

## Feedback and Complaints Policy

### 1. Purpose

Community Engagement, a program of Inala Community House (ICH) welcomes and values feedback and complaints from service users, families, carers, service providers and regulators. Community Engagement views feedback and complaints as an opportunity to continuously evaluate and improve its activities and accountabilities. Community Engagement encourages an environment in which staff, contractors, service users and volunteers can raise issues or concerns. Information on how to provide feedback or make a complaint is available to, and easily accessible to all stakeholders. Community Engagement shall ensure that stakeholders are made aware of complaint handling procedures, and that complaints will be addressed in a fair and respectful manner.

This policy operates in conjunction with the ICH Feedback and Complaints policy. A separate ICH Grievance Policy and procedures exist for staff, contractors and volunteers.

All feedback and complaints will be handled in a manner which upholds the human and legal rights of the service user (in accordance with the ICH Human Rights Policy).

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Community Engagement staff, contractors, volunteers, service users and other stakeholders.

### 3. Definition

**Complaint:** Any dispute or conflict that arises between stakeholders of ICH Community Engagement. Examples may include complaints against a staff member, volunteer, or service user. Complaints may relate to, but are not limited to, issues such as conduct, services provided, administration or discrimination. All complaints will be handled in line with ICH policies and procedures.

**Complainant:** Any service user, person, community member, staff member or stakeholder who has contact with Community Engagement who has made a complaint regarding the organisation, programs and service, staff members or stakeholders employed by or in contact with Community Engagement.

**Feedback:** Either a positive or negative reaction or response to a particular process, service or activity. The following definitions are provided:

- A comment may be an explanation or reaction, a suggestion, or a statement of fact, opinion, attitude, conclusion or judgement

- A compliment is an expression of praise or commendation

**Involved Party/Parties:** The individual, group, service or organisation for which the complaint refers to, or whose actions they are in relation to. In situations of a complaint or grievance against the organisation or program, the delegated officer for that program (i.e. Manager (Community Engagement) or Chief Executive Officer) will be the responsible representative for the complaint.

**Allegation:** a claim that an illegal act has occurred. Allegations are always investigated and sometimes an external authority undertakes the investigation such as the police.

**Concern:** a notification that a person is worried that something is not working, has gone wrong or is otherwise not as it should be.

## 4. Policy

### 4.1 Principles

The principles underpinning this policy are:

- All stakeholders have a right to be provided with services that are accountable.
- Processes should be open and transparent.
- All parties should be informed, listened to and allowed the right of reply.
- The program adheres to social justice principles.
- All stakeholders have a right to be heard and have their complaints dealt with in a timely manner.
- All stakeholders have a right to complain about the service they are receiving without fear of retribution, victimisation or otherwise disadvantage in access to service and service delivery.
- Information collected is stored in line with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Inala Community House (ICH) and Community Engagement privacy policies.
- People making complaints should be supported to access complaints processes.
- Complaints processes should be sensitive to any cultural requirements.
- Robust complaints processes and systems are an important part of quality service management and help safeguard people with a disability.
- Complaints may identify risks to service users, visitors and staff. Addressing identified risks will support ICH in meeting its occupational health and safety obligations.
- Feedback and complaints are an essential component of continuous improvement.

## 4.2 Feedback and Complaints

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines for all stakeholders of the service who have a right to complain or provide feedback about the services they receive.

All stakeholders will be informed of their rights to make a complaint or provide feedback in relation to the services they receive and contact that they have with program staff (including relevant external agencies). Stakeholders will have access to the complaints procedures and will be informed on how to go about initiating a complaint or making appeal.

Community Engagement has a preference for complaints to be addressed in a respectful and transparent manner between stakeholders before initiating formal complaint procedures. Community Engagement views such practices as integral to best practice. It is also expected that Community Engagement supports service users and the community to access supports and complaints processes in the community where relevant, for example Queensland and Federal Police Services or Legal advice agencies.

Community Engagement has a procedure for dealing with complaints. It is the responsibility of the Manager (CE) to assess whether the complaint is of such a serious nature that the formal complaint procedures are to be initiated immediately, without the use of mediation or dispute avoidance. The Manager (CE) will ensure that the process is impartial, transparent and accountable for all parties.

It is also the responsibility of the Manager (CE) to record the details of the complaint, response, case notes, correspondence and any other relevant information and to store these appropriately. In addition, They will also take responsibility for making entries into and maintaining the complaints register. The register is used to record complaint details, tasks completed and important dates relevant to the complaints process and ensure the correct procedures are followed within Community Engagement. The Manager (CE) will liaise with stakeholders to gather the correct information and prompt the completion of the complaint process.

### **Support Person/Advocate**

The complainant and the involved party have a range of options available to them which they may access to support them through the complaints process.

Support persons can include but are not limited to:

- Family member
- Friend
- Child Safety Officer
- Legal Representative
- Union Delegate
- Other person as deemed appropriate by the complainant

Requests for additional support may be made directly to the organisation

### **Confidentiality of Complaints**

A complaint lodged by a Stakeholder will be kept confidential amongst workers/persons directly concerned with the resolution. The complainant's permission will be obtained prior to any information being given to other parties which may be necessary to satisfactorily resolve the complaint.

### **Reviewing Complaints**

It is the responsibility of the Manager (CE) to monitor and review the programs complaints register. This is to ensure all complaints and grievances processes have been followed, outcomes and associated tasks/actions finalised and emerging patterns identified.

## **5. Review**

This policy remains in effect unless otherwise determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner as required.

## **6. Related Documents**

### **Policies**

ICH Grievance Policy  
ICH Feedback and Complaints Policy

### **Procedures**

ICH CE Feedback and Complaints Procedure