

Blind Citizens Australia

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**My Aged Care**

# Complaints Procedures and available supports

## What happens if I have a complaint?

If you are feeling concerned about any aspect of service delivery, you should approach your case manager or service provider directly in the first instance. In most cases, they will be best placed to resolve any complaints and alleviate your concerns.

The provider needs to accept a complaint regardless of whether it is made verbally, in writing or anonymously.

Your provider must have appropriate processes in place to receive, record and resolve complaints. They must provide you with the information on how you can access these processes. The complaints process will also be included in your agreement.

These processes have to take into consideration people with additional support requirements such as people with vision or hearing impairments and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Note: Providers must not discontinue care or services, refuse access or otherwise take action against any person because they have made a complaint. Providers must also handle and address any complaints fairly, promptly and confidentially.

If you have a complaint about a service or service provider that you have raised directly but you are not satisfied with the outcome, you have a right to make a formal complaint. There are a number of ways you can make a complaint and seek support for the process. If you want a representative - family member, carer or other support person to be your advocate, you have a right to do so. You can call the My Aged Care contact centre on 1800 200 422 (8am to 8pm) to lodge your complaint directly.

## The Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Aged Care

The Charter of Aged Care Rights outlines your rights and responsibilities, through all levels of support in the aged care system. All Commonwealth-subsidised aged care providers delivering care and services across the continuum of aged care must ensure they comply with the Charter. Please note, the Charter is currently being updated, and the new Charter that covers all programmes provided by My Aged Care will be in place from July 2019.

A copy of the Charter must be provided to all consumers by the service providers.

The Charter is available in English and a number of other languages. It can be accessed via:

<https://agedcare.health.gov.au/publications-and-articles/guides-advice-and-policies/charter-of-care-recipients-rights-and-responsibilities-home-care>

If a service provider were to act in a way that is inconsistent with the Charter, it may be in breach of its responsibilities under the Act and be subject to appropriate compliance action.

If you, your family, friends or carer, or anyone else, is concerned that a Government-subsidised service provider is not complying with the Charter, the complaints process, as outlined above, can be followed.

## Aged Care Complaints Commissioner

The Aged Care Complaints Commissioner provides a free complaints resolution service across Australia. Anyone can contact the Complaints Commissioner if they wish to raise a complaint or concern about an Australian Government-subsidised aged care service. This includes services for residential care and residential respite care, Home Care Packages, Commonwealth Home Support Programme, and flexible care, including transition care and the National Aboriginal and Flexible Aged Care Programmes.

For details on how to contact the commissioner, see our ‘Helpful Contacts’ fact sheet.

## Advocacy Support Services

You are able to have an advocate to support you in any stage of your complaints process. An advocate may be family or a friend, a carer, or an organisation.

Blind Citizens Australia may be able to assist if your complaint is directly related to blindness or vision impairment. Otherwise, aged care advocacy organisations are available to assist. You can find contact details of advocacy support services on our ‘Helpful Contacts’ fact sheet.