

## Family Relationship Centre (FRC) Client Information

### Client Feedback and Complaints

We aim at all times to provide an equitable, respectful and professional service and therefore we invite feedback at every stage. If you have concerns however about any aspect of the service you have received, there are a number of steps you can take to have your concerns heard and resolved.

#### How do I give feedback?

Feedback on the quality of the service and/or ideas for improvement are welcome by staff members and management. You can do this in **person**, by **phone** or in **writing**. We value your feedback because it helps improve our service.

#### How do I make a complaint?

CatholicCare and the FRC seek to resolve all complaints in a non-threatening, informal, and accessible manner. You/your service will NOT be disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint. There are three avenues to the Complaints Process:

1. If you feel comfortable to do so, raise your concerns with the staff member concerned (or their Manager) so they may have the opportunity to resolve it for you in a timely and constructive way. A staff member can also advise you about the process for lodging a complaint.

2. If you still have a concern or feel uncomfortable with taking the first step, you may contact the relevant **Manager** on **1300 477 433** or **mail** your form to: CatholicCare, PO Box 1733, Toowoomba QLD 4350.

The Manager will discuss your concern with you and will aim to resolve the matter to your satisfaction and ensure an agreement is reached on what action may or may not need to be taken. We will keep you informed as to the progress of your complaint.

You can expect that the matter will be dealt with promptly with a response from the Manager or a delegated staff member **within 7 days** of receiving your complaint.

**Support** - You have the right to have a support person, carer, and/or interpreter assist you when making a complaint and during the complaints resolution process.

**What to Include in a Complaint** -When making a complaint, you should explain your concern in your own words. You should include enough information so we have a clear picture of the problem. This will allow us to assess your complaint and determine the most appropriate response.

3. Following completion of Step 2, if you are not satisfied then you can contact the **FRC Toowoomba Complaints Manager** on:

T: 1300 477 433

E: [enquiries@catholiccare.services](mailto:enquiries@catholiccare.services)

M: Private and Confidential, Complaints Manager, PO Box 1733, TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350

NB If your complaint has not been resolved, you have the right to contact the relevant funding body.

### Client Privacy and Confidentiality

- We respect your right to keep personal information private. All information is stored securely to ensure your privacy is maintained.
- Personal information is used to assist us in providing a service that best meets your circumstances.
- At times we may require information from other professionals or agencies to meet your particular needs or when other professionals or agencies require information we hold to meet your service provision needs. Your permission to obtain or release information will be sought in accordance with FRC and CatholicCare guidelines.
- FRC Toowoomba is committed to the *Australian Privacy Principles 2014*.
- Family Dispute Resolution with a registered Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner is confidential and not admissible in court (except in regards to the limits of confidentiality outlined below).

#### Limits to Confidentiality

- For accountability purposes, regular reports to our funding bodies are required. All identifying information is removed.
- FRC Toowoomba has a Duty of Care to inform relevant authorities, family members or other bodies of any actual or intended harm (including self-harm) of a person.
- FRC Toowoomba is obliged to notify relevant authorities about serious criminal offences as outlined in the *Child Protection Act 1999* and the *Crimes Act 1914*.
- FRC Toowoomba will only release client information:
  - if we are required to do so by law
  - where there is child abuse or risk of abuse; or
  - to an independent children's lawyer under the Family Law Act.

#### Client Records

**Adults** - records are kept for 7 years after a service was last received by the client.

**Children** - records are kept for 7 years after the year they turn 18 or last received a service (whichever is the later date).

**Clients with impaired decision-making capacity** - records are kept for 7 years after the year the client no longer has an impaired decision-making capacity or died, whichever event occurred first.

(Section 29 (2)(c) Queensland Limitations of Actions Act 1974).

### Client Record Viewing

Clients are welcome to look at their file, and may request access to their records by contacting our Privacy Officer on **1300 477 433**. Access will be subject to considerations about legal and privacy issues and the safety of other people.

### Client Rights

As a person using CatholicCare services, you have a number of **rights**. FRC Toowoomba recognises your right to:

- Receive good quality services
- Be treated with respect and courtesy
- Be part of decisions made about your care
- Be informed and consulted about the services you receive
- Expect privacy, confidentiality, and access to personal information kept about you by the FRC and CatholicCare
- Have another person of your choice support you and advocate on your behalf
- Have your comments valued
- Make a confidential complaint if you are not happy with the services you receive
- Refuse a service

### Client Responsibilities

While you have a number of **rights** as a client, you **also have some responsibilities** to the people providing care to you. FRC Toowoomba asks their clients to:

- Provide staff with information so we can provide a service that recognises your strengths and the areas in which you need support.
- Treat staff with respect and courtesy; for example, by letting them know as soon as possible if you cannot keep an appointment or to advise if there is a change to your personal details.
- Seek clarification if you need more information about your participation in our programs.
- Take responsibility for the results of any decisions which you make with staff about your care.
- Share responsibility with our staff for ensuring that harassment, abuse or discrimination does not occur.

### The FRC and CatholicCare's Responsibilities

- We will keep an up-to-date knowledge of policies and procedures in providing our services to you.
- We will ensure our services are accessible and affordable, especially to those who are disadvantaged, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, beliefs or disability.
- We will support you in ensuring you are well informed before you are asked to give either written or verbal consent.
- We will support you in ensuring that our expectations of you are clear.
- We will ensure that cultural and linguistic diversity is acknowledged and valued in the way we provide our service to you.
- We will use feedback from comments and complaints to improve our services where you have given us permission to do so.
- We will advise you of workplace health and safety issues relating to our premises, for example, emergency assembly points, smoking areas etc.

### Advocacy

- Advocacy is the process of standing alongside an individual who is disadvantaged, and speaking out on their behalf in a way that represents the best interests of that person.
- The aim of advocacy is to bring about beneficial outcomes in a way that enables each client to retain as much control as possible over how it is carried out.
- Advocacy may involve speaking, acting or writing on behalf of an individual (or group) who has limited ability to exercise his/her rights.
- CatholicCare and the FRC encourage people to use advocates if needed to ensure:
  - ✦ CatholicCare/FRC is informed of the advocacy
  - ✦ There is written permission
  - ✦ They do not act as an interpreter for you while acting in an advocacy role
  - ✦ Action is always in the best interests of you
  - ✦ You are kept informed of any decisions that are made
- You can also contact an independent advocacy service that is free and confidential. A professional can be with you and assist you. **QLD Aged and Disability Advocacy Inc 1800 818 338**

#### Contacting FRC Toowoomba

**P:** 1300 348 248

**E:** [fradmin@catholiccare.services](mailto:fradmin@catholiccare.services)

**W:** [www.catholiccare.services](http://www.catholiccare.services)

**M:** PO Box 1733, Toowoomba, QLD 4350