

Feedback and Complaints

This policy applies to all customers, staff, contractors, volunteers, business partners and other stakeholders.

Interchange actively seeks feedback both positive and negative from customers, families, carers, service providers and regulators to ensure people are treated fairly when they use our services. Feedback and complaints are an important source of information and are used to improve our services wherever possible.

Interchange is committed to ensuring everyone has the ability to make feedback or complaints and

If you would like assistance to make a complaint Interchange is able to link you to provide support to access translation, advocacy, or other support services required. Please inform a staff member that you would like assistance so we can help. Alternatively, customers can access advocacy support through external organisations and provide Interchange with the details.

Interchange believes:

- everyone has the right to provide feedback and complaints
- everyone has the right to support and advocacy to provide feedback or make a complaint
- in fostering a service culture that encourages open and honest communication
- informing customers of the standard of service they can expect
- encouraging and making it easy for people to provide feedback and being sensitive to any cultural requirements
- robust complaints processes and systems are an important part of quality service management and help safeguard people with disability
- feedback and complaints identify risks to people with disability but also visitors and staff
- feedback and complaints support Interchange to meet its occupational health and safety obligations
- feedback and complaints will be recorded, analysed and opportunities for Interchange to continuously improve its services identified
- positive feedback enables Interchange staff to know what part of services are working well for the customer

Record of Policy Development

Version	Date approved	Date for review
3.6	January 2008	May 2021

Responsibilities and Delegations

This policy applies to:	Board, CEO, Executive, Human Resources, Staff
Policy Approval	Executive

Policy Context – this policy relates to:	
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Standards for Disability Services (Standard 4) NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators https://www.hadsco.wa.gov.au
Legislation	
Contractual obligations	
Organisation policies	
Forms, record keeping, other documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interchange Feedback and Complaints Form / Work Instruction Interchange Customer Complaints Resolution information sheet Response to Outcome of Complaint Template Letter

Definitions

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

Complaint – formal advice that an incident has occurred, something is not working the way it should, something is inappropriate, or someone is at risk. A serious incident reporting process is required for legal and contractual purposes when a complaint is about a serious incident. All complaints, whether minor or major in nature will be entered into the customer management system (Lumary).

Feedback – all feedback, whether positive or negative in nature will be entered into the customer management system (Lumary). An informal complaint usually offered verbally, is quickly resolved and does not require investigation.

Procedures

- All customers are provided with information about their rights in regards to feedback and complaints when commencing services.
- All feedback will be recorded in the Customer Record System by the employee receiving the feedback or complaint.
- When a concern is raised, the employee involved will listen and attempt to work with the customer to address the issue. The emphasis will be on resolving problems at first contact, through listening, problem solving, providing an explanation, giving more information, suggesting a solution or expressing understanding and empathy in situations where a solution is unlikely.
- Should this not result in resolution, the employee will escalate the matter to their line supervisor who will provide the customer with the *Interchange Customer Complaints Resolution* information sheet, outlining the process to be followed to make a formal complaint and have it addressed.

- Customers who make a complaint will:
 - ✓ be reminded of the *Interchange Feedback and Complaints information sheet* given on commencement of services
 - ✓ be advised they have the right to have support and advocacy during this process
 - ✓ be assisted to access the appropriate support and advocacy as required
 - ✓ be provided with the appropriate forms to document the complaint if they wish to do this in writing
 - ✓ be advised they can choose to discuss the complaint with the employee working with them or their Team Leader if they choose
 - ✓ be advised that if the complaint concerns the conduct of an employee, that this will be reviewed by the relevant People and Culture team member
 - ✓ be advised of their right to independent advocacy or representation of their own choice and assisted to access that support if they wish to engage it
 - ✓ be advised that an Executive Manager will be notified of the complaint and will ensure an appropriate person to review and document the complaint with the parties involved
 - ✓ have their complaint dealt with confidentially and quickly, in an atmosphere of equity and trust
 - ✓ have their complaint documented
 - ✓ have a copy of the complaint documentation provided to them

If requested the customers will receive a letter of resolution from Interchange.

- In the event that the matter is not resolved, it will be referred to an Executive Manager or Chief Executive Officer who will endeavour to resolve the situation and document the agreed resolution and provide a copy to the parties involved. If the customer remains dissatisfied, they will be advised of the option to escalate the matter to the Chair of the Board and also of other avenues external to Interchange, such as the Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO) or NDIS Quality & Safeguarding Commission, which they can access to achieve a resolution. If necessary, they will be assisted to access those external organisations.

Using Feedback for Service Improvement

- When feedback or a complaint is received Team Leaders will be responsible for maintaining and managing the customer record system that will be used for recording and collating customer feedback.
- Risk, Quality and Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for preparing a report on feedback and complaints, monthly to Executive Team.
- Results from customer feedback will be reviewed by People & Culture Leadership Team and used to inform service development and planning.

Equity and Access Considerations

Interchange is committed to ensuring fair and equal access to physical environments, information, communication and services. For the communication and implementation of this policy, this may include:

- considering the suitability of physical environments
- the use of augmentative and alternative communication methods to supplement or replace speech or writing for those with impairments in the production or comprehension of spoken or written

language. These methods include the display of text, large print, tactile communication, easy English, accessible multimedia and accessible information and communications technology.

Cultural Diversity

Employees are to ensure that services are provided with sensitivity to and an awareness of the cultural beliefs and practices of customers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This includes an awareness of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families and communities.

Communication about this policy should be done in a way that suits each individual with regard to their cultural background e.g. if required, the use of an interpreter or easy English documents.

Interchange will develop connections with culturally appropriate organisations and groups to influence the meaningful participation of people with disability.

Where relevant, when attempting to strengthen relationships with people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, Interchange will firstly utilise the advice and influence of key community members and organisation