



Australian Stroke Clinical Registry

AuSCR FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Version 2: May 2018 FINAL

1.0 Preamble

The Australian Stroke Clinical Registry (AuSCR) is open and responsive to feedback, complaints and suggestions from patients, carers, health professionals or administrators (eg ethics or governance officers) and any other individuals or organisations. This policy document provides guidelines for the notification, recording, responding and monitoring of feedback and complaints associated with the AuSCR. The AuSCR will always endeavor to seek resolutions that are satisfactory to all stakeholders in consultation with the appropriate governance committees.

1.1 Overview of the AuSCR

The AuSCR is an online dataset of information about the acute treatment of people with stroke or transient ischemic attack that has been collected and entered by individual participating hospitals across Australia. The AuSCR also contains patient health outcomes data collected three to six months following admission for acute stroke treatment and which is collected by AuSCR office staff via post or telephone.

The AuSCR Consortium partners, (The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, the George Institute for Global Health, the Stroke Foundation and the Stroke Society of Australasia) do not directly provide health care or medical advice. Any complaints or enquiries about medical or healthcare services are directed back to the relevant hospital services or medical practitioners for resolution as dictated by their own policies and procedures.

1.2 What are feedback and complaints?

Feedback is information about an individual's assessment of the AuSCR which may be either positive or negative. A complaint is feedback that is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern. While welcoming all types of feedback, AuSCR pays particular attention to formally addressing complaints. People may complain to prevent an incident from recurring or to receive an apology.

In cases where feedback is a commendation or compliment AuSCR endeavors to ensure that this is shared with the relevant individual or health service.

Feedback related to any aspect of the AuSCR, and the way in which patient data are collected, stored or accessed may be received. Feedback may be received by the AuSCR in person or via telephone, email or letter.

1.3 What is resolution?

Resolution is the desired outcome of having addressed a complaint to the satisfaction of the parties involved. It is a responsive process that seeks to address a person's concerns and accompanying emotions. The process involves complaints being heard, assessed, negotiated, responded to, and resolved to the best of the AuSCR's ability.

1.4 Receiving complaints

All complaints about the AuSCR, its processes, staff or contractors should be directed to the AuSCR office via the 1800 free call number, mailing address or the dedicated email account. For patients and their family/next of kin, these details can be found on the Patient Information Sheet provided by hospitals or with the mailed follow up questionnaire. Contact details are also located on the AuSCR website.

If patient, family/next of kin complaints associated with the AuSCR are received by hospital staff, patients should be informed that the AuSCR is managed externally. Patients should then be given the option of making contact with the AuSCR Office themselves (via the mechanisms listed in the Patient Information Sheet) or, alternatively, having a hospital staff member pass on their contact details to the AuSCR Office for follow up.

1.5 Documenting complaints

All complaints are documented on the *Complaint Register*, maintained by the AuSCR office. This register tracks the progress of the complaint and provides a record of any communication and actions taken in relation to the complaint, including dates of receipt and resolution.

1.6 Investigating and responding to complaints

All complaints will be acknowledged and reviewed as a matter of priority. AuSCR staff must determine whether the complaint relates to AuSCR or external health services. This categorisation will determine the appropriate investigation and resolution procedures. Complaints determined to relate to an external health service will be referred directly to that service in writing for appropriate management and will not be reviewed by the AuSCR. The AuSCR National Coordinator and/or the AuSCR Data Custodian will oversee the management and response to all complaints directly associated with the AuSCR. All written complaints relating to the AuSCR will be investigated and addressed within 30 days of receipt. Written complaints will be addressed in writing with the complainant. Verbal complaints will be addressed according to the stated preference of the complainant, either verbally or in writing.

1.7 Improving AuSCR processes and procedures to avoid future complaints

The AuSCR Management Committee will review all complaints, and the subsequent actions taken, to determine whether AuSCR processes or procedures require modification to ensure the same problem(s) do not arise in future. Where a complaint remains unresolved, the AuSCR Management Committee may also decide on any subsequent actions required. All complaints and actions will be summarized for review by the AuSCR Steering Committee, along with correspondence about changes to AuSCR processes or procedures implemented as relevant.

1.8 Related AuSCR documents

- AuSCR Complaints Register
- AuSCR Feedback and Complaints SOP
- AuSCR Site PI complaint notification email template (health services complaints)
- AuSCR Complainant response letter template (health services complaints)
- AuSCR Complainant response letter template (AuSCR complaints)