Quality Pathway Information Sheet 7
Customer and Stakeholder Feedback

This Information Sheet provides guidance on implementing customer and stakeholder feedback practice.

Quality management's first principle is that of customer focus, guiding service providers to gather feedback from customers and stakeholders on how the service provider is meeting needs. Customer and stakeholder feedback about their experience and their perception of the service provider's performance is valuable information to assist in assessing and building levels of quality.

Facilitating feedback

The type and amount of feedback needed from customers and stakeholders to assist in assessing and building levels of quality is unlikely to be given unsolicited; service providers need to actively seek it out through a planned and continual process.

Feedback collection needs to be appropriate to the target group, well timed, and in formats that facilitate the easiest and quickest responses, while gathering the required information for the service provider. A well-considered feedback process includes a combination of feedback collection methods, each used where it will be most effective.

Feedback may be obtained using verbal, paper, electronic, or on-line methods:
- General satisfaction surveys
- Specific issue / subject surveys
- Suggestion box / mail
- Response cards
- Customer exit survey and interview
- Customer and stakeholder consultation sessions
- Event evaluation survey
- Project and program evaluation survey
- Interagency / partnership survey
- Social media and website data analysis
- Customer representative / reference group

> *tip!*
>
> ### Practice tip: Surveys
> ✓ *Keep questions and surveys short and simple*
> ✓ *Ask only what you really need to know and will use*
> ✓ *Use rating scales and yes/no options*
> ✓ *Include open ended questions to gather more detailed responses (but not too many)*
> ✓ *Avoid leading and emotionally or politically loaded questions*
> ✓ *Start surveys with easy to answer questions.*

Information to collect

Service providers need feedback across a number of domains. These domains should be used to guide specific questions for any feedback gathering activity.
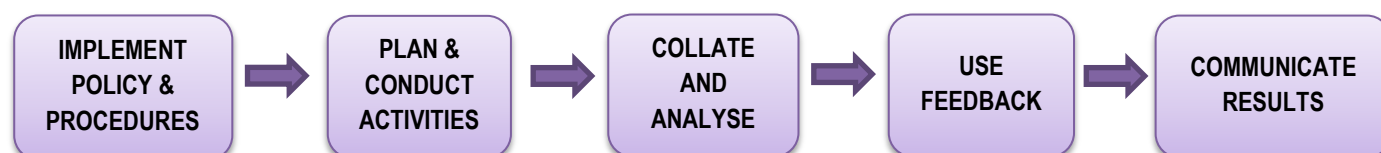
Domain		Example
Effectiveness	Measure how well customers and stakeholders consider the service has assisted them or achieved goals.	Using a scale for responses, ask: *"How well has the program increased your confidence in social occasions?"*
Satisfaction	Measure customer and stakeholder happiness and satisfaction with various aspects of the service, i.e. types of services, reliability, responsiveness, and interactions with staff.	Using a scale for responses, ask: *"How satisfied are you with how staff involved you in decisions about services provided for you?"*
Levels of importance	Elicit information about what is most or least important to customers and stakeholders, i.e. choice of location, different service formats, workshop topics.	Ask open ended or listed response question: *"What are the three most important pieces of information to provide to new customers to the service?"*
Priorities for improvement	What needs to be done better or improved?	Ask open ended questions and seek examples or ask why: *"How could our service improve the way we transfer customer information? Provide an example of what this would look like."*
Outcomes	What specific outcomes have been achieved for customers?	Measure changes in customer health, lifestyle, behaviour or attitude.

Unplanned feedback

Unplanned feedback such as compliments and suggestions should be welcomed and recognised for their value in contributing to quality improvement. A simple system for recording unplanned feedback, such as a register, will support the collation of information which can then be analysed, and used to inform development.

Complaints are also valuable in highlighting potential risks and for informing areas for improvement. Complaints management includes a register documenting all complaints received, with this information regularly reviewed as part of the quality improvement program.

Steps in gathering and managing feedback

IMPLEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES → PLAN & CONDUCT ACTIVITIES → COLLATE AND ANALYSE → USE FEEDBACK → COMMUNICATE RESULTS

▶ **Action: Implement policies and procedures**
  o Develop and implement policies and procedures for feedback management. These should address delegations and responsibilities, protection of privacy, types of information to be collected, methods of collection, use of financial and other resources, application of data, etc.

> ***Practice tip: Data collection***
> ✓ *All feedback collected should be used to inform service delivery and organisation development.*
> ✓ *If feedback is not going to be used, don't collect it!*

▶ **Action: Plan and conduct activities**

- o Schedule feedback activities to align with reporting requirements, development activities and opportunistic events such as the provider's AGM.
- o Plan individual feedback activities considering the information required, target audience, method of communicating and collection methods.
- o Facilitate feedback as one-off activities as well as those that allow for comparisons over time.

▶ **Action: Collate and analyse feedback**

- o Collate feedback at the end of targeted activities.
- o Collate feedback through regular data collections to identify how well customer or stakeholder needs are being met (for example, customer case plans and achievement of goals, customer outcome data, and feedback and complaint registers).
- o Analyse data to identify major risks and concerns, priorities for improvements, and patterns and issues.

▶ **Action: Use feedback**

- o Use feedback to inform quality improvement action plans, strategic and service planning, project and development activities, and funding submissions.

▶ **Action: Communicate results**

- o Summarise and communicate feedback results to contributors and more broadly to demonstrate how input is valued and contributing to service provider development.
- o Communicate results to staff and the governing body.