



Complaints - It's OK to complain

What can a complaint be about?

A complaint can be about anything to do with the service you receive from Mpower, a person or something else.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone can make a complaint about Mpower. This person may be a person with a disability, a family member or an advocate.

Who can help you make a complaint?

To help you make a complaint you can ask a friend, family member, support worker, case manager or advocate.

Will you get into trouble or lose your services for making a complaint?

No, you will not get into trouble or lose your service. It is your right to make a complaint when you are not happy with the services you get. Mpower must make sure that you are treated with respect and not disadvantaged because you made a complaint.

Complaints process

Complaints will be kept strictly confidential.

1. Talk, email or write to the person involved in your complaint or their manager.
2. Please provide the following information when making the complaint:
 - What happened
 - Who was involved
 - When it happened
 - Names of people who saw it happen
 - How it made you feel
3. Mpower staff will listen to what is wrong.
4. Mpower staff will attempt to resolve the complaint promptly (up to 3 working days). Reports of abuse and neglect will be responded to immediately (*within one working day*).
5. If dealing with the complaint takes more than 3 working days Mpower will keep you updated on what is happening with your complaint throughout the process. This may occur when staff are required to speak to other people involved.

6. As an outcome you may get a:

- Better service for you and other people
- Letter of apology
- Letter to tell you why this happened
- Letter to say that there is nothing we can do.

7. If you are not happy with the outcome you can:

- Ask for another meeting with Mpower
- Speak to the Mpower Chief Executive Officer
- Disability Services Commissioner **1800 677 342**

The Disability Services Commissioner can:

- Listen to a complaint about Mpower.
- Decide to help you. For example, speaking to Mpower or asking a meeting between you and Mpower.

8. Complaint details will be kept confidentially in a complaints register at Mpower.

9. Non identifying information about the complaint details will be provided to the Disability Services Commissioner.

10. The complaints register will be reviewed annually by Mpower to identify areas for improvement.

People making a complaint will not have services affected because a complaint has been made.

Advocacy

Mpower service users are entitled to have an advocate present at any meeting at Mpower. This may include meetings around, access to services, assistance with planning, decision making, choice or making a complaint. The person who requires an advocate to be appointed needs to be involved in the selection of the advocate to ensure he/she maintains active participation in the process.

To ensure independence and to avoid conflict of interest Mpower employees are not able to act as an advocate for Mpower consumers.

For further information about advocacy please contact Southwest Advocacy Association (03) 5561 4584

South West Region



Rights, Privacy & Complaints brochure available in other languages and easy read format. Please contact Mpower for further information.

Mpower Inc. is accredited with the Quality Improvement Council on Australian Health & Community Service Standards



Information Privacy

Mpower is one many community services that often work together to meet the needs of residents in this area. The following information provides some general advice on how your personal and health information will be handled while you are a user of this service.

What happens to information about me?

When you become a service user of this agency a record may be kept of your personal and health information. This includes your name, address, contact details and information about your health. Every time you attend or have contact with us, new information is added to your record. This allows all staff involved with your support to access your information easily and quickly when it is needed.

Your personal and health information is stored securely at this agency. We will keep your record for a minimum of 7 years after your last visit. The record will then be disposed of securely, as required by law.

Why is this information necessary?

We need to collect and keep this information to provide you with an appropriate service. Your personal and health information can help us to quickly identify which of our services are likely to be meet your needs. It will also lessen the need to collect the same information over and over.

Some information may also be used for research and planning, to help us provide better outcomes for the whole community. In this case, any identifying information, such as your name and contact details, will be removed before the information is used.

What rights do I have to access my health information?

You can ask to see any information held on your record. This may include viewing the information, getting a summary or in some cases a fuller copy of your record, or having information explained to you if you wish. Some limits may apply where particular circumstances prevent us from releasing information. If any limits apply to your record, this will be explained to you.

You also have the right to correct any information in your record that you believe is incorrect, incomplete, out of date or misleading. You cannot ask that information held on your record be removed, though you may ask that a correcting statement be added to it. For information on how you may request access and/or correction, please speak to one of our staff.

How will my information remain confidential?

We have strict policies about who can see and use your personal and health information. All our staff members must treat your information confidentially. Your privacy is also protected by law. Generally, we only share personal or health information about you with people who are directly involved in your ongoing care, for the purpose of a particular service.

If we need to share information for any other purpose we will ask for your agreement before doing so (*unless otherwise required by law*).

What if I am unable to give consent?

In some cases, consumers may not be able to give consent because they are legally unable to make a decision about release of their information (*for example, young people, children, people with a severe illness or major injury, or those with a mental illness or other impairment*).

In such cases, a decision will be sought from the services users authorised representative. People who can act as authorised representatives in these circumstances are specified by law.

Who may have access to information about me?

We may recommend that other service providers outside this agency become involved in your care. In that case, you will be asked to give consent for us to disclose any necessary information from your record to the other services, to help them assess your needs and provide you with relevant support.

When can information be disclosed to other people without my consent?

There are very few situations when your information may be shared without your consent.

For example, in an emergency situation, we would have to release medical information about you to aid emergency treatment.

Also, in certain circumstances, Mpower may be required by law to release personal information about you. Examples may include:

- Reporting of notifiable diseases to the Department of Human Services; or
- Providing health records to a court when required in relation to legal proceedings;
- Providing health records to a law enforcement agency (*eg. Police*) in response to a search warrant.

If any of these circumstances apply, we will advise you as close as we can to the time when the information is released.

Rights & Responsibilities

It is important that you know what to expect from Mpower, its services and staff and what your responsibilities are whilst receiving services.

You have the right;

- To quality services and programs that meet high standards
- To be treated with respect and dignity at all times
- To be informed of all aspects of the service provided eg. eligibility, fees, people involved in your support, services available, alternatives
- To refuse services
- To have your privacy respected and your personal information treated as confidential
- To receive services for which you have provided consent
- To have services provided in an environment that is accessible, clean, safe and secure
- To be free from abuse and neglect

- To make a complaint or provide a compliment
- To involve an advocate of your choice in any aspect of your support
- To have strength based planning that is person or family centred. To be actively involved in the decisions around the delivery of your service.
- To have services that respect your culture and communication needs
- To have opportunities for community inclusion and a valued role in the community
- To have your individual needs considered when a service is provided

You have a responsibility:

- To inform staff about changes to your situation
- To treat Mpower equipment and property with care and to report any damage
- To contribute to quality improvement by providing feedback to the agency
- To respect the human worth and dignity of the Mpower, staff and other consumers
- To inform staff of any cancellation to appointments or programs as early as possible
- To provide, to the best of your ability, accurate information to Mpower staff so they can provide a quality service
- To ask questions so we can assist you to understand what is provided
- To provide an environment that is safe, clean and pleasant. This includes strictly no smoking, alcohol or drugs at Mpower
- To leave any valuables at home. Mpower will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to property brought to the facility or programs
- To pay accounts / fess in an appropriate time

**Contact us on (03) 5561 8111,
your enquiries are welcome.**