provider for at least 7 years from the date a record is made. These include, where appropriate:

- information about complaints;

- any action taken to resolve complaints; and
- the outcome of any action taken.

We are also required by law to collect complaints-related information to enable us to review issues raised in complaints, identify and address systemic issues raised through the complaints management and resolution process and, if requested, to report information relating to complaints to the NDIS Commissioner.

Please note: In some cases, State and/or Territory health records laws require us to keep information that constitutes health records for longer than 7 years. We have to follow these laws, too.

Review of Complaints Management and Resolution System

The internal complaints management and resolution process is reviewed periodically to ensure the process is fit for purpose and effective.

Status of this Document

This policy is intended to document Bayside Speech and Literacy Hub's complaints management and resolution system as required by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018.

Distribution of this Document

This policy forms part of the provider's compliance system. Up to date copies are available to view and download from your website. A copy is also provided to:

- each person receiving support or services from us as an NDIS provider, and their family, carers, and advocates (as appropriate); and
- each person employed or otherwise engaged by us (our team). Each team member is trained in the complaint management and resolution process as part of their induction.

Who is responsible for making sure this system is followed?

Each team member of Bayside Speech and Literacy Hub must comply with the system as documented in this policy. This policy forms part of the provider's compliance system with respect to the NDIS.

The Complaints Officer has primary responsibility for training all provider team members to comply with the requirements of this policy, including making sure clients and others are aware of their rights to make a complaint.

The Complaints Officer also has primary responsibility for the oversight and review of the complaints management and resolution system.

On all matters relating to the system and complaints, the Complaints Officer reports to Bayside Speech and Literacy Hub Director, who bears ultimate responsibility for setting the objectives of the system and monitoring compliance.

Feedback

Complaints (and compliments) give us useful information about the quality of our services. Resolving complaints in a friendly way gives us the opportunity to improve our services and to learn from our mistakes. We take all complaints very seriously and will work hard to address and resolve them efficiently and to your satisfaction.