

hcsccl powers

Provider cooperation is essential to obtain information and resolve complaints.

Most matters are resolved in preliminary inquiry by informal mediation, less often by conciliation and rarely, by investigation.

hcsccl can require a service provider to provide information, a response, an explanation or documents within a reasonable time.

This includes obtaining a consumer's personal records.

Failure to cooperate with hcsccl attracts fines.

hcsccl is freedom of information exempt.

hcsccl can require a service provider to provide reports about their complaints and action taken to remedy them.

What else does hcsccl do?

- monitors and reports complaint trends
- makes recommendations to improve safety and quality
- provides training and coaching about making and responding to complaints

Need help?

- visit the hcsccl Web site
- speak to an hcsccl staff member
- use hcsccl Web site to request a guest speaker

Making and responding to complaints – need help?

1 step-by-step
www.hcsccl.sa.gov.au

2 hcsccl Enquiry Service
p 8226 8666
Country SA 1800 232 007
Monday to Thursday 10am to 4pm



hcsccl
health & community services
complaints commissioner

PO Box 199 Rundle Mall
Adelaide SA 5000
p 8226 8652 – reception only
f 8226 8620
www.hcsccl.sa.gov.au

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hcsccl

health & community services
complaints commissioner

responding to complaints about
health or community services

a guide for providers



Complaints – safety & quality

Complaints are feedback about services. Complaints are an opportunity to make services safer and better for everyone.

A person who is upset about services sought, or treatment received, from a health or community service provider, can make a complaint to **hcsc** under the *Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004*.

What to do if you receive a complaint

Attempt to resolve the complaint directly with the consumer. While each complaint is different, the following general principles apply

- establish, use and regularly review a complaints policy
- train staff and volunteers to manage complaints appropriately
- ask questions and gather all relevant information
- respond promptly and thoroughly to all complaints
- keep clear and accurate records
- find ways to meet any special needs a consumer may have (for example, an interpreter)
- emphasise confidentiality and privacy
- plan meetings and stay calm
- keep your promises
- keep the consumer informed

- aim to make progress towards resolving the complaint within 30 days of receipt
- seek advice and assistance if you are unsure how to proceed
- separate complaint records from consumer service records
- **remember** – the value of complaints lies in your response to their causes

What if a complaint can't be resolved directly with the consumer?

You can seek help from **hcsc** to resolve a consumer complaint or you can refer the consumer to **hcsc**.

Who can complain to **hcsc**?

- almost anyone over 16
- a parent or guardian can make a complaint on behalf of a person aged less than 16

What can a person complain to **hcsc** about?

A service sought or received from a public, private or non-government health or community service, or provider – an organisation or an individual.

Generally **hcsc** can help with a complaint that began up to 2 years ago.

What will **hcsc** do when a complaint is made?

- **hcsc** will assist the consumer to make reasonable attempts to resolve the problem directly with the service provider within 30 days
- **hcsc** acts independently, impartially and in the public interest
- **hcsc** will assess a complaint and make a determination about it within 45 days of receipt
- **hcsc** may determine that a complaint
 - be informally mediated
 - be referred for conciliation
 - be investigated
 - be referred to a health professional registration board
 - be referred to a more appropriate body
 - requires no further action

Registration boards and other statutory bodies

hcsc matters may overlap with other jurisdictions eg Coroner, Equal Opportunity Commission, registration boards.

hcsc consults with these bodies to resolve overlapping complaints.