



Supporting older Australians to make a complaint

A guide for volunteers

It's an older person's right to raise a concern or make a complaint

Everyone in aged care has the right to be safe and raise a concern about their care and services. 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 the organisation you volunteer with is an approved provider, you can check with the person who engaged you, such as your volunteer manager, to ensure you understand your responsibilities.

What do you need to know?

As a volunteer working in aged care, older Australians may ask you 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 for you to know how to support them, and to remember that it is 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 process for handling complaints 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 if an older person raises a concern or complaint with you?

Talk with your volunteer manager; they will be able to give you more information about handling complaints and the supports available for older Australians.

If an older person tells you about a concern or complaint they have, it is important that you let them know you will be sharing this information with your volunteer manager. An older person's right to confidentiality must be respected.

If you see or hear something that concerns you, inform your volunteer manager, provider, or the Commission.

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

**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
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
GPO Box 9819, in your capital city