



right **care**  
right **place**  
right **time**

**phn**  
WESTERN NSW  
An Australian Government Initiative

## WNSW PHN

# External Feedback Statement

Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN) is committed to ensuring feedback received from external parties is handled seriously and professionally. This includes being accessible, responsive, and addressing any complaints in a way that is objective, fair, and confidential.

WNSW PHN is committed to seeking and receiving feedback about our services, systems, and practices.

WNSW PHN is committed to continually improving the WNSW PHN Program. Complaints will be used to identify and address any issues and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the complaint management system.

WNSW PHN commits to:

- Ensuring all external compliments, suggestions for improvement and complaints are dealt with in accordance with WNSW PHN expectations, standards, and internal policies and procedures;
- Being accessible for external parties wishing to provide feedback, by providing a feedback form on the website plus options to provide feedback verbally, via email or in a letter;
- Addressing external compliments, suggestions and complaints regarding WNSW PHN and/or its employees in a timely manner, with a target of 5 business days to respond and 30 days to resolve;
- Recognising and respect everybody's right to provide feedback;
- Treating all complaints fairly;
- Ensuring that the identity of the complainant is protected, where feasible and appropriate; and
- Ensuring personal information that identifies individuals is only disclosed as permitted under the Privacy Act, 1988.

### **Who can make a compliment or a complaint?**

Any interested party may lodge external feedback in the WNSW PHN Complaints and Feedback Register Form.

People making complaints will be:

- Provided with information about our complaints handling process;
- Provided with multiple and accessible ways to make complaints;
- Listened to, treated with respect by employees and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate; and
- Provided with reasons for our decision and any options for review.

WNSW PHN can accept anonymous complaints (for example, by telephone) and will undertake an investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided. The wish by a complainant to remain anonymous may limit our ability to investigate the matter fully and restrict our ability to provide a response to the complainant.

## **How to lodge a compliment or complaint**

Information on how to lodge a compliment or complaint and the WNSW PHN's complaint handling process ("Our Feedback Process" – see Appendix A) is provided on the WNSW PHN public website <https://www.wnswphn.org.au/contact-us>.

## **Verbal Feedback**

Employees may be approached in person or via the phone regarding feedback on the activities of our organisation or a commissioned service provider.

Compliments and Complaints can be lodged verbally by phoning 1300 699 167.

Employees will also inform and encourage the person lodging feedback to lodge their feedback in writing via the WNSW PHN Complaints and Feedback Register on the WNSW PHN website <https://www.wnswphn.org.au/contact-us>.

## **In Writing**

Compliments and Complaints can be lodged in writing via the following:

- Writing a letter/documenting the details and sending via:
  - <https://www.wnswphn.org.au/contact-us>.
  - Email to [admin@wnswphn.org.au](mailto:admin@wnswphn.org.au)
  - Individual employee member's work email
  - Letter to Western NSW PHN, PO Box 890, Dubbo, NSW 2830

All external feedback lodged via the WNSW PHN Complaints and Feedback Register automatically notifies relevant WNSW PHN employee members regarding the submission of feedback.

All external feedback lodged in writing via [admin@wnswphn.org.au](mailto:admin@wnswphn.org.au) and/or received via a letter in the post will be actioned accordingly for follow-up and/or investigation as required.

Employees in receipt of any external feedback (Compliments and or Complaints) via their work email or via post will be action this feedback accordingly for follow-up and/or investigation as required.

## **Unreasonable Conduct by People Making Complaints**

WNSW PHN employees are here to help. WNSW PHN employees have the right to not be subject to unreasonable behaviour by complainants.

Unreasonable behaviour includes behaviour and comments which are abusive, offensive, threatening and/or vexatious.

Assigned officers responsible for managing a complaint will use the [NSW Ombudsman Better Practice Guide to Managing Unreasonable Complaint Conduct](#) when dealing with complainants who behave unreasonably, available on the Commonwealth Ombudsman website [www.ombudsman.gov.au/publications/better-practice-guides](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/publications/better-practice-guides).

## Review of Outcome

A complainant can seek review of the outcome of their complaint if they are not satisfied. A review or appeal can be sought directly from WNSW PHN, where an internal review will be conducted by a senior employee who was not involved in the original assessment of the complaint.

A request for review should be made in writing within three months of the complainant being notified of the outcome via the [admin@wnswphn.org.au](mailto:admin@wnswphn.org.au) inbox or at the following address:

WNSW PHN

PO Box 890, Dubbo NSW 2830

Complainants should be aware that a review is not a fresh investigation of a complaint. The review will consider:

- the process adopted by the investigating officer and whether it was appropriate to address the issues raised; and
- the merit of the initial conclusions and whether they were clearly and appropriately explained to the complainant.

The reviewing officer may:

- uphold the original outcome; or
- refer the matter back to the original investigating officer or another officer for further review/action.

An internal review can only be conducted once, following which the complaint will be closed, subject to the finalisation of any matters referred to an assessment officer for consideration.

A complainant may also choose to directly engage with an external body, such as the Commonwealth Ombudsman, to seek a review of the department's management, handling and/or the outcome of the complaint.

Further details on the WNSW PHN Feedback and Complaints Handling Process can be requested by calling 1300 699 167, emailing [admin@wnswphn.org.au](mailto:admin@wnswphn.org.au), or online at [wnswphn.org.au/contact-us](http://wnswphn.org.au/contact-us).