

## Complaints and Feedback Management Policy and Procedure

This Policy and Procedure document details the management of complaints and feedback made to Splash Paediatric Therapy (SPT). This document is relevant to all SPT clients (including family members, carers and independent advocates of our clients), staff, stakeholders and members of the public. Complaints and feedback is encouraged and can be provided through multiple mechanisms including conversations with Allied Health Professionals, phone calls, emails, website or via hardcopy at specific clinic location.

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

Promote clear, honest and open communication and ensure everyone is aware and understands how they can provide feedback or make a complaint.

SPT clients (Including family members, carers and independent advocates of our clients), staff, stakeholders and members of the public has their concerns satisfactorily addressed, feels supported through the feedback and complaints management process and is kept informed of progress.

All complaints and feedback are documented and addressed accordingly in a timely efficient manner. Ensuring appropriate corrective actions are taken in response to complaints and feedback to improve participant satisfaction.

### 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all SPT clients (including family members, carers and independent advocates of our clients), staff, stakeholders and members of the public.

For the purposes of this document, 'parties to a complaint' can include: SPT; the complaint handling staffs; clients; other complainants; the complainant and the subject of a complaint.

### 3. Definitions

#### *a) Complaint*

For the purposes of this document a complaint is an oral or written expression of concern or dissatisfaction with SPT services, activities, actions, and/ or individuals associated with these services.

#### *b) Feedback*

Information about reactions to service, a persons performance, a product etc. which is used as a basis for improvement. Feedback can be a negative or positive.

#### **4. Procedures**

##### **Participants lodging Feedback / Complaints**

- a) Participants are provided with information on how and where to provide complaints/feedback. A complaint can be lodged by completing the Splash Complaints and Feedback Form online or via hard copy and returned to SPT by email, post or in person. If an oral complaint is received, and the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, complaints handling staff will record and submit the complaint in the Complaints and Feedback database on Slack.
- b) Clients have the opportunity to provide feedback / make a complaint at any time and more particularly at the time of reviews and participant surveys.

##### **Management of complaint**

- a) SPT complaints handling staff will acknowledge recipient of a complaint and advise complainants, ensuring they feel the complaint has been adequately acknowledged and they are given time to express how it has affected them and what actions they would like to see. Complaints handling staff may also contact the complainant to request additional information and provide them an estimated time to investigate and resolve.
- b) Following investigation, complaints handling staff will inform the complainant and the respondent of the outcome of the investigation and of any decisions made.
- c) The complaint is recorded in the SPT Complaints Register. Access to the register or any completed forms must be limited to management only.
- d) How to resolve a complaint.
  - This could include acknowledgement, an apology, answers and / or action.
  - Improvement to service if required. This could include:
    - Further training of staff / other involved
    - Reviewing and enhancing policies and / or procedures
    - Change of personnel
    - Changes to the environment
- e) If the complaint is of serious nature (eg mandatory reporting required), a formal incident investigation will be conducted (use the Incident investigation form) to explore what led to the complain and any steps are required to prevent it occurring again.

### **3. Responsibilities**

*SPT staff are responsible for:*

- a)** Behaving professionally and respectfully when dealing with complainants
- b)** Complying with the Complaints and Feedback Management Policy and Procedures
- c)** Lodging all complaints and feedback into the Complaints and Feedback Register on Slack

*SPT Management is responsible for:*

- a)** Monitoring Complaints and Feedback Register and reporting to the Risk Management Committee and Director.
- b)** Investigation and resolution of a complaint as appropriate and in conjunction with other relevant staff
- c)** Notifying other Management team members and Director of any arising issues from the investigation

*The Chair (or proxy) of the Risk Management Committee, in conjunction with Committee Members, is responsible for:*

- a)** Providing leadership in demonstrating a commitment to the resolution of complaints made to SPT.
- b)** Ensuring policies and procedures are in place to guide staff in managing complaints and feedback; appropriately resourcing and supporting staff who handle complaints.
- c)** Ensuring a continuous quality and improvement approach to complaints management.

*Complainants are responsible for:*

- a)** Providing a clear and honest account of their concerns and expectations for the outcome of their complaint, including providing all relevant information and documents to assist in the investigation and resolution of the matter.
- b)** Engaging openly in the complaint handling process, including participating in discussion with other parties to resolve the concerns when considered appropriate.
- c)** Responding to requests for information from SPT complaint handling staff in a timely manner.

*Respondents are responsible for:*

- a)** Providing a clear and honest response to the complaint, including providing all relevant information and documents to assist in the investigation and resolution of the matter.
- b)** Engaging openly in the complaint handling process.

## **5. Positive Feedback / Compliments Management**

- a) Positive feedback / Compliments will be recorded in the same way as a complaint. SPT can analyse this information to facilitate discussions on how to continuously improve and continue.

## **6. Training Staff on Feedback / Complaints Management**

- a) New staff on induction will read all policies and procedures and acknowledge that they understand. Staff will understand that complaints / feedback is welcomed and that they can submit Feedback / Complaints at any time.
- b) Therapy staff should understand the Complaints and Feedback Management Policy and Procedures. Staff will be notified of any updates or changes to Policies and Procedures.
- c) Anonymous complaints are accepted however may be difficult to investigate and resolve in a manner that satisfies the complainant

## **7. Confidentiality**

- a) Personal details of the complainant may need to be disclosed to the person being complained about for the matter to be fully investigated, but will remain confidential in other situations, for example in a report on complaint incidents and trends. SPT complaints handling staff will take all reasonable steps to prevent adverse repercussions for a complainant in disclosing their identity or other particulars to the subject of a complaint.
- b) As far as possible, a complainant's identity and personal details will not be disclosed to staff other than complaints handling staff.
- c) Copy of the complaint form, without complainant contact details, will be made available to the respondent with the consent of the complainant. Complaints handling staff, with the consent of the complainant, may also make additional materials (e.g. statements or other evidence) available to the respondent when required for completeness and proper understanding of the complaint made.
- d) Complaint information will be stored securely and access to it restricted to ensure the privacy of the complainant.

## **8. Anonymous complaints**

- a) SPT accepts anonymous complaints; however, it may be difficult to fully investigate anonymous complaints and report on the outcome of the investigation. This can result in an unsatisfying result for the complainant. The complainant should be made aware of this when making the complaint and asked how they would like to be informed about the outcome of the investigation.

### **Lodge your complaint with a regulatory body or authority**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response from SPT, a formal complaint may be lodged with an independent regulatory body or authority. The complainant should telephone the regulatory body or authority first to ensure it is the appropriate organisation to handle the complaint.

Regulatory bodies and authorities include:

- [Office of the Health Complaints Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency \(AHPRA\)](#)
- [Victorian Ombudsman](#)
- [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)
- [Mental Health Complaints Commissioner](#)
- [Disability Services Commissioner](#)
- [Private Health Insurance Ombudsman](#)
- [Office of the Australian Information Commissioner \(Privacy Commissioner\)](#)
- [National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner](#)
- [Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.](#)