Complaints handling

All complaints to go straight to CEO Dr Jenny Harasty (Our Child Safety Officer) who will investigate and determine action required such resolving difficulties, changing therapist, providing documents, or a free therapy session if needed.

Every complaint is different but the steps for dealing with them should be the same.

A complaint handling procedure ensures complaints are dealt with the same way every time.

Here is a procedure for handling customer complaints consistently.

1. **Listen to the complaint**. Accept ownership of the problem. Apologise. Don't blame others. Thank the customer for bringing the problem to your attention.
2. **Be understanding**. Remember, the person is complaining about your business, not about you personally. Be calm, cheerful and helpful. Where possible, let the customer know that you will take responsibility for resolving the problem.
3. **Record the complaint**. Detail the complaint so that you and other staff know exactly what the problem is. Have one place to record complaints and the actions taken to resolve them. This lets you see any patterns emerge over time. Complaints about a particular process or product might indicate that changes need to be made. Staff can also see what was done to resolve complaints in the past.
4. **Make sure you have all the facts**. Check that you understand the details while the person is making the complaint, and ask questions if necessary. This will also let them know that you are taking their complaint seriously.
5. **Discuss options for fixing the problem**. At the very least, a sincere apology costs nothing. But think about what this complaint could cost you in lost business or a complaint to the Equal Opportunity Commission. Maybe you can provide a free product or discount a future service.
6. **Keep your promises**. Don't promise things that you can't deliver. In handling complaints it is better to under-promise and over-deliver.
7. **Be quick**. If complaints take several days to resolve or are forgotten, they can escalate.
8. **Follow up**. Record the customer's contact details and follow up to see if they were happy with how their complaint was handled. Let them know what you are doing to avoid the problem in the future.
9. **Reward your staff**. Encourage and reward your staff for dealing with unhappy customers and handling their complaints well.

Complaints management:

All service providers of specialist disability services are to have clear and accessible complaints handling and dispute resolution processes which are in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard

Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organizations.

Providers must advise participants that if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint lodged with their provider, the participant can lodge a complaint with the Department of Communities,

Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) Central Complaints Unit.

For more information:

<https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/aboutus/compliments>