Just Better Care Complaints and Whistleblower Policy

Purpose

Just Better Care is committed to delivering high-quality in-home care and support services that empower participants to live their lives their way.

We recognise that open and transparent feedback is vital to continuous improvement. Where a participant or stakeholder has a complaint or grievance, Just Better Care provides every opportunity to express their concerns and works promptly and effectively to resolve them.

We are also committed to the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct. This policy encourages staff, participants, carers, contractors, and other stakeholders to report any genuine concerns regarding misconduct, unethical behaviour, or risks to participant safety — without fear of reprisal.

Just Better Care complies with the complaints management requirements under:

- The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
- The Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards
- The NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators

Definitions

- Grievance: Any concern, problem, or complaint raised by participants, supporters, staff, suppliers, or the public about Just Better Care's services, actions, decisions, or behaviours they believe to be unfair or unjust.
- Whistleblowing: The act of reporting, in good faith, any suspected illegal, unethical, or unsafe practices within the organisation or affecting participants.

Whistleblowing principles include:

- Protection from retaliation
- Confidentiality
- Fair and timely investigation
- Transparency

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Objectives

The Just Better Care Complaints and Whistleblower Procedure aims to:

- Receive and address feedback in good faith
- Resolve issues promptly, respectfully, and confidentially
- Foster positive relationships with all stakeholders
- Promote continuous improvement in our practices
- Enhance outcomes for participants and staff
- Provide clear communication and feedback about the resolution process

Principles

1. Protection from Retaliation
   No person who raises a concern in good faith will be subject to victimisation, discrimination, or any adverse consequences.
2. Confidentiality
   The identity of whistleblowers and complainants will be protected wherever possible.
3. Fair and Timely Investigation
   All reports will be assessed and investigated objectively, promptly, and impartially.
4. Transparency
   Participants and staff will be kept informed about the process and, where appropriate, the outcomes.

Investigation Process

1. Acknowledgement
   Just Better Care will acknowledge receipt of the report or complaint as soon as possible.
2. Assessment
   The matter will be reviewed to determine whether an investigation is required and the appropriate pathway for resolution.
3. Investigation
   A thorough and confidential investigation will be undertaken.
4. Outcome and Action
   Findings and recommended actions will be reported to relevant management or the Board, and corrective measures will be implemented as necessary.

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Participant Focus

Participant safety and wellbeing are our highest priorities. Any concern involving a participant will be addressed with urgency, ensuring appropriate support and protection throughout the process.

Record Keeping

All reports, investigations, and resolutions will be securely documented and retained in accordance with legal and organisational requirements.

Training and Awareness

All staff and volunteers receive regular training on this policy and on how to raise or respond to concerns.
Participants are informed of their right to report complaints or concerns without fear of reprisal.

Open Disclosure and Complaint Management

Just Better Care embraces the principles of Open Disclosure when managing complaints and grievances. We ensure that:

- Participants and their representatives understand their right to make a complaint without fear of retribution.
- Information about the complaints process is provided at service commencement, during service reviews, and upon request.
- Information about external complaint pathways is made available, including:
    - Just Better Care Australia
    - NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
    - Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
- Assistance is available for participants wishing to lodge a complaint externally.
- All complaints are handled with respect for privacy, dignity, and confidentiality.

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How to Raise a Concern

Concerns can be raised through any of the following channels:

- A Just Better Care Support Worker, Coordinator, Care Manager, clinician, franchise manager, or owner
- Your local Just Better Care office directly
- Just Better Care Australia (National Office)
    - Phone: 1300 587 823
    - Email: feedback@justbettercare.com
- Anonymous feedback form: justbettercare.com/feedback

Reports should include as much detail as possible:

- Description of the concern
- Names of individuals involved (if known)
- Date, time, and location of the incident(s)
- Any supporting evidence or documents

Just Better Care Feedback Cycle

1. Feedback Lodged
   Complaints and grievances (including whistleblowing reports) can be made in writing or verbally by individuals or groups.
   Feedback may be submitted through the participant complaint form, website, email, letter, or by calling your local Just Better Care office.
2. Acknowledgement
   We respond to all feedback promptly — ideally on the day it is received.
   Complainants are informed of the process, their preferred resolution is discussed, and timelines are provided. Progress updates are given regularly until resolution.
3. Assessment and Investigation
   Complaints are investigated transparently and fairly, in consultation with those involved. The process includes reviewing what happened, when, and who was affected.
4. Outcome and Communication
   The outcome is communicated promptly to the complainant, either verbally or in writing, depending on the situation.
   Participants are invited to provide feedback on how their complaint was handled.
5. Training and Continuous Improvement
   Insights from complaints are used to improve services. Staff and volunteers receive regular training to ensure awareness of complaint-handling and whistleblower protections.

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