**Ostomy NSW Member Complaints Policy**

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| **Document ID:**  | Member Complaints Policy  |
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| **Applicable** **All internal/external Site/s:**  | All  |

# **VERSION CONTROL**

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| **Document History**  |
| **Version**  | **Summary of Changes**  |
| 1.0  | Original  |
| 2.0  |  |

### **1 Introduction**

* 1. Ostomy NSW Limited (ONL) fosters a culture of openness, trust, and integrity. This can only be achieved if open communication exists and is allowed to occur through open dialogue.
	2. This policy aims to provide our members a secure method to raise a complaint about the operation of Ostomy NSW Limited and how the member has been treated.

### **2 Purpose**

1. Ostomy NSW acknowledges that people have a right to make complaints about its service or actions. This Member Complaints Policy ensures that complaints can be managed fairly, quickly and professionally.
	1. The Ostomy NSW Member Complaints Policy is intended to:
* Support people to make a complaint
* Make it easier for Ostomy NSW to deal with complaints
* Help Ostomy NSW improve its services
* Give employees, members, supplier and other stakeholders confidence in Ostomy NSW.

### **3 Commitments**

3 Ostomy NSW will make sure that:

* Anyone who is not happy about the association can easily make a complaint.
* People are given assistance to make their complaint.
* People are not disadvantaged or treated unfairly after they make a complaint.
* Complaints are dealt with quickly and fairly.
* People are told what decisions have been made about their complaint and the reasons for the decision.
* Complaints are recorded and reported on to help Ostomy NSW provide better services.

### **4. Policy Availability**

The Member Complaints Policy and these policy and procedures are available on Ostomy NSW website and at their offices.

**5. Scope**

The Member Complaints Policy applies to all complaints received Ostomy NSW and the way they are handled.

Complaints include those that are:

* Fixed quickly
* Made verbally
* Made anonymously.

**6. Complaints Model**

Ostomy NSW Member Complaints Policy is a step-by-step way to receive, record, assess, review, respond and report on complaints. It recognises that complaints are usually made verbally to the Manager, staff or volunteers.

**Stage 1**: Complaints are initially managed and resolved by the Manager.

**Stage 2**: Unresolved complaints are referred to the Ostomy NSW Board for review and response.

**Stage 3**: People who are not happy with the way Ostomy NSW has handled their complaint can contact the Australian Council of Stoma Associations Inc or the Commonwealth Department of Health, Disability and Ageing Stoma Appliance Scheme Enquiry line for help.

ACSA: email feedback@australianstoma.com.au

DoHDA (Stoma): 02 6289 2308 or email: stoma@health.gov.au

**7. Receiving complaints**

***Making a complaint***

People can make a complaint:

* By telephone or in person
* By email to president@ostomynsw.org.au or online via Ostomy NSW website (this will be directed to info@ostomynsw.org.au)
* In writing, addressed to the Manager or the Board of Directors
* Anonymously

If a complaint is made on a person’s behalf, Ostomy NSW will check that the person agrees is happy for Ostomy NSW to respond directly to their representative.

***Helping people make a complaint***

• Ostomy NSW staff and volunteers should help people make a complaint, and tell them what information they need to provide.

• Ostomy NSW should arrange help if a person needs an interpreter, or has special needs. Ostomy NSW Manager will endeavour to meet these needs with a service provider.

***Acknowledging complaints***

• Ostomy NSW should let people know they have received their complaint within two (2) business days.

• Ostomy NSW can let people know they have received their complaint verbally or in writing.

• Acknowledgements should tell people how long it will take to handle the complaint and the contact details for the person dealing with the complaint.

**8. Recording complaints**

All written complaints will be referred to the Manager. The Manager will arrange for the complaint details to be recorded in the complaints register.

(Please refer to ***Complaints Register*** word document attached at the end of this policy).

All verbal complaints will be recorded by the receiving person and passed to the Manager. Details of the complaint will be entered in the complaints register. If a verbal complaint is complex, the Manager should ask the person to put their complaint in writing.

The Manager should create a full record of how the complaint is managed. The complaints register should include:

• the name of the person making the complaint

• the date the complaint was received and how

• what the complaint is about

• information collected and considered

• complaint decision and the reasons for the decision

• final response communicated to complainant

• the date the complaint was finalised

• any action required by Ostomy NSW to resolve the complaint.

**9. Assessing complaints**

Each complaint should be looked at carefully to figure out:

• what the complaint is about

• how it should be managed, including whether it is urgent

• if any extra information is needed.

Ostomy NSW needs to look at:

• whether the complaint involves an action of Ostomy NSW or its staff

• whether the person making the complaint is directly affected

• whether the complaint is worth investigating

• whether the person making the complaint has a right to appeal the decision

• what the person wants Ostomy NSW to do to fix the problem

Anonymous complaints will be accepted and dealt with like any other complaint. Important considerations include:

• how serious the complaint is

• how much information is provided

• whether Ostomy NSW is able to properly investigate the complaint.

The investigating assessment will be recorded in the complaint record to be held by the Manager.

**10. Reviewing complaints**

Complaints will be dealt with quickly and efficiently. Complaints should also be handled in a fair and objective way.

When Ostomy NSW deals with a complaint, it should:

• talk to the person making the complaint to check whether they understand all the issues

• gather and consider all relevant information about the complaint

• identify and consider relevant laws, policies and procedures

• give anyone affected by the complaint a fair hearing before the complaint is decided

• decide what can be done to fix the problem.

Ostomy NSW can fix the problem by:

• apologising

• changing its decision

• changing its policy, practice, procedure

• fixing misleading or inaccurate records

• offering help, providing further information or referring the complaint to someone who can help.

**11. Responding to complaints**

Ostomy NSW should tell the person making the complaint what it decides within fifteen (15) working days of the complaint being received. The final response can be provided verbally, but should be confirmed in writing.

If the final response cannot be provided within this time, Ostomy NSW should let the person know how their complaint is progressing and when they can expect a response.

The final response should include:

• the decision and the reasons for the decision

• contact details for the person handling the complaint

• information about any right of appeal.

**12. Reporting on how the Member Complaints Policy works**

The Ostomy NSW Board should receive a report at each Board meeting on how the Member Complaints Policy is working.

The report will:

• identify and analyse complaint trends, significant issues and figure out whether the Member Complaints Policy is operating effectively

• include any recommendations for improvement

• monitor how Ostomy NSW will implement accepted recommendations.

**--- END OF POLICY ---**

**Complaints Register**

