

HDAA Impartiality concerns

HDAA is committed to improving our services and welcomes any feedback that our stakeholders may wish to offer in relation to the services we provide. This feedback helps us to identify anything that we do well or need to improve.

Providing HDAA with notice of a concern regarding the impartiality of our services enables us to review and resolve the issue in a constructive and timely manner to minimise risk to people and services who could be adversely affected. Should you have a concern related to the impartiality of an assessment, certification decision, or one of our team of assessors or staff, please take the time to inform us so that we can deal with the matter as expediently as possible.

Assessors have an important role to play in supporting the impartiality of the assessment and certification process. Notification of a perceived conflict of interest, related to themselves or assessor colleague when on site, and being required to notify HDAA of any related concern is essential to the integrity of the assessments HDAA and our people provide.

The role of the HDAA Impartiality Committee

To provide assessment and certification of management systems we are required by international standards (ISO/IEC 17021) to have in place a committee to safeguard the impartiality of our functioning. We have established a committee comprised of independent persons who have experience of human services, are independent individuals and interested parties such as a service provider and a consumer representative.

The purpose of the committee is:

- to assist in developing the policies relating to impartiality of its certification activities;
- to ensure the consistent objective provision of certification activities;
- to advise on matters affecting confidence in certification; and
- to conduct a periodic review of the impartiality of our assessment, certification and decision making.

Formalised terms of reference for the committee have been authorised by our Health and Human Services Manager to ensure:

- no single interest predominates;
- the committee has access to necessary information enabling it to fulfil its functions; and
- the committee can take confidential, independent action.

Our process for notifying and addressing impartiality concerns includes the following:

- Impartiality concerns should be forwarded to either the Health and Human Services Manager or the Chair of the Impartiality Committee.
- Information and any evidence regarding the impartiality concern should be forwarded in writing and shall be recorded in the HDAA Impartiality Register. Information should include:
 - What the perceived breach of impartiality is.
 - Who is involved in the breach – people and organisation/s.
 - Who the person is advising of the perceived breach.
 - Contact details for the committee to follow up.
- The information relating to the perceived impartiality risk should be provided to the Health and Human Services Manager (contact details below).
- The Health and Human Services Manager will document the information received and provide an initial review. Where an issue is identified or not able to be resolved immediately or involves senior management of HDAA, the concern will be forwarded to the Impartiality Committee Chair.

- If during a review of an impartiality concern a potential breach is identified, the committee may hold a teleconference to consider a decision.
- The impartiality register will be completed when the concern is finalised.
- Where a breach of impartiality is confirmed, the issue will be notified to relevant stakeholders. This may include HDAA accreditors or scheme owners, clients, contractors or staff.

How do I raise an impartiality concern? Impartiality concern can be forwarded in writing by a letter, fax, or email, to the Health and Human Services Manager to be forwarded to the Impartiality Committee.

HDAA contact details:

Health and Human Services Manager: Janet Davidson McGown

Postal Address: PO Box 365, NORTH LAKES, QLD 4509

Telephone: 1800 601 696

Email: janet.davidsonmcgown@hdaa.com.au (subject "Attention Impartiality Committee Chair")

What if I am still concerned?

You will receive a response from HDAA confirming the decision on the impartiality concern. If you are still concerned the matter will be referred to an HDAA Advisory Council member who will review and document an outcome. This decision will be the final response of HDAA. If the decision of the Advisory Council member is not accepted, the concerned party can at that time escalate the complaint to the HDAA accreditation body (ISQua or Jas-ANZ) who then will take responsibility for responding.