

Feedback and Complaints Management Policy

Alwyndor recognises feedback including complaints, provide a valuable opportunity to improve our care and services. As such we welcome all forms of feedback and actively seek it through a range of engagement opportunities.

Our complaints management approach follows the Better Practice Guide to Complaint Handling in Aged Care Services:

Culture: Alwyndor takes a positive approach to complaints, recognising they are valuable for continuous improvement in everything we do.

Principles: The complaint handling system is modelled on principles of open disclosure, fairness, accessibility, responsiveness, and efficiency and is integrated into all Alwyndor practices.

People: All employees at induction learn how to respond positively to complaints. Key employees are trained, skilled and supported in complaint management to ensure issues are resolved appropriately.

Analysis: Management use information from residents, clients, next of kin, advocate, or decision maker, to identify any trends. They share trends with the Governing body and employees, the older person and/or representative and any required continuous improvement processes are put in place.

Applicability

This policy applies to:

- all categories of employees
- governing body
- all volunteers
- contractors and consultants, whether or not they are employees

Standard 2 expectation statement for older people:

The organisation is well run. I can contribute to improvements to fund aged care services. My provider and aged care workers listen and respond to my feedback and concerns. I received funded care services from aged care workers who are knowledgeable, competent, capable and caring.

Outcome statement 2.6a

The governing body must lead a culture of quality, safety and inclusion that supports aged care workers to provide quality funded aged care services by focusing on continuous improvement, embracing diversity and prioritising the safety, health and wellbeing of aged care workers.

Outcome statement 2.6b

The governing body must lead a culture of quality, safety and inclusion that supports individuals accessing quality funded aged care services by focusing on continuous improvement, embracing diversity and prioritising the safety, health and wellbeing of individuals.

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Policy Commitment

Alwyndor is committed to ensuring that our clients, residents, advocates, representatives, and employees are actively engaged, supported, assisted and encouraged to provide feedback, both positive and negative, about our services and operations.

Alwyndor recognises that all clients and residents have the right to provide feedback or complain about the care and services they receive, and we will ensure that all clients feel comfortable and safe when doing so.

The Alwyndor feedback and complaints system will operate in a manner that is accessible, confidential, prompt, and fair.

Alwyndor will:

- Maintain a system to manage feedback and complaints and use this system to improve how care and services are delivered.
- Provide a range of ways feedback can be shared including options that allow clients and residents to remain anonymous if they choose to.
- Provide current information to older people about how to make a complaint or provide feedback that considers cultural, language, physical or other support needs including how to access advocates, language, and other support services.
- Provide employees with information and training on:
 - how to encourage feedback
 - how to provide feedback on service quality and improvement opportunities
 - what to do when feedback or complaints are received
 - determining when feedback should be managed as a complaint
- Partner with the client or resident to make a complaint throughout the management process including inviting them to participate, keeping them informed, involving them in identifying the solution or follow-up actions and/or encouraging them to share ideas about improving the process.

The Alwyndor feedback and complaints system incorporates the principles of open disclosure.

Open Disclosure

Open disclosure is the open discussion that we have with the client when something goes wrong that has harmed or had the potential to cause harm to them.

Practising open disclosure is communicating with a client when things go wrong, listening to their experience of what has happened, apologising, and explaining the steps that we have taken to prevent it happening again. This may also involve the client's next of kin, advocate, or decision maker, when a client or resident would like them to be involved.

For complaints, we apply the principles of open disclosure. Serious or complex complaints should have a written response and should include:

- an apology for the experience
- a summary of our understanding of the issues
- an overview of our resolution process
- an invitation to participate
- contact details of the contact person
- reassurance of transparency and confidentiality

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Identity, Culture and Diversity

When managing feedback and complaints Alwyndor recognises and respects the aspects that make our clients, residents, and community diverse and will incorporate these considerations into our services and operations. This includes an acknowledgement of the person's country of origin, family and cultural background, preferred language, education, religion, belief system and socio-political outlook and an appreciation of how these aspects may influence their ability to feel comfortable and safe in making a complaint.

Resources in other languages to assist with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) older people and families is available on the Aged Care Quality and Safety website, or by requesting a 'Do You Have a Concern' brochure in another language at reception. Interpreter services will be arranged if required by contacting the Translating and Interpreting Service.

Barriers to Feedback

Clients and residents should feel safe and comfortable giving feedback to Alwyndor. Some clients or residents have barriers that make it difficult for them to raise complaints. These could be cognitive or communication difficulties, vision or hearing impairment, language, or cultural differences. The nature of a complaint can also be particularly sensitive or private, may prevent or hinder the client from making a report, submitting all the details of the report, and submitting the report in a timely manner. The client may feel hesitation in making a report due to fear of reprisal as consequence of raising the issue.

Alwyndor will develop interventions to tackle these barriers and create a culture that welcomes feedback and supports clients to make complaints. One of these protections include a Whistleblower policy to manage any disclosures that qualify for protections in accordance with the Aged Care Act, 2024.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Alwyndor Governing body is responsible for ensuring systems and processes for responding to feedback and complaints are maintained.

Management is responsible for:

- fostering an environment where feedback and complaints are encouraged, reported, investigated and outcomes incorporated into continual improvement activities
- ensuring matters contained in this policy are endorsed and clearly communicated to all relevant personnel within the organisation
- ensuring applicable staff have the required skills to effectively manage complaints
- providing training and education on open disclosure for management and senior staff
- taking a 'no-blame' approach when responding to and managing complaints
- implementing a process for reporting feedback and complaint matters to the Executive Team and Alwyndor Governing body
- monitoring feedback and complaint data as well as the effectiveness of this policy as part of continuous improvement activities
- ensuring industry standards for complaints management are met

All employees, clients, volunteers, associated providers, and contractors are responsible for understanding and abiding by the Feedback and Complaints Policy and related processes

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