

Purpose

This policy ensures that service users, carers, families, and other stakeholders can make complaints or provide feedback confidently, knowing they will be treated respectfully and without fear of reprisal. It supports compliance with the Aged Care Act 2024, Aged Care Quality Standards, and CHSP funding requirements.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all service users, carers, staff, volunteers and contractors engaged with Linked Community Services CHSP-funded community transport services including ACVVS.

Policy Statement

Linked Community Services is committed to delivering safe, high-quality, and person-centred transport services. We recognise the right of all service users to provide feedback and raise complaints without fear, and we are committed to responding to complaints fairly, promptly, and transparently.

Guiding Principles

Linked Community Services fosters a culture of open and honest communication. We actively and regularly seek feedback from service users, participants, carers, staff and stakeholders. Feedback supports a robust continuous improvements process that promotes service improvements.

Linked Community Services are committed to the following guiding principles when addressing feedback and complaints:

- **Rights-based approach:** Service users are supported to understand and exercise their rights.
- **Accessibility:** Complaints can be made in various ways, including anonymously.
- **No disadvantage:** Service Users are assured that services will not be affected by complaints.
- **Timeliness:** Complaints are addressed promptly.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Complaints are handled in a culturally safe and respectful manner.
- **Confidentiality:** All personal information is handled in accordance with privacy laws.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
CEO	Oversee the complaints process and ensure compliance with legislative requirements.
Manager	Ensure staff understand and implement the complaint process. Monitor trends and report outcomes.
Staff/Volunteers	Respond to complaints respectfully and refer complaints appropriately
Service users/Carers	Encouraged to raise concerns to improve services.

Policy Protocols

1. A Commitment to Safety and a Rights-Based approach

Linked Community Services are committed to upholding the rights of all participants and service users, as outlined in the Statement of Rights (*Aged Care Act 2024*), including the right to:

- Safe and quality care and services
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Have your identity, culture, and diversity valued
- Speak up and be heard

2. Accepting Feedback

Linked Community Services will support and encourage Feedback routinely. Service users, carers, families, advocates or staff can raise a complaint or provide feedback:

- In person
- By phone 65838644
- In writing via our feedback form, website, email, or mail info@linked.org.au
- Verbally to any staff member
- Anonymously, if preferred
- Through an advocate, like Seniors Rights 0292813600, Service or OPAN 1300700600

3. Acknowledging Feedback

- All complaints will be acknowledged within **2 business days**.
- The feedback is recorded in the ***Complaints & Feedback Register***.
- The matter is assigned to a senior staff member for resolution,
- The matter is progressed confidentially and in line with the procedure.

4. Assessment and Resolution

- Linked Community Services will assess the concern fairly and objectively.
- Risk to the participant/service user is prioritised – if urgent, immediate action is taken.
- If urgency is not a factor, Linked Community Services aim to resolve complaints within **10 business days**, with regular updates provided to the relevant participant, service user or carer.
- If the issue is complex in nature and involves several parties, the resolution may take longer. In this case Linked Community Services will maintain regular contact with the relevant participant, service user or carer.

5. Outcome and Resolution

Linked Community Services will advise the complainant of:

- Actions taken
- The outcome
- Any changes implemented to prevent recurrence

6. Escalation Options

If the person providing the feedback is not satisfied with the outcome, they will be made aware of their options to escalate the complaint to:

- **The Board of Directors**, Linked Community Services.

Email: info@linked.org.au

- **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission**

Phone: 1800 951 822

Email: info@agedcarequality.gov.au

Website: www.agedcarequality.gov.au

- **Aged Care Advocacy Services**

OPAN – Older Persons Advocacy Network

Phone: 1800 700 600

Website: www.opan.org.au

7. Continuous Improvement

- Trends and recurring issues are analysed.
- Complaints inform service improvements and staff training.

8. Record Keeping

- All complaints are recorded in the ***Complaints and Feedback Register***.
- Records include nature, actions taken, outcome, and lessons learned.
- Complaint records are stored securely and handled per the Privacy Act 1988.

9. No Reprisal Policy

- Service users are assured that making a complaint **will not impact the quality of care** they receive.
- Staff are trained to respond professionally and supportively.

10. Privacy and Confidentiality

- All complaints are managed in line with the **Privacy Act 1988**.
- Information is only shared with those directly involved in resolution.

11. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

- All feedback will be statistically recorded in management reports to the Board for monitoring of trends, actions and reconciliation
- HKCT will ensure Team Members are trained to encourage and support a service user's rights to provide feedback to the organisation.

Related Procedures

Grievance Policy

Complaints procedure

Aged Care Quality Standards

Aged Care Act

Relevant Standard**Aged Care Quality Standards**

1. The Individual
2. The Organisation
3. The care and service