

Complaints Policy

Policy Number: 2.02



Title: Complaints Handling Policy & Procedures

Purpose:

NSW Stoma Ltd is committed to ensuring that any person or organisation using NSW Stoma's services or affected by its operations has the right to lodge a complaint or to appeal a decision of the organisation and to have their concerns addressed in ways that ensure access and equity, fairness, accountability and transparency.

Scope

This policy applies to all members, staff, board members and volunteers of NSW Stoma Ltd and relates to the services and activities of NSW Stoma Ltd

Policy

The organisation will provide a complaints and appeals management procedure that:

- is simple and easy to use
- is effectively communicated and promoted to all members and stakeholders
- ensures complaints or appeals are fairly assessed and responded to promptly
- is procedurally fair and follows principles of natural justice
- complies with legislative requirements.

PRINCIPLES

NSW Stoma Ltd will:

- consider all complaints it receives.
- treat all complainants with respect, recognising that the issue of complaint is important to the complainant.
- maintain confidentiality of parties involved, keeping any information private to those directly involved in the complaint and its resolution.
- deal with all complaints in a timely manner.
- ensure that a complainant is not penalised in any way or prevented from use of services during the progress of an issue except where they are ineligible for services.
- keep parties to the complaint informed of progress of the complaint.
- resolve complaints, where possible, to the satisfaction of all parties involved.
- ensure that Board members, staff and volunteers are given information about the complaints procedure as part of their induction and are aware of procedures for managing member feedback and complaints.
- ensure all service users and stakeholders are aware of the complaints policy and procedures.
- ensure that feedback data (both positive and negative) concerning the complaints process is considered in organisational reviews and in planning service improvements.

PROCEDURES

Information for members and stakeholders

NSW Stoma Lt's complaints procedure will be made available on the NSW Stoma Ltd website.

Making a complaint

A person wishing to make a complaint may do so;

- in writing addressed to "Complaints, NSW Stoma Ltd, Unit 5, 7-29 Bridge Rd, Stanmore NSW 2048; or
- verbally to:
 - the staff member they were dealing with at the time
 - the General Manager
 - if the complaint concerns the General Manager – any member of the Board;
 - A complaint about the conduct or behavior of a staff member will normally be dealt with by the General Manager,
 - A complaint about the General Manager will normally be dealt with by the Board or, if the complainant is a Board member, by the Chair of the Board.
 - All other complaints will be referred to the General Manager. In the absence or unavailability of the General Manager, the Deputy Manager may deal with complaints.

The General Manager will be responsible for:

- receiving and registering written complaints,
- directing them to the appropriate person if required,
- promptly informing the complainant that their complaint has been received; and
- providing the complainant with a copy of the NSW Stoma Ltd Complaints Policy.

Procedure for complaints management

After the complaint has been received and registered, the General Manager or delegate will be responsible for:

1. Investigating the complaint:

- examining the complaint within 2 weeks of the complaint being received
- notify the person about whom a complaint is being made of the complaint and its nature
- investigating the complaint, including seeking information from the subject of the complaint, and deciding how to respond
- informing the complainant in writing within 3 weeks of the complaint being received of what is being done to investigate and resolve it, and the expected time frame for resolution.

As far as possible, complaints will be investigated and resolved within 4 weeks of being received. If this time frame cannot be met, the complainant will be informed of the reasons why and of the alternative time frame for resolution.

2. Resolving the complaint:

Actions to resolve a complaint may include

- making a decision or referring to the appropriate people for a decision within 4 weeks of the complaint being received;
- Informing the complainant of any options for further action if required.

Subject to privacy and confidentiality constraints, NSW Stoma Ltd will inform the complainant of the outcome of their complaint as follows:

- upheld (and if so what will be done to resolve it)
- resolved (and how this has been achieved); or
- if no further action can be taken, the reasons for this.

Record keeping

A register of complaints and appeals will be kept in the complaints register in soft copy. The register will be maintained by the General Manager and will record the following for each complaint or appeal:

- Details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint
- Date lodged
- Action taken
- Date of resolution and reason for decision
- Indication of complainant being notified of outcome
- Complainant response and any further action

Copies of all correspondence will be kept in the soft copy dedicated folder.

Complaints about the General Manager will be kept by the Chair in a suitable confidential location.

A statistical summary of complaints will be maintained by the General Manager who will be responsible for preparing a report on complaints made yearly to the Board.

Results from this report will be reviewed by the General Manager and the Board and used to:

- inform service planning and decision-making by including a review of complaints in all service planning, monitoring and evaluation activities

Complaints involving specific staff members or volunteers

Internal complaints, where a staff member or volunteer makes a complaint concerning another staff member or volunteer, will be dealt with in accordance with the NSW Stoma Ltd [*Grievance Handling Policy & Procedure*](#)

Any disciplinary action against a staff member or volunteer arising from a complaint will be taken in accordance with the procedures contained in NSW Stoma Ltd's disciplinary procedures.

Complaints involving the General Manager or Board members

Complaints involving the General Manager will be managed by the Chair.

Complaints made against a Board member will be referred to the Chair. The Chair, or their delegate, will:

- notify the person about whom a complaint is being made of the complaint and its nature
- investigate the complaint and provide the member with an opportunity to respond to any issues raised
- attempt to mediate the dispute (if appropriate) and/or attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the outside party.

Where the Chair is the subject of a complaint, the complaint should be referred to the General Manager.

If the matter remains unresolved, the Chair or the General Manager will raise the matter at the next Board meeting to determine how the complaint should be addressed.

***** End of Policy *****