



## **COMMUNICATING YOUR CONCERNS**

**Multiple Sclerosis Limited (MSL) is committed to providing high quality services to people with MS and other progressive neurological conditions and to their families and carers. We encourage our clients to make comment, congratulate us on our services or complain if we have failed to provide a satisfactory service.**

- MSL strives to provide appropriate services in a manner which enhances the independence, confidence and dignity of all clients.
- It is the policy of MSL to support a client's right to be heard in relation to the service they are receiving or requiring, and to be supported in making a formal complaint about the service.
- We will also accept informal suggestion from clients. These suggestions may be regarding the improvement of delivered services.
- MSL will objectively view any formal complaint as a valuable indicator of the need for possible improvement in the provision of quality services.
- MSL ensures that its policies, practices and procedures protect the rights of the client so that no-one is discriminated against, abused or harassed, and that complaints can be made **without fear of victimisation**.

### **Definition of a Complaint:**

- MSL will consider anything as a complaint which consumers think is **unfair** or which makes them **dissatisfied with the service**
- The system provides for 3 levels of Complaints - **informal, formal and external**
- A "**Complaint**" is any dissatisfaction with a product or service offered or provided.
- The "**Complainant**" is the person making a complaint.
- A "**Dispute**" is a pursued unresolved complaint

### **Right to make an Informal Complaint:**

- Clients and/or carers have the right to raise complaints, issues and problems that they have with any aspect of the service, and to have them resolved equitably and fairly, in a way that preserves the dignity of the client.
- MSL will accept any expression of dissatisfaction which a client or any key stakeholder has about the service as a 'complaint'.
- Advocates and families are encouraged to be part of the complaints handling process, when clients want support.
- Staff of MSL will ensure, where possible, that all clients, their families, guardians and advocates understand their right to complain.
- MSL will continue to provide services where appropriate, throughout the resolution of a complaint

## Steps to Follow when Lodging a Complaint:

1. The client should contact the **Complaints Officer on 1800 287 367 or (03) 9845 2700** outlining their complaint.
2. The Complaints Officer will inform the client of the complaints process and forward them the complaints procedure and complaints form.
3. Clients who present to reception with a complaint will be linked to the Complaints Officer by phone so they can outline the complaints process.
4. Clients will be informed that the complaint may be made in writing, telephone or in person at a mutually convenient meeting with the staff concerned.
5. If clients have issues with communication or English is not their first language the Complaints Officer will suggest they lodge a **Face to face verbal complaint** with support of an interpreter or relevant persons who can assist with their communication issues.
6. If making a verbal complaint the client may wish to invite a carer, friend, family member, outside advocate, or an MSL Staff Member for support.
7. The Complaints Officer will acknowledge the complaint in writing **within 5 working days**.
8. The Complaints Officer would then process the details if required they may speak with the client and any other person who is involved to discuss the situation, or by any other process they think appropriate and document accordingly.
9. The Complaints Officer will encourage the parties to resolve the complaint.
10. If the concern is still not resolved and requires further investigation, either the client or the relevant Manager may refer the issue to the Manager Client Services, The Nerve Centre, 54 Railway Road, Blackburn Vic 3130. Telephone: (03) 9845 2700.
11. If the client is still not satisfied with the outcome, or if the Manager of Client Services thinks that it is appropriate, the matter will be referred to the **CEO** for investigation and facilitation of complaint process.
12. If the client is still not satisfied with the outcome, or if the CEO considers it appropriate, the matter may be referred to the Board of Directors via the Chairman.
13. A complaint can be made to the **Disability Services Commissioner** if the complainant believes MSL has not properly investigated or acted upon a complaint.
14. A MSL client may make a complaint directly to **the Disability Services Commissioner**
15. At the end of the process a client will be sent a letter documenting the outcome of their complaint and asking for feedback.
16. Feedback from client comment on the MSL complaints process will be used for future planning of a quality service.