



Supporting older Australians to make a complaint

A guide for volunteer managers

It's an older person's right to make a complaint

Everyone in aged care has the right to be safe. When issues arise, an older person, their family or representative have the right to make a complaint.

Who is the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission?

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) is the national regulator of aged care services in Australia.

The Commission's purpose is to protect and enhance the safety, health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people receiving Australian government funded aged care and services.

We do this by:

- granting approvals for providers to deliver aged care services
- monitoring the performance of aged care services and their compliance with the Aged Care Quality Standards
- handling complaints, and overseeing approved providers, their workers and volunteers' behaviour with the Code of Conduct for Aged Care.

If you aren't sure whether your organisation is an approved provider, you can check with the person in charge at your service to ensure you understand your responsibilities and those of the volunteers you manage.

What do your volunteers need to know?

Older Australians may ask your volunteers for information or advice about who they should contact or where they can find information about raising a concern or making a complaint.

It's important you ensure your volunteers know how to support them. Volunteers should also be comfortable to respond to concerns raised by an older person and know that it's always okay to speak up.

Older Australians may choose to:



Talk to someone at their aged care service

An older person may wish to start by discussing their complaint directly with the aged care service. An aged care service must have a complaints process that makes it easy for an older person to speak up and have their concern managed effectively.



Talk to the Commission

If an older person isn't comfortable speaking to their aged care service or they aren't satisfied with the service's response, they can make a complaint directly with the Commission.

Details can be found on the Commission's website at <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaint> or by phoning **1800 951 822**.



Get support from an advocate

An advocate is a person that can stand beside an older person and support them to have their voice heard, make informed decisions, and address issues related to their aged care services. Older people receiving care and services have the right to access an aged care advocate. The Older Persons Advocacy Network (also known as OPAN) offers free and independent information and support.

More information can be found on OPAN's website at <https://opan.org.au/> or by phoning **1800 700 600**.



What should you do as a volunteer manager?

As a volunteer manager, you can provide information about complaints handling and the role of advocacy services to your volunteers. A volunteer can then support the people receiving care and services to access the complaints processes available to them.

If an older person tells a volunteer about a complaint they have, it is important that you let the volunteer know what they can and cannot do with this information. Remember, an older person's right to confidentiality must be respected.

You can provide your volunteers with the factsheet [Supporting older Australians to make a complaint – a guide for volunteers](#).

Volunteers can complete the online learning module *Volunteers and complaints* to learn more about how they can support an older person to understand their rights within complaints handling.

**It's always okay to speak up.
Remember, it's an older person's right
to make a complaint.**

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.



Phone
1800 951 822



Web
agedcarequality.gov.au



Write
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