

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Feedback from clients is important in ensuring that services are continuing to meet the client's needs and for planning appropriate services. An important source of feedback is client complaints and these are welcomed and encouraged by Beresfield & District Community Care Inc.

All clients should be made aware of their right to complain, and should fully understand the complaints procedure and the use and availability of advocates.

Clients have a right to complain about the services they are receiving without fear of retribution and can expect complaints to be dealt with promptly.

The Manager and Care Workers should take steps to ensure that clients feel comfortable to continue accessing services after making a complaint.

Information on the complaints procedure of Beresfield & District Community Care Inc. is to be included in the Client Handbook and brochures and presented to and explained to clients at the time of assessment.

Regular information of Complaints Procedure should appear in the Client Newsletter.

The client has the right to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf with staff and/or the Management of Beresfield & District Community Care Inc. This may be a family member or friend, or an agency such as the Older Person's Rights Service or Disability Rights Service.

All complaints are to be recorded on the Complaints Record Form), which is to be completed, by the Manager or Co-ordinator.

Persons affected by the complaint should be fully informed of all facts and given the opportunity to put their case.

### **Complaint Procedure**

- Clients are encouraged to raise their complaint with the Manager or a Co-ordinator.
- The client contacts the Manager or Coordinator in writing or by phone about their complaint
- The Manager will respond within three (3) working days and will arrange to meet with the client to discuss the complaint;
- If the client is not satisfied with the outcome, they should contact the Manager or use an advocate to negotiate on their behalf.
- If the client is not satisfied with the result of the Manager's or Co-ordinators response, they may write to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors to have their situation reviewed again. In such circumstances the Chairperson, or nominated Board member, will review the Manager's or coordinator's decision and advise the client of the result within 30 days of receipt of appeal;

- If after approaching the above people, the issue is still not resolved, the client can complain to the Ageing and Disability & Home Care Department or to the Commissioner of Community Services. The Manager will make the addresses and phone numbers for these bodies available to clients. Service brochures will inform client of this information.
- The client should be informed of the outcome of their complaint and asked for their feedback on the complaints procedure.
- The details regarding the Complaint and the progress of same will be recorded on Software.

### **Dispute between Client and Carer**

If team members are aware of a dispute between a client and their carer, which concerns the Beresfield & District Community Care Inc. services, they should refer the situation to the Manager who will either:

- Mediate and attempt to negotiate a solution, or
- With the client's permission, bring in someone with mediation skills to mediate.

If a dispute arises which does not involve Beresfield & District Community Care Inc., the team members should not get involved but should, if requested, refer the matter to the Manager. The Manager should then refer the client and their carer to an appropriate mediation service.

### **Confidentiality of Complaints**

As far as possible, the fact that a client has lodged a complaint and the details of that complaint should be kept confidential amongst the team members directly concerned with its resolution. The client's permission should be obtained prior to any information being given to other parties, which it may be desirable to involve in order to satisfactorily resolving the complaint.

Aged Care Complaints Commissioner  
 GPO Box 9848  
 (Your capital city and state or territory)  
 1800 550552  
 Online [agedcarecomplaints.gov.au](http://agedcarecomplaints.gov.au)

NSW Ombudsman 1800 451 524  
 Level 24  
 580 George Street  
 Sydney NSW 2000

Commonwealth Ombudsman 1300 362 072  
 GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601

Commissioner for Community Services  
 Level 3, 128 Chalmers Street  
 SURRY HILLS 2010  
 Phone: 1800 060 409

