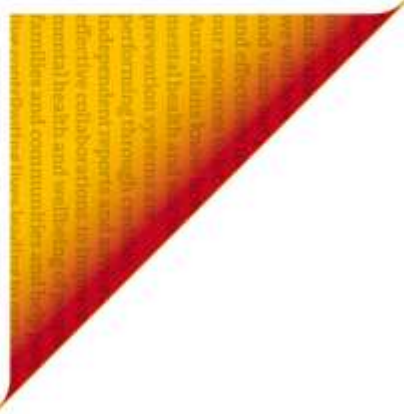


The National Mental Health Commission's

Complaints Management Policy and Process



Australian Government
National Mental Health Commission



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Authorisation and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or as determined by the Commission, and will be published on the website of the Commission.

Author: NMHC Executive

Revision and approval history

Version	Authorisation Date	Authorisation Position	Approval/Revision Type
1.0	July 2013	Deputy CEO	Approval
1.1	August 2013	Acting CEO	Revision

Preamble

The National Mental Health Commission welcomes all feedback about our organisation and our work. If you have a compliment, complaint, suggestion or enquiry about the Commission we would like to hear from you.

Purpose and scope

This document sets out the Commission's complaints management policy and key processes in dealing with compliments, complaints and other feedback from members of the public and stakeholders.

Compliments and Enquiries

If you have a compliment, suggestion or enquiry about the Commission please contact us by:

Email: enquiries@nationalmentalhealthcommission.gov.au

Phone: (02) 8229 7550

Mail: National Mental Health Commission, PO Box R 1463, Sydney NSW 2000

Complaints

From time to time we may not meet your expectations. If you wish to raise a concern about the Commission, your experiences with the Commission or a Commission

funded contractor, consultant, event or activity, you can do this through our Complaints Management Policy and Process.

1. Complaints Management Policy and Process

We believe members of the public and stakeholders have a right to:

- complain or express concerns about the Commission without fear of recrimination
- have their issue dealt with fairly, promptly and professionally
- be represented by an advocate of their choice in any formal complaint resolution process
- be treated in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner
- confidentiality
- withdraw at any stage throughout the process. However, the Commission may elect to pursue the complaint without their involvement.

The Commission's Complaints Management Policy and Process is in place to provide:

- a clear commitment to receive and deal with feedback, good and bad
- an accessible process that handles complaints in a timely, professional and consistent way
- a simple process that avoids the unnecessary use of resources including people's time and money
- information to help the Commission to improve its work, impact, operations and processes.

2. What you can contact us about

The complaints management process looks into issues raised by the public or external stakeholders about the Commission or a Commission funded contractor, consultant, event or activity.

For example, a complaint may be about what you believe is a flawed administrative process or procedural deficiency; an unreasonable delay in response to an enquiry you have made; a discriminatory action or decision; unprofessional behaviour or misconduct by a Commission officer or Commissioner; a factual error; or fraud and compliance issues.

3. Process for making a complaint

We encourage you in the first instance to contact us to discuss your issue or complaint or to try to resolve the issue directly with the person concerned.

However, if you are not satisfied after doing this or if you wish to make a formal complaint at any time, please do so by writing to the Commission CEO. Alternatively, if you would prefer, you can write to the Commission Chair.

Email: enquiries@nationalmentalhealthcommission.gov.au

Mail: National Mental Health Commission, PO Box R 1463, Sydney NSW 2000

To help us understand and resolve your complaint you should provide written details of the basis upon which the complaint is being made, including:

- a clear statement about what you consider was unsatisfactory
- copies of, or references to, information to support the complaint
- details of any attempts you have made to resolve the matter informally
- a statement about what you wish to achieve from the complaint process
- to help us to look into your concerns more effectively, your permission for the Commission to use any personal information you provide to process and respond to your complaint (see section 4 for more information).

We will accept anonymous complaints but resolution processes to address such issues are very limited. Providing your name and contact details will help us to look into your concerns more effectively (see section 4 below).

If you provide your contact details we will:

- acknowledge your complaint in writing within five working days of receiving it
- provide a written response to your complaint to you within 28 calendar days of receiving it. If the issue is complex we may need to extend that time and this will be communicated to you.

We may need to contact you to as we deal with your complaint to clarify any issues or seek further information.

4. Information we need and confidentiality

We will accept anonymous complaints but the following information will help us to look into your concerns more effectively:

- your name and contact details

- permission for the Commission officer/s looking into the matter to disclose your personal information to the relevant parties (if applicable or necessary)
- permission for the relevant parties to provide details of your dealings with them to the Commission officer/s looking into the matter (if applicable or necessary).

The Commission will seek your consent before requesting and/or disclosing any of your personal information.

If you agree, your personal information will be used for the purpose of processing your complaint and will be protected under the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988. Your personal information will not be released to any person or organisation unless required by law or you provide your consent.

You have the right to withdraw your personal information from the Complaints Management Policy and Process at any time.

5. Other complaints handling mechanisms

The Commission's Complaints Management Policy and Process deals only with complaints about the Commission or a Commission funded contractor, consultant, event or activity. We do not get involved in individual service complaints or cases nor do we advocate for individual people or groups. Instead we are an advocate for mental health and related systems improvement and better accountability.

If you have a complaint about a service or a decision made by another organisation, you will need to contact the relevant decision making or complaints body.

Healthcare complaints

If you would like your mental health treatment or care investigated, or are seeking to make a healthcare complaint, click on this link to find what organisation is in your state or territory - [healthcare complaint organisations](#)

Support in finding services

If you are seeking support or assistance in finding services, please contact the peak mental health non-government organisation in your state or territory for information and assistance, listed below:

- [Mental Health Coalition of South Australia](#)
- [Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT](#)
- [Mental Health Coordinating Council NSW](#)
- [Mental Health Council of Tasmania](#)

- [Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition](#)
- [Psychiatric Disability Services of Victoria \(VICSERV\)](#)
- [Queensland Alliance for Mental Health Inc](#)
- [Western Australian Association for Mental Health](#)

6. What you can do if you are not satisfied

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your concerns have been handled by the Commission you can complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). Complaints to the Ombudsman can be made in writing, by phone, in person or by using an online complaint form.

Phone: 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Post: GPO Box 442, CANBERRA ACT 2601