

Warrigal Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure

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POLICY STATEMENT

Warrigal is committed to fostering a culture of openness, respect, and continuous improvement. We recognise that feedback whether it comes from residents, families, staff, contractors, volunteers, or visitors is vital to enhancing the quality of our services **and** upholding our values.

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Warrigal Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure is to ensure a clear, consistent, and transparent approach is applied to managing all complaints and feedback received by the organisation.

Feedback and complaints may be related to a number of issues, including but not limited to, Warrigal's services, people, environments, systems, processes, resources, policies, and business practices.

By establishing defined processes, responsibilities, and expectations, this policy ensures: Improved Complaints Process: Aged care providers now have enhanced systems to manage complaints more effectively, while residents, their families, and carers continue to have direct access to the independent Complaints Commissioner for impartial oversight."

- Timely and appropriate responses to concerns.
- The accurate capture and integrity of complaints and feedback data.
- Accountability at all levels of the organisation.
- Open communication and opportunity for shared learning.
- Continuous improvement in care practices and service delivery.
- Fostering a supportive culture where feedback is actively and deeply valued.
- Consistent complaint handling practices across the whole organisation.

Warrigal's Feedback and Complaints handling approach reflects Warrigal's Vision, Purpose and Values.

2. SCOPE

The Policy applies to all aspects of aged care services provided by Warrigal, including all support functions, services, homes and delivery modes. This includes all regions where Warrigal operates.

This Policy applies to all employees, directors, contractors, or any other persons who work for or within Warrigal.

Under this Policy, anyone can submit feedback or make a complaint using Warrigal's Complaint and Feedback system, including but not limited to:

- Residents/Clients and their families and or representatives
- Staff members, central staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors
- Advocates and external agencies
- Anyone within Warrigal central
- Members of the public

3. DEFINITIONS

Compliments – Positive feedback recognising a person, service or action that improved someone's experience.

Feedback - Input from consumers, carers, the workforce, and others that is actively sought and used to inform continuous improvements for individual consumers and the organisation as a whole.

Improvement Suggestions - A recommendation to improve care, services, communication, environment or processes, supporting continuous improvement.

Complaint -An expression of dissatisfaction or concern raised by a consumer, their representative, or other stakeholder about any aspect of funded aged care services or the provider's compliance with the Act, which is managed in accordance with the provider's complaints and feedback management system and the rules under the Aged Care Act 2024.

- **Minor Complaints** – A concern that causes minor inconvenience, discomfort or dissatisfaction, without impacting safety, wellbeing or care quality.
- **Major Complaints** - A serious concern that affects safety, wellbeing, dignity or rights, or reflects a breach in care standards, including issues like neglect, abuse, sub-standard care or privacy breaches.

Key Person – The designated individual responsible for managing a complaint from initial receipt through to resolution. The Key Person receives the notification through the digital system and is accountable for assessing the issue, identifying required actions, determining who needs to be involved, and coordinating a timely and appropriate response to ensure the matter is effectively resolved.

Feedback Provider - A Feedback Provider is any individual or group who shares insights, experiences, or observations relating to all aspects of aged care services provided by Warrigal, with the intention of informing, improving, or acknowledging care delivery

Responsible Persons – Refers to individuals who hold specific accountability for the governance and safe operation of an aged care service. **Advocates** – A person who supports and promotes the rights and interests of an aged care consumer, their role is to ensure the consumers voice is heard and respected.

Representative – A representative is a person chosen or recognised to act on behalf of an aged care consumer in matters relating to their care, wellbeing, and rights.

Anonymous Complaint – A complaint provided without any identification. Warrigal recognises the importance of allowing individuals to raise concerns anonymously whilst adhering to the Aged Care Act and is committed to treating these complaints with the same seriousness and respect as identified complaints.

ionMY – Warrigal's digital feedback and complaints system.

Registered Supporter

Is an individual nominated by an older person (or their legal representative) to assist them in communicating, making decisions, or engaging with Warrigal. This person is formally recorded as having permission to receive information or participate in discussions relating to the person's care or services.

4. FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS CATEGORIES, DEFINITIONS AND SUBCATEGORIES

To ensure a consistent, transparent, and meaningful response to issues raised, all complaints and feedback are categorised based on 7 identified categories.

Each category is supported by a guiding principle, a clear definition, and a set of subcategories that provide further detail under the main category.

[Flowchart for Complaints and Feedback in Warrigal.pdf](#)

The categories are:

1. Dignity and Respect
2. Clinical care
3. Communication
4. Access and Responsiveness
5. Personal care
6. Food and Dining
7. Organisational Culture

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Residents, Clients, Families, and Members of the public have the following responsibilities:

- Provide feedback respectfully: Share feedback and raise concerns in a respectful and constructive manner, without fear of reprisal or negative consequences.
- Encouraged to provide suggestions and continuous improvements: in helping Warrigal identify opportunities for service and organisational improvement.
- Engage in the process: Participate in the complaints process and, where desired, involve their nominated representative, advocate, or other preferred supporter.

Staff and Volunteers

- Follow the Complaints and Feedback framework.

- Maintain confidentiality at all times whilst maintaining a positive, respectful, and fair environment
- Must complete annual training on complaints and feedback so they know how to raise, manage, and respond to concerns fairly, respectfully, and according to the rules.
- Must ensure that no person will be subject to discrimination, retaliation, or any adverse consequence for making a complaint or providing feedback.

Staff Grievances and Whistle-blower Disclosures

Staff grievances and whistleblower disclosures are managed under their respective policies and do not form part of the Complaints and Feedback System.

- For guidance on raising a staff grievance, refer to the Staff Grievance and Resolution Policy.
- For guidance on whistleblower matters, refer to the Whistleblower Policy.
- Warrigal fosters a “no wrong door” approach, meaning that staff, residents, or other individuals raising concerns will be directed to the appropriate process to ensure their matter is handled correctly and confidentially and in accordance with policy.
- Where a whistleblower elects for their disclosure to be handled through the Complaints System, it will still be managed in accordance with applicable whistleblower legislation and protections, separate from standard feedback and complaints processes.

Complaint Handlers (Initial Recipients via Feedback Management System)

Duties include assessing the nature and severity of the issue, identifying required actions, involving relevant personnel, and coordinating a timely and appropriate response in line with the

[Flowchart for Complaints and Feedback in Warrigal.pdf](#)

General Managers, Senior Managers, and Relevant Staff

- Ensure the complaints and feedback system is accessible, transparent, and effectively implemented.
- Are accountable for ensuring staff understand and fulfil their responsibilities in logging, investigating, actioning, resolving, and reporting complaints and feedback.
- Provide leadership, resources, and oversight to support a culture that values feedback and drives continuous improvement.

Executive Team

- Receive monthly updates on significant complaints through the Managers Meeting.
- Ensure that relevant data is reported to the Consumer Advisory Board (CAB), Quality Care Advisory Board (QCAB) and the Care Governance Committee (CGC) to support governance and quality assurance.
- Identify and contribute to the assessment of high-risk issues based on available complaints and feedback data.

Individuals Subject to a Complaint

- Are expected to continue performing their duties with professionalism and integrity.
- Must maintain confidentiality and treat all parties involved with respect throughout the resolution process.

Residents or family members who are the subject of a complaint

- Residents or family members who are the subject of a complaint will be supported with empathy and respect throughout the process. The organisation will ensure they feel seen, heard, and informed,
- Will provide appropriate assistance to help them engage in the resolution process in a way that acknowledges their emotional wellbeing and individual circumstances.
- Are encouraged to participate in a way that supports open communication, mutual understanding, and a fair resolution, with appropriate support provided as needed.

Advocates

- Advocates can play a key role in supporting older people, their families, or representatives throughout the complaints and feedback process.
- Advocates help empower older people and their families by ensuring their rights, preferences, and voices are heard and respected throughout the complaints and feedback process.

Registered Supporter

- Act in the person's best interests: Support the older person (or their legal representative) in communicating, making decisions, and engaging with Warrigal respectfully and appropriately.
- Maintain confidentiality: Handle any shared information sensitively and only use it for the purpose of supporting the person's care or services.
- Participate appropriately: Engage in discussions or decision-making processes as permitted and formally recorded by the older person or their legal representative.
- Respect consent boundaries: Ensure that involvement aligns with the permissions provided and does not exceed the authority granted by the older person.

6. PROCESS FOR MANAGING COMPLAINTS

Warrigal refers to the Complaints and Feedback Framework to guide the process for managing complaints. Once feedback is provided it is recorded in the feedback management System [Public Feedback](#)

Where an individual wishes to be actively involved in the resolution process, they will be provided with appropriate opportunities and support to participate.

Documents, actions, correspondence, notes, and outcomes relating to feedback and complaints are records that must be documented and uploaded in the feedback and complaints system.

For more detailed operational guidance please refer to the Operational Feedback and Complaints policy

[Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure.pdf](#)

6.1 Right of appeal

In the event a feedback provider or complainant is not happy with the outcome of the feedback and complaints handling process, all parties have the right to dispute the resolution through Warrigals' appeal mechanism.

Appeals may be made verbally or in writing. The appeal should clearly state the grounds for review and include any supporting documentation (not previously provided).

6.1.2 Review process

Appeals will be reviewed by an independent party not involved in the organisation. This will ensure impartially by ensuring the review is assessed fairly, objectively and without bias. The review will consider all relevant information and may involve further consultation with the parties involved in the matter.

6.1.3 Outcome Notification

The appellant will be notified of the outcome in writing within 10 business days. The decision of the review is final within the internal process.

6.1.4 External Escalation

If the appellant remains dissatisfied, they may escalate the matter to an appropriate external body, such as:

- [ACQSC Complaints Commissioner](#)
- [Complaints | Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)

6.2 Reportable incident

If during the complaint investigation a reportable incident is suspected or confirmed, it must be escalated immediately to the designated staff member or incident response team member.

7.CONFIDENTIALITY OF COMPLAINTS

Warrigal is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and transparent environment for all staff, residents, families, and stakeholders. All individuals involved in the complaints and feedback process share responsibility for maintaining a positive, respectful, and fair environment.

All complaints, regardless of the source, will be managed with sensitivity, fairness, and strict confidentiality. Personal information related to complaints will only be shared with

those directly involved in the resolution process, in accordance with applicable privacy laws and organisational processes, systems and policies.

Warrigal support open disclosure practices, ensuring honest and timely communication. Individuals are encouraged to raise concerns or lodge complaints freely and may choose to do so anonymously if they wish.

All complaints will be taken seriously, assessed promptly, and used constructively to improve the quality of care and services. No person will face discrimination or retaliation for making a complaint.

8. PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

Warrigal is committed to providing inclusive, respectful, and person-centred support to all consumers, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, special needs, LGBTIQ+ individuals, and those living with cognitive impairments or dementia.

Staff are trained to understand and respond to the unique needs and experiences of these individuals, ensuring that their identity, dignity, and preferences are upheld throughout the feedback and complaints process.

Cultural aspects are considered when reviewing complaints or disputes, and residents/clients are supported to feel comfortable in discussing concerns. An independent interpreter is offered if the resident/client is not proficient in English. At their request, a representative may also act as an advocate particularly in situations where there is a language, cognitive, or literacy barrier. Helping to ensure their voice is heard and respected. Additional support may include simplified communication strategies, the involvement of trusted individuals, or access to specialised advocacy services.

Where possible, Warrigal uses resources from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission to provide information in simple language or in the language of the consumer. Any actions, interventions, or referrals are tailored to meet the needs of specific groups, which may involve collaboration with organisations that have expertise in supporting these consumers.

Warrigal recognises and supports individuals with special needs as defined by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, which include people from diverse backgrounds or circumstances that may require additional consideration, adjustment, or support to ensure equitable access and participation in care and services.

Where we can, we use the resources on the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission website to provide information in the language of the resident/client.

9 STANDARDS AND LEGISLATION

Aged Care Act 2024 – Section 165, Division 5- November 1, 2025

Aged Care Rules 2025- Chater 4, Part 10, Division 2
The Privacy Act 1988
The Better Practice Guide to complaints
Strengthened Quality Standards

10. Documents and Policies Associated

Key Categories and terminology for Complaints and Feedback in Warrigal
Flowchart for Complaints and Feedback in Warrigal
Templates for Responses
Grievance Resolution Policy
Whistle blower Policy
Managing Performance and Behaviour Policy
Diversity Action Plan
Use of Interpreter Policy
Operations Feedback Policy and Procedure) [Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure.pdf](#)

11.DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Owner	Amanda Archer Chief Design and Growth Officer
Date Approved	
Applicable Aged Care Programs	Home Service, Residential Services, Village Services, Warrigal Central Staff, Warrigal Volunteers
Review History	Developed: October 2025
Date of review and summary of changes	
Date of review and summary of changes	
Date of review and summary of changes	

APPENDIX A

Key Categories and Terminology for Complaints and Feedback in Warrigal

Compliment	Positive feedback recognising a person, service or action that improved someone's experience.	
Improvement Suggestion	A recommendation to improve care, services, communication, environment or processes, supporting continuous improvement.	
Minor Complaint	A concern that causes minor inconvenience, discomfort, or dissatisfaction, without impacting safety, wellbeing, or care quality.	
Major Complaint	A serious concern that affects safety, wellbeing, dignity, or rights, or reflects a breach in care standards, including issues like neglect, abuse, sub-standard care or privacy breaches. <i>All commission complaints are considered Major until triaged by Feedback and Complaints Coordinator and a representative on the Operations team (Complaints Officer) to identify if the complaint made meets the description of a major complaint.</i>	
Dignity and Respect	Category Definition: Treating people with kindness and respect, protecting their privacy, and valuing their choices, culture, and identity. Guiding Principle: Every individual is treated with kindness, respect, and compassion, with their privacy, choices, culture, and identity respected in every interaction.	Sub-category: Privacy, Dignity and Choice, Respectful Interactions, Cultural Safety, and Inclusion, Social and Cultural Connectedness.
Clinical Care	Category Definition: Providing safe, high-quality clinical care, including treatment, medications, and health services. Guiding Principle: Safe, effective, and person-centered clinical care is delivered by skilled professionals who are responsive to the health needs of each	Sub-category: Medication Management, Falls / Safety, Pain Management, Care Planning and Assessment, Infection and Wound Management, Allied Health Services.
Communication	Category Definition: Providing clear, timely information that people can understand and supporting their involvement in decisions about their care. Guiding Principle: Information is shared clearly and respectfully, ensuring residents and their families are informed, involved, and confident in decisions about care and services.	Sub-category: Communication with Customers and Families, Information regarding service delivery, Language Support Needs, Consent and Decision Making, Complaints Handling and Resolution.
Access and Responsiveness	Category Definition: Ensuring services are easy to access and delivered promptly based on each person's needs. Guiding Principle: Services are easy to access and delivered in a timely, flexible, and person-centered way that meets the unique needs of each resident and their family.	Sub-category: Admission Process/ Off-boarding, Non-Warrigal Services, Digital Systems and Equipment, Maintenance and Repairs, Accessibility, Wait Times/ Delays, Staff Availability and Rostering, Finance.
Personal Care	Category Definition: Helping with daily tasks like washing, dressing, and moving around in a way that suits each person's preferences. Guiding Principle: Daily living support is provided with empathy, dignity, and respect, tailored to each resident's preferences, routines, and personal comfort.	Sub-category: Daily Living Support (showering, toileting, mobility), Grooming and Hygiene, Personal Environment Support (cleaning, laundry), Routines and Preferences, Personal Safety and Risk.
Food and Dining	Category Definition: Providing meals that are enjoyable, nutritious, and suited to people's dietary needs and preferences. Guiding Principle: Nutritious, enjoyable meals are provided in a welcoming environment that respects individual dietary needs, cultural preferences, and the social value of mealtimes.	Sub-category: Food Presentation, Food Taste, Food Temperature, Menu Concerns, Hospitality and Catering Services, Other Residents/ Customers, Dietary Modifications Concerns.
Organisational Culture	Category Definition: Creating a positive, safe, and respectful environment through good leadership, training, and staff behaviour. Guiding Principle: A positive and respectful culture is fostered through strong leadership, compassionate staff, and a shared commitment to the wellbeing of residents and families.	Sub-category: Staff/ Volunteer Conduct and Behaviour, Training and Capability, Governance and Risk, Ideas and Suggestions.
Responsible Persons	• Staff who are responsible for executive decisions at Warrigal, including Directors and Members of the Governing Body. • Staff who have authority or responsibility for, or significant influence over, planning, directing or controlling the activities of Warrigal. • Staff who are, or are likely to be, responsible for day-to-day operations of an aged care service. • Staff who are responsible for nursing services (must hold a recognised nursing qualification).	

APPENDIX B

Flowchart for Complaints and Feedback in Warrigal

