

<p>Policy Statement</p>	<p><i>It is our policy to enable you, your families and representatives, visitors, staff and volunteers to provide feedback or raise a complaint about any aspect of our service, the care we provide or the operation of our organisation. The aim of this policy is to improve the quality of care and services we provide you by adopting a positive, blame-free approach to resolving complaints. All feedback is taken seriously. Compliments tell us what we're doing right. Complaints are seen as an opportunity for improvement. We will make all reasonable efforts to understand your issues or concerns and resolve complaints within our service when they arise.</i></p> <p><i>The timely and efficient management of complaints fosters a positive, cooperative attitude with you, your representatives, visitors, volunteers and staff. Complaints will be addressed promptly with the aim of providing a formal response to you in a timely manner. We will communicate openly and regularly with you while we work to resolve a complaint. You will be actively involved in resolving the issue. Once a resolution has been reached, we will talk with you to make sure you are satisfied with the outcome of your complaint. If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you can ask us for a reconsideration of our decision. We can also assist you in accessing external complaint resolution mechanisms if you choose.</i></p>
<p>1. Complaints and the Law</p>	<p>1.1 From 1 November 2025, the new Aged Care Act will give older people and families stronger rights when making complaints. We must respond quickly, treat your concerns with respect, and use your feedback to improve our services.</p> <p>1.2 The new law includes a Statement of Rights. This means you have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ safe and quality care ➤ to be treated with dignity and respect ➤ to have your privacy protected, and ➤ to raise concerns without fear of punishment or backlash. <p>You also have the right to involve an advocate or support person if you choose.</p> <p>1.3 A copy of the Statement of Rights is made available to you in the Resident/Client Handbook you were given when you were admitted to our service. It is also provided within the legal Residential or Service Agreement you were asked to sign when commencing care with us.</p> <p>1.4 CRC must have a clear, fair and easy-to-use system for handling complaints. This includes acknowledging your complaint within a few days, keeping you updated on what is happening, talking openly with you about what went wrong and how it will be fixed (called <i>open disclosure</i>), and providing an outcome that restores trust such as an apology, better communication or changes to care.</p>
<p>2. How can you provide feedback?</p>	<p>2.1 There are many ways in which you can provide compliments, concerns, complaints or suggestions about care and services at CRC.</p> <p>2.2 Talk to our employees</p> <p>You can discuss any compliments, concerns or suggestions with any employee caring for you, or ask to speak directly to our:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CEO/Director of Nursing for any complaint ➤ Home Care Coordinator for complaints about Home Care services. ➤ Operations Coordinator for complaints about food, cleaning, laundry, maintenance ➤ Clinical Care Coordinator for complaints about your care or the lifestyle program. <p>2.3 Provide your feedback in writing</p> <p>Feedback can be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ by email to reception@cobramregionalcare.com.au ➤ by telephone on (03) 58719 100 ➤ in writing by mail or email to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracey Gemmill, CEO/Director of Nursing Cobram Regional Care PO Box 535 Cobram, 3644 or tracey.gemmill@cobramregionalcare.com.au

<p><i>How can you provide feedback?</i></p>	<p>2.4 Within the residential service we also facilitate a bi-monthly Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) where all feedback is welcome to be raised and discussed. The minutes of this committee, as well as any serious complaints, are also directly reported to the Governing Body (the 'Committee of Management') monthly.</p> <p>2.5 We also conduct regular Consumer Experience Surveys to understand how we are tracking across a broad range of areas such as cleanliness, food and safety</p>
<p>3. Making a Complaint to someone else</p>	<p>3.1 We hope that most feedback at CRC can be resolved by us, and we always welcome the opportunity to speak with you directly about any concerns you may have.</p> <p>3.2 However, if you don't feel that we have addressed your concerns adequately, or you simply don't feel comfortable raising the complaint with us, there are a number of external bodies that provide free services to assist with advocacy and complaints resolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) Through their advocacy service, the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) can support residents, clients and families to understand and exercise their rights and have their voice heard on the issues that are important to them. You can contact them on 1800 700 600 or for more information refer to www.opan.org.au ➤ Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission provides a free complaints resolution service. You can contact them on 1800 951 822 or for more information refer to www.agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaint ➤ NDIS Complaints Commission For those residents or clients that are NDIS participants, you are also able to raise your feedback directly with the NDIS Complaints Commission. This is separate and independent to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. The NDIS Complaints Commission can be contacted on 1800 035 544 or for more information refer to www.ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback-and-complaints .
<p>4. How can you provide feedback in another language?</p>	<p>4.1 You should be able to make a complaint in different ways, including in a language or format you understand. If English is not your first language, you can ask for interpreter services.</p> <p>4.2 If you speak a language other than English and wish to provide feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contact us during business hours and we can arrange a phone call with an interpreter if required. ➤ Write to us or email us in your own language and we will arrange for your letter to be translated.
<p>5. Support for people with vision or hearing loss</p>	<p>5.1 If you are deaf, hard of hearing or have a visual impairment, let us know the best way to communicate with you.</p> <p>5.2 We can arrange video remote interpreters in Auslan, tactile deaf and blind and note taking to assist us to communicate with each other. CRC also welcomes calls through the National Relay Service.</p> <p>5.3 For more information about the National Relay Service, visit their website at www.accesshub.gov.au or contact the NRS Helpdesk on 1800 555 660</p>
<p>6. How long will it take?</p>	<p>6.1 We will acknowledge your feedback as soon as it is received. All compliments are shared with the relevant employees.</p> <p>6.2 If your feedback relates to a concern or suggestion, we will appoint the most appropriate employee to review the issue and ensure appropriate next steps are in place.</p> <p>6.3 Most concerns or suggestions can be addressed within a few days. More complex matters may take a number of weeks. We are committed to working with you through this process and will keep you updated if there is any delay.</p>



<p>7. How will you be involved?</p>	<p>7.1 It is important that you are involved in the investigation and resolution of your complaint at each step.</p> <p>7.2 This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensuring that your voice is heard and involving you or your representatives in decisions that affect you ➤ Being honest with you about our findings and practicing open disclosure ➤ Keeping you informed about the progress and outcome of the complaint ➤ Giving you the chance to respond to our findings before finalising a complaint ➤ Asking whether you are satisfied with the outcome of your complaint <p>7.3 We will ask you what you wish to achieve by making a complaint, or what actions you believe will restore your trust and confidence in our service. This is called a restorative outcome.</p>
<p>8. Procedural fairness</p>	<p>8.1 When we handle complaints about our services or our staff, we make sure we provide procedural fairness to a person who may be negatively affected by a decision we make.</p> <p>8.2 This means giving them the opportunity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Be heard ➤ Be treated fairly and without bias ➤ Be informed of and respond to allegations ➤ Be given information regarding the status of a complaint. <p>8.3 We will ask whether you are happy to be named, or whether you wish to remain anonymous when discussing your complaint with others.</p>
<p>9. Your Confidentiality</p>	<p>9.1 Information regarding any complaint is kept confidential amongst only the staff concerned with its resolution.</p> <p>9.2 Complaint documentation is securely maintained and accessible only to staff handling the complaint.</p> <p>9.3 Statistics on all types of complaints are recorded and used to inform ongoing improvement activities within the service. For this purpose, complaint information may be disseminated to management and other staff. However, the identity of the complainant or persons named in the feedback will not be disclosed</p>
<p>10. Protecting you from victimisation and discrimination</p>	<p>10.1 We have an obligation under the Aged Care Act to make sure that nobody is victimised as a result of making a complaint.</p> <p>10.2 These protections are extended to any whistleblower – whether it be a client, resident, family member, staff member or other person.</p> <p>10.3 Our obligations, and your protections, are spelled out for you in policy 2.6.1.2 Whistleblower Protections - Aged Care Act 2024 that is given to you when you commence services with us.</p>
<p>11. What do we do with complaints and feedback information?</p>	<p>11.1 After we have addressed your compliment, concern or suggestion, there are lots of ways that the information shapes what we do at CRC.</p> <p>11.2 We are required to use complaints to improve our services, not just to fix problems in the moment. That means your feedback should help make things better for everyone receiving our care and services - not only for you.</p> <p>11.3 We monitor and track de-identified feedback data monthly – at the facility, service, Executive and Board level – to look at numbers, trends, themes and outcomes. We look for what we are consistently doing well and what organisation wide changes we may need to make in response to any themes or trends that are identified.</p> <p>11.4 Feedback data is also shared freely at our Consumer Advisory Committee meetings.</p>
<p>Review</p>	<p><i>This policy is reviewed every three years, or more frequently in response to identified risk, or where legislative or best-practice changes require amendment.</i></p>