

COMPLAINTS SYSTEMS & PRACTICE SELF-AUDIT

Quick checklist

Encouraging people who access your services to give feedback, and when necessary complain, about the supports you provide, not only empowers those individuals but also provides an opportunity to improve the overall quality of the services you provide.

This '*Complaints Systems & Practice Self-Audit – Quick checklist*' is designed to give you a snapshot of the progress your organisation has made in relation to the development of a positive complaints culture. The checklist will also assist you to identify and prioritise areas of your complaints management system that you may want or need to develop further. The checklist covers key components of Quality Framework Industry Standard 7 and the *Disability Act 2006* (in relation to complaints) to enable you to determine your progress in relation to your legislative and regulatory compliance obligations and assist in your preparations for the independent monitoring process that service providers are required to undertake.

We suggest that you have a small group of people from your organisation (preferably from different areas of the organisation, e.g. people in receipt of services, families, direct support staff and management) and work through each item marking them in relation to whether the statement reflects your existing practices. There is space available to list any quality improvement initiatives to be undertaken, whether this is to build on good work you are already doing or to address areas you may need to improve further.

As outlined in more detail in the Good Practice Guide and Self Audit Tool (pages 36-37), five steps we recommend you follow as you use the audit include:

- Step 1 - Map what is happening now.
- Step 2 - Work out what is missing.
- Step 3 - Agree on the priority areas for work.
- Step 4 - Develop action plans for the agreed priority areas.
- Step 5 - Evaluate the outcomes to inform future plans.

Including people with a disability and their families/advocates in this process will further build people's belief in your organisation's transparency and commitment to listening to their feedback. It will also help to ensure that your complaints process is as user friendly and person centred as possible.

A more in depth review of your organisation's complaints culture and complaints handling systems can be achieved by complementing the use of this checklist with the following resources that are available from the Disability Services Commissioner:

- Complaints Culture Surveys: these can be used to obtain the views of your stakeholders (people with a disability, families/advocates and staff) as to the culture that exists within your organisation in relation to complaints.

<http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/publications.htm#cultural>

- Good Practice Guide Self-Audit: a self-audit tool that offers a more comprehensive insight into the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation's complaints management system. Direct references to the Self-Audit tool are in blue text in the Complaints Systems & Practice Self-Audit Quick checklist.

http://www.odsc.vic.gov.au/downloads/downloads/dsc_good_practice_guide&audit_tool.pdf

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NB Wherever the term 'people who access your services' is used in this document it should be taken to include people with a disability and their families / carers / advocates.

	References Key <i>Disability Act 2006</i> Quality Framework Industry Standard 7 <i>DSC Good Practice Guide</i> <i>DSC Self Audit Tool</i>	Y	P a r t i a l	N	Comment(s) / Further action(s) required
1	Your organisation has clear complaints management policies and procedures (they include information about rights, process, timeframes, external complaint bodies, recording and reporting). All staff are familiar with the policies and procedures. <i>Act S104, QF IS 7.2, Chapter 7.3.2, 7.4.1.a, 7.5.2.d, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3</i>				
2	You adopt an approach to the handling, management and resolution of complaints that is person centred, underpinned by the rules of natural justice and is consistent with the <i>Disability Act 2006</i> (Vic) and the Quality Framework All of QF IS 7 (specifically 7.1), <i>Chapter 7.5.2.c, Chapter 8, 4.6.1, 4.6.3, 4.7, 4.9</i>				
3	There is a senior manager responsible for the effectiveness of the complaint management system. <i>Chapter 5.2 Chapter 7 Figure 2</i>				
4	You have informed all people who access your services of their right to complain and given them a copy of an accessible (language) document informing them of how to complain. <i>QF IS 7.6, Chapter 7.3.2, 7.5.2.f, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7</i>				
5	You have strategies in place to actively encourage feedback and complaints from people who access your services and support them to feel comfortable and valued when giving you feedback. <i>QF IS 7.2 Chapter 2, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 3.6.4</i>				
6	You have strategies in place to ensure that people who make complaints are treated respectfully, courteously and sensitively. <i>Chapter 7.2.2, 2.2</i>				

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7	You assist people who access your services to make complaints including assisting them to put together their complaint and/or offering them access to external support or advocacy if required. <i>QF IS 7.5, 1.8, 1.9</i>				
8	You always clarify the issues with the person making the complaint to ensure all issues have been documented correctly including the outcome sought. <i>Chapter 7 page 25 tip, 3.2, 4.12.1.c</i>				
9	All people who make a complaint are kept updated, in a manner that is agreed to with them, on a regular basis about the progress/status of their complaint and about what/if action will be taken to address their concern. <i>1.3, 1.6, 3.1, 4.1.1, 4.2</i>				
10	You have systems in place to ensure that the privacy and confidentiality of the person making the complaint is protected throughout and after the complaint process. <i>Chapter 7.5.2 a and b, 2.3</i>				
11	You have strategies in place to ensure that people are not treated adversely as a result of making a complaint. <i>Act S106, QF IS 7.3, 1.2.c, 1.11</i>				
12	You inform people who have made a complaint of their right to take further action if they are unhappy with the way their complaint is handled. <i>Act S109 b)</i>				
13	All improvements and changes made as a result of feedback or complaints are communicated to the person who made the complaint and, as relevant, to other people who access your services and staff. <i>Chapter 2, 1.5, 4.4, 5.1</i>				
14	All staff understand the role of feedback and complaints in improving the quality of the supports people who access your services receive. <i>Chapter 2, Chapter 7.3.2, 3.6.2</i>				

	References Key <i>Disability Act 2006</i> Quality Framework Industry Standard 7 <i>DSC Good Practice Guide</i> <i>DSC Self Audit Tool</i>	Y	P a r t i a l	N	Comment(s) / Further action(s) required
15	All staff receive training in issues relevant to, and the handling of, complaints through staff induction / orientation and subsequent specific training activities. <i>Chapter 4, Chapter 7.3, Chapter 7.4.4.b and c, Chapter 8, 1.10, 3.6.1</i>				
16	You have strategies in place to ensure that all staff in your organisation view and respond to complaints positively. <i>1.10, 3.6.1, 3.6.3</i>				
17	All staff know where to refer complaints internally if they are unable to respond to a complaint made to them. <i>1.3, 1.7</i>				
18	All staff aware of the Disability Services Commissioner and its role in the resolution of complaints in the disability sector. <i>Act S107, S109, S110, S111, 4.5, 4.11.3, 4.11.5</i>				
19	You involve people who access your services and staff in the creation and improvement of your complaint handling documents and systems. <i>Chapter 2 tip page 7, Chapter 7.3.2, 7.4.1.a, 5.2.2</i>				
20	You maintain records of all complaints and use this information to inform quality improvement initiatives at an individual, service and organisational level. <i>QF IS 7.4, Chapter 7.4.7, 1.2.b, 4.12, 5.1, 5.2</i>				
21	Complaints information is regularly provided to the Board of Management to further inform discussion and decisions regarding the future directions of the organisation. <i>Chapter 6, 6.1, Chapter 7.3.2, 5.1, 5.2.1, 5.3</i>				
22	You report annually to the Disability Services Commissioner specifying the number of complaints your organisation received and how they were resolved. <i>Act S105</i>				

Completed by:

Date completed: