**[Complaints Self-Assessment Tool](https://www.mhcc.vic.gov.au/complaints-self-assessment-tool)** – ref stage 6

Engagement material  
**Stage 6: Improving the experience**   
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# **Discussion points**

* Do all staff (including Lived Experience workers) know to whom, and how, they would report a complaint or provide feedback about how to improve the complaints process?
* Are Lived Experience advisory bodies regularly reviewing the accessibility and effectiveness of the complaints process, and collating and reporting any concerns about it that they have encountered?
* Are feedback bodies doing the same?
* Are these concerns being regularly reported to management and governance bodies?
* Is targeted staff training designed and delivered to facilitate improvements to the complaint process?

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# **Constraints**

* Resourcing constraints mean services are unable to be sufficiently responsive to complaints about the complaint process: this creates an environment where it is difficult to identify process improvements, but also to justify the time and budget required to make them
* Supervision and line-management processes may not include a review of how staff managed the complaints process
* It is difficult to design feedback tools and processes that are accessible to the widest range of situations, cohorts, contexts and settings: they are thus often not amenable to major or frequent change

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# **Barriers**

* Logistical pressures may make feedback about the complaints process unlikely to be recorded on a staff-scribed complaint form or other linked document, and also make this information more likely to be overlooked in a feedback body meeting
* Complaining about complaints is likely to be informal and situation-specific (often verbal) during the investigation/resolution/response phase, with no guideline, procedure or familiar mechanism to record it at that time: complaints training does not usually cover or address this
* Services may not look externally, to other services and complaint bodies, to proactively improve their complaints process and collateral
* Staff are not usually trained to improve the experience of complaining based on feedback about complaining

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# **Advice**

* Common complaint process concerns/problems/limitations to be addressed, and improvements made, to expedite and facilitate making a complaint and ensure outcomes
* All such improvements need to be driven by Lived Experience staff as well as service staff
* Services to have strategies to collect feedback about consumer/carer experience besides complaint forms that are accessible, well-known and regular
* Consumers, carers and all staff to be aware of and familiar with these other feedback options
* These feedback pathways and resulting change need to have been evaluated as improving consumer and carer experience of care

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