

## Feedback - Frequently Asked Questions

At Austin Health we welcome and value your feedback as it helps us know what we are doing well and where we need to improve. We are keen to hear about your experience and have the opportunity to address and resolve your concerns.

When providing feedback to Austin Health you are able to:

- Provide feedback or make a complaint without it affecting the way you are treated
- Have your concerns addressed in a transparent and timely way
- Share your (or someone you care for) experience and participate to improve the quality of care and health services

Your feedback helps us to provide high quality, safe care and to make changes when required / possible, so others do not have the same experience.

For examples of how we used previous feedback, please visit our website via this link

<https://www.austin.org.au/how-we-use-your-feedback/>

### Types of feedback you can provide to Austin Health

- Compliments help us know when we've done a good job. When the Patient Experience Unit receives a compliment, we add it to our feedback system and share it with senior staff and their teams. We always appreciate kind words and gratitude about our care and services.
- Enquiries: are requests for information. Depending on the enquiry, the Patient Experience Team ask relevant staff to either contact you directly, or provide information to the Patient Experience Team, to communicate back to you.
- Suggestions: are an idea or plan put forward for consideration. Suggestions received at the Patient Experience Unit are entered into our electronic feedback system and forwarded to relevant staff for their review and consideration and actioning, if appropriate.
- Complaints: are an expression of dissatisfaction brought to the attention of a staff member that may help us to improve the care and service provided. Please see below for more information about Austin Health's complaint management processes.

### Who can provide feedback?

Anyone can provide feedback.

We are mindful of the importance of maintaining patient privacy and confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of a patient, you should ask for their permission prior to complaining. The Patient Experience Team may need to request the patient's consent for you to act on their behalf and to receive information relating to the complaint. The Patient Experience Team will contact you to request consent, when required.

### Requesting assistance or an interpreter to provide feedback

Please do not hesitate to contact the Patient Experience Team if you require an interpreter or assistance to provide feedback.



Austin Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays its respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Austin Health celebrates, values and includes people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.



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- If you speak a language other than English, we can help you provide feedback. For more information visit website <https://www.austin.org.au/providing-feedback-in-another-language/>
- If you are deaf, hard of hearing or have a visual impairment, we can help you provide feedback. Let us know the best way to communicate with you. For more information please visit website; <https://www.austin.org.au/getting-assistance-to-provide-feedback/>
- Our Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) support people with disability, their families and carers to access services at Austin Health. For more information please visit the website <https://www.austin.org.au/disability-liaison/>

## **I want to remain anonymous, is this possible?**

Yes, we welcome anonymous feedback. You can provide feedback anonymously, however this means we will not be able to get in touch with you for more details or to let you know the outcome of your feedback. The Patient Experience Team enter anonymous feedback into our feedback system and forward it to the most appropriate staff member to review.

## **How do I know Austin Health received my feedback?**

We aim to acknowledge all written feedback within 2 working days. If you have not received acknowledgement of your feedback, please contact the Patient Experience Team.

## **How do I make a complaint?**

Speaking directly with your health service provider is often the quickest and easiest way to resolve complaints. If you are staying in hospital, your first step is to talk with the staff caring for you or ask to speak to the nurse in charge.

If, after speaking with staff, you are not satisfied or would feel more comfortable talking to someone else, please contact the Patient Experience Team regarding your concerns. You can do this by:

- Emailing [feedback@austin.org.au](mailto:feedback@austin.org.au)
- Completing an online feedback form via the website <https://www.austin.org.au/feedback/>
- Completing a Paper Feedback Form and placing it in the box located at the main entrance of each Austin Health Site
- Calling the Patient Experience Team on 9496 3566
- Sending written complaint to:

The Patient Experience Team  
Austin Health  
PO Box 5555  
Heidelberg VIC 3084

The Patient Experience Unit operates between 9am-4pm on weekdays. If your call is not answered, please leave a detailed message and a Patient Experience Team member will return your call as soon as possible. When leaving a message, please provide us with your name, contact number and a brief description of your concern.

If we need to contact you, it will be from a private number. For privacy reasons, we cannot leave a message, unless your voicemail clearly identifies who you are.



We acknowledge that sometimes issues can be distressing for you and we will do our best to support you. We are mindful that feedback is most effective when it is received in an appropriate and non-intimidating or threatening manner. Aggression towards staff in either verbal or written form is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

## **What information do we need from you when making a complaint?**

- Providing your name and contact details will help us to get in touch and help resolve the issue.
- Be clear and factual about what went wrong, who was involved and when and where it happened. Dot points help to convey your information concisely.
- Documents that may provide useful information about the complaint, for example:
  - discharge summaries from other hospitals
  - appointment letters
  - letters from your GP or specialists, etc
- Please let us know if you would like a response to your complaint.
- Explain the outcome/s you would like, for example:
  - an explanation about what happened and why
  - an apology
  - access to treatment
  - reimbursement or compensation
  - a change in policy or practice to prevent future problems

## **What happens with my complaint?**

- Once we have acknowledged we have received your complaint and gained consent (if required), we enter your feedback into our electronic feedback system. The Patient Experience Team will then forward the complaint to the most appropriate senior staff to review, follow up and/or investigate.
- We will provide you a response if requested.
- Our timeframe for response can vary based on the complexity of the issues you have raised and the level of investigation required. In some cases, we need to communicate and interview multiple staff, review medical records and gather information to better understand events.
- We aim to have most complaints responded to within 30 working days, however, more complex issues can take several months to provide you a response.
- We encourage you to contact The Patient Experience Team if you would like an update on the progress of your feedback.

## **Will my care (or the person I complain on behalf of) be affected if I make a complaint?**

If you make a complaint at Austin Health, it won't affect the care or services you and your family receive.



Any information the Patient Experience Team gathers while reviewing your complaint will stay confidential. It is kept in a separate system, not in your medical record. This means that when you or the person you're complaining for visit Austin Health, staff won't be able to see the complaint in the medical record.

## What if I am not satisfied with the outcome of my complaint?

The Patient Experience Team will provide a formal response to your complaint when requested. If you feel that your feedback has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, you may find it helpful to contact The Health Complaints Commissioner (HCC).

The HCC is:

- the independent Office responsible for protecting Victorian's health rights
- free and impartial
- able to confidentially receive complaints about health service providers.

The HCC can be contacted on 1300 582 113 or online at <http://hcc.vic.gov.au/make-complaint>.

For more information about the HCC, please visit the website <https://hcc.vic.gov.au/>

## Mental Health Complaints

If you would like to provide feedback for the Austin Health Mental Health Service, there are two different ways to do so:

- Contact the Austin Health Patient Experience Team, who will send your feedback directly to the Mental Health Services Leadership Team. The leadership team will then act to find someone to assist you.
- Contact the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (MHWC). The MHWC exists to provide an independent facilitator of feedback and complaints and works collaboratively with consumers, families, carers, support people and mental health service staff.

The MHWC can be contacted by calling 1800 246 054 or by emailing [help@mhwc.vic.gov.au](mailto:help@mhwc.vic.gov.au).

For more information, please visit the MHWC website <https://www.mhwc.vic.gov.au/>

## Patient Experience Team contact details:

- Email: [Feedback@austin.org.au](mailto:Feedback@austin.org.au)
- Phone: 9496 3566

Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9am –4pm (excluding public holidays)

If the Patient Experience Team do not answer the phone, please leave a message and we will endeavour to return your phone call within 1 working day.



Patient Information

Document title: Feedback Frequently Asked Questions



For further information

Department: The Patient Experience Unit

Phone: 9496 3566

