

## Feedback and Complaints Policy

Spinal Life Australia (SLA) aims to consistently provide services that meet the needs of members, clients and stakeholders satisfying applicable statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements.

Feedback provided to SLA will be regarded as an opportunity to review and improve services that the organisation delivers providing better outcomes to members, clients and stakeholders. Providing information on how to provide feedback to SLA, recording information, responding to feedback and resolving complaints are essential to achieving and maintaining services that meet individual needs.

*Feedback* is any kind of compliment, concern, suggestion or complaint.

A *complaint* is any type of feedback about SLA's services that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable, for which a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

*Workers* are defined as the Board of Directors (BOD), Board Committees, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), executive officers, senior managers, managers, supervisors, employees and volunteers.

Types of complaints include:

- Complaints regarding the way services are provided by SLA.
- Decisions that have been made by SLA
- Conduct of SLA's workers
- Breach of privacy of clients' personal information

### Who can provide feedback?

Anyone can make a complaint to SLA including:

- A client
- A member
- A client's family or guardian
- A client's financial manager
- An advocate
- A community visitor
- A professional
- A member of the public

Feedback can also be made to SLA anonymously.

### How can feedback be made?

Complaints can be made to SLA in any of the following forms:

- Through SLA's website [www.spinal.com.au](http://www.spinal.com.au)
- By email to [feedback@spinal.com.au](mailto:feedback@spinal.com.au)
- In writing
- In person
- By phone

When feedback is received by SLA consent is deemed to have been given to use the submitter's personal information in order to process the feedback, unless the submitter chooses to make their submission anonymously. When a submission is made anonymously, SLA's ability to process the feedback effectively may be limited.

### Responding to Feedback

Feedback received verbally will be considered to have been acknowledged by the worker receiving the feedback.

All other feedback received by SLA, except anonymous feedback, will be acknowledged within two (2) business days. Feedback received via the SLA website will be acknowledged automatically.

Feedback that requires a response other than an acknowledgement, such as a complaint, should be resolved and the outcome communicated within twenty-eight (28) days. If the feedback is complex and requires longer than twenty-eight (28) days to resolve, SLA will communicate regular updates to the individual that provided the feedback until the issue is resolved or the matter finalised.

### **Requests to Reconsider Resolution of a Complaint**

There may be situations where a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint to SLA.

SLA may accept a request to reconsider a complaint resolution if:

- The request is made within six (6) weeks of the complaint being resolved by SLA;
- The reasons for the reconsideration relate to a matter of natural justice not being carried out by SLA;
- The person making the request has new and significant evidence relating to the original complaint which they were unable to provide during the first original complaint resolution process;
- The new evidence would, on the balance of probabilities, lead to a different outcome.

SLA will not consider a request to reconsider an outcome of a resolved complaint if the request constitutes unreasonable conduct by the person making the request.

SLA will only reconsider the finding of a previous complaint process once.

Requests to reconsider a reconsideration will not be accepted.

A reconsideration may only be undertaken by a person not involved in the original decision for the applicable complaint.

If a complainant is not satisfied with SLA's response to their request to reconsider, then they are also entitled to raise their concerns with an appropriate external regulatory body

### **External Regulatory Agencies**

If the person providing the feedback is not satisfied with how their feedback has been resolved they are also entitled to submit their feedback to an appropriate regulatory agency:

NDIS clients can call the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 034 544 or lodge feedback online by visiting [ndiscommission.gov.au](http://ndiscommission.gov.au)

VHC clients can call the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822 or lodge feedback online by visiting [agedcarequality.govcms.gov.au](http://agedcarequality.govcms.gov.au)

NIISQ clients can call the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland on 1300 607 566 2 or lodge feedback online by visiting [niis.qld.gov.au](http://niis.qld.gov.au)

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

SLA will only provide information about a complaint to those individuals directly involved and all parties will be informed of the need for upholding privacy and confidentiality. All information regarding the complaint will be stored securely in the client's file and SLA's Feedback and Complaints Register.