

# SA HEALTH AND NATIONAL COMPLAINTS CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES

\*based on National complaint categories

ACCESS	Availability of services in terms of location, waiting lists and other constraints that limit use of service
SUB-CATEGORY	DEFINITION
<b>Attendance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; provider fails to keep an agreed appointment</li> <li>&gt; failure to attend to give emergency treatment</li> </ul>
<b>Delay in admission or treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; delays in treatment or admission including delay in attending – e.g. long waits in emergency department or waiting rooms (excludes waiting lists)</li> </ul>
<b>Discharge or transfer arrangements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; premature, unsuitable or delayed discharge or transfer</li> <li>&gt; inadequate discharge planning</li> <li>&gt; refusal to discharge</li> </ul>
<b>Referral</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; refusal to refer</li> <li>&gt; inappropriate referral</li> </ul>
<b>Refusal to admit or treat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; refusal by health service or health provider to accept a person as a consumer / client</li> <li>&gt; refusal to provide a service where a service is available</li> </ul>
<b>Service availability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; service or resources non-existent</li> <li>&gt; service or resources insufficient for consumer requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; ambulance and patient transit problems including inter-hospital transfers</li> </ul>
<b>Waiting lists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; unreasonable wait for elective surgery, other treatment or service, or further postponement after a date has been set (excludes delay in admission)</li> <li>&gt; outpatient appointments</li> </ul>
<b>Admission to Mixed Gender accommodation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; co-location of male and females in the same bay in general wards resulting in ‘mixed gender accommodation’ will only occur in an exceptional situation, and at the discretion of the Bed Manager or delegate</li> </ul>
<b>Cancellation of surgery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; unreasonable cancellation of appointment or surgery</li> <li>&gt; short notice provided for cancellation</li> </ul>

<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>Appropriateness, completeness and reliability of information, the way information is communicated, or special communication needs</b>
<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>Attitude</b>	> staff manner is rude, discourteous, negative, lacks sensitivity or is patronising or overbearing (excludes discrimination)
<b>Inadequate information</b>	> information is inadequate, difficult to understand due to jargon, language or other barriers or is incomplete
<b>Interpreter / special needs services</b>	> failure to provide interpreter or special needs services for consumer to assist in communication (e.g. spoken language, sign language, disability support)
<b>Wrong / misleading information</b>	> information is wrong, incorrect, misleading or conflicting (excludes consent not informed / failure to warn and information on costs)

<b>CONSENT</b>	<b>Consumer's right to be involved in decision making and to be given sufficient information on which to base their consent or treatment or service</b>
<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>Consent invalid</b>	> consent considered invalid when the patient was not competent to consent, did not understand information, was coerced or consent was not specific to the treatment performed
<b>Consent not informed / failure to warn</b>	> not enough information was given for the consumer to make an informed choice regarding treatment options (excludes inadequate information)
<b>Consent not obtained</b>	> treatment provided or action taken without the current consent of the consumer or consumer's legal representative
<b>Failure to involve or consent consumer</b>	> failure to involve the consumer in decision making in relation to an aspect of treatment or care
<b>Involuntary admission</b>	> the admission or treatment of a patient when not indicated or required a patient detained, scheduled under a mental health act

<b>CORPORATE SERVICES</b>	<b>Support services such as hotel services (environmental), administrative procedures and the standard of facilities including hygiene and safety (excludes billing practices)</b>
<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>Administrative services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; administrative processes such as clerical, reception, administrative record keeping and bookings / admission</li> </ul>
<b>Hotel services (accommodation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; services and physical environment provided during a patient's visit or stay (includes car parking, cleaning, laundry, maintenance, security and accommodation)</li> </ul>
<b>Hygiene / environmental standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; hazards in physical environment</li> <li>&gt; unclean or unsanitary conditions</li> <li>&gt; unsafe storage or sharps</li> <li>&gt; inadequate or substandard conditions in relation to fire safety, wayfinding, noise and lighting</li> <li>&gt; excludes infection control</li> </ul>
<b>Leisure and lifestyle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; leisure and lifestyle program or lack of activities within Aged Care Services</li> </ul>
<b>Grounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; unsafe paving, signage, wayfinding</li> </ul>
<b>Lost property</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; lost property ie personal items</li> </ul>
<b>Car parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; cost, location, access</li> </ul>
<b>Bedside computers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; cost, access</li> </ul>
<b>Catering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; meals ie taste, quantity, temperature, appearance</li> <li>&gt; food / catering delivery</li> <li>&gt; not suitable to patients medical condition (eg texture modification, nutritional content)</li> </ul>
<b>TeleHealth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; unknown TeleHealth appointment</li> <li>&gt; issues with accessing TeleHealth</li> </ul>

<b>COST</b>	<b>Fees, discrepancies between advertised and actual costs, charges and rebates, and information about costs and fees</b>
<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>Billing practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; unfair / unsatisfactory billing practices including item numbers used to disadvantage, insufficient or wrong information on bill, extra fees for services normally included in a global fee, unreasonable penalties for late payment, refusal to consider financial circumstances etc (excludes overcharging)</li> </ul>
<b>Government subsidies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; government subsidies for treatment or services are unavailable or inadequate (for example schedule fee, availability of drugs under the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme, travel subsidy)</li> </ul>
<b>Information on costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; information on costs was not offered prior to treatment or the information was partial, misleading or incorrect</li> <li>&gt; long stay fees</li> <li>&gt; information on ambulance fees</li> <li>&gt; ambulance fees (cost of ambulance or complaint about the provision of an ambulance account for transportation (excludes incorrect invoice fees and inadequate discharge planning)</li> </ul>
<b>Overcharging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; fee or account is too high, including unnecessary provision of services</li> </ul>
<b>Private health insurance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; complaints relating to reimbursement of costs by private health insurer</li> </ul>
<b>Public / private election</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; patient classified as private rather than public or vice versa</li> <li>&gt; failure of a hospital to explain options for choice of status</li> <li>&gt; confusion between fee for service and public status</li> </ul>

<b>GRIEVANCES</b>	<b>Action taken by a provider in response to a complaint</b>
<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>Inadequate / no response to complaint</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; inadequate or non-existent response to complaint made directly to a health service by consumer</li> </ul>
<b>Reprisal / retaliation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; any direct or indirect action of threat against a consumer, or detrimental change in treatment or care as a result of the complaint</li> <li>&gt; disadvantage in employment for staff who lodge a complaint or report, or who file information about a complaint</li> </ul>
<b>Patient behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; one patient raising concern about another patient on the ward who is disruptive to other patients or staff</li> </ul>

<b>PRIVACY / DISCRIMINATION</b>	<b>Breaches of consumer rights or acts of discrimination in relation to service provision or breaches of privacy or confidentiality</b>
<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>Access to records</b>	> restriction or refusal of access to information in any personal health record
<b>Discrimination</b>	> consumer claims is being treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities as others in a similar situation because of their age, religion disability or gender(excludes attitude and refusal to admit or treat)
<b>Discrimination public / private</b>	> public patient treated less favourably than private patient or vice versa > pressure to accept private treatment or service
<b>Inconsiderate service</b>	> failure to treat with respect, dignity and consideration (excludes attitude)
<b>Privacy / confidentiality</b>	> failure to ensure personal privacy or confidentiality > breach of privacy principles > maintenance of patient / consumer confidentiality
<b>Racial discrimination</b>	> consumer claims is being treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities as others in a similar situation, because of their race, the country where they were born, their ethnic origin or their skin colour. (excludes attitude and refusal to admit or treat)

<b>PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT</b>	<b>Unethical and/or illegal practices as well as issues of competence (excludes negligent treatment and referral)</b>
<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>Accuracy/ inadequacy of records</b>	> failure to create and maintain adequate, accurate, complete and up to date health records
<b>Assault</b>	> physically aggressive or violent actions against a consumer (excludes consent not obtained) note: for assaults of a sexual nature see 'Sexual misconduct' below
<b>Certificates / reports</b>	> failure to provide a correct certificate or report > deliberate falsification of certificate or report > provision of an incorrect, biased or misleading report
<b>Competence</b>	> failure to meet standard of practice because of lack of or failure to use clinical knowledge, skills, judgement or care
<b>Financial fraud</b>	> claims that a provider has tried to make a profit dishonestly, gain an unjust financial advantage, become beneficiary of a vulnerable person's will or commit Medicare fraud
<b>Illegal practices</b>	> alleged breaches of trade practices law > deceptive claims > assuming bogus qualifications > extortion > criminal actions > fraudulent claims of curative properties > dishonesty > excludes financial fraud
<b>Impairment</b>	> failure to meet a standard of practice due to mental or physical condition related to drug or alcohol addiction, mental illness, physical impairment, or illness to a degree where it impinges on a provider's ability to practice safely
<b>Sexual misconduct</b>	> any touching of a sexual nature or any sexual relationship with a consumer whether or not initiated by the consumer > behaviour such as gestures or comments that are sexually demeaning to a consumer
<b>Safety / Rights</b>	> consumer felt unsafe (right to be safe from abuse or risk of abuse) > failure to provide Statement of Rights ( <i>Mental Health Act 2009</i> ) > failure to uphold human rights (ie restraint, seclusion etc)

TREATMENT	Diagnosis, testing, medication and other therapies provided
SUB-CATEGORY	DEFINITION
<b>Adverse outcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; any event or circumstance leading to unintended harm or suffering, which results in admission, prolonged hospitalisation, significant disability at discharge or death</li> </ul>
<b>Coordination of treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; uncertainty about who is managing the patient</li> <li>&gt; no-one taking overall responsibility for the patient</li> <li>&gt; conflicting decisions</li> <li>&gt; poor communication between providers (staff) about treatment or care</li> </ul>
<b>Diagnosis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; missed, wrong or inadequate diagnosis</li> <li>&gt; failure to investigate adequately</li> </ul>
<b>Inadequate treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; claim that a provider did not provide adequate treatment or care (excludes negligent treatment and competence)</li> </ul>
<b>Infection control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; inadequate measures taken to control sources of infection, sterilise equipment or to adhere to standard universal precautions</li> </ul>
<b>Medication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; failure to prescribe</li> <li>&gt; over or under prescribing</li> <li>&gt; wrong or incorrect prescribing</li> <li>&gt; inappropriate use of medication</li> <li>&gt; incorrect dosage administered</li> </ul>
<b>Negligent treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; explicit allegations of legal liability under tort law (distinct from competence)</li> </ul>
<b>Rough / painful treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; rough treatment or unnecessary pain inflicted during an examination or treatment</li> </ul>
<b>Withdrawal / denial of treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; withdrawal of treatment or denial of additional treatment or service perceived to have a therapeutic benefit (excludes refusal to treat)</li> </ul>
<b>Wrong / inappropriate treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; incorrect or inappropriate choice of therapy has been made but not where proper therapies are performed wrongly</li> </ul>

## Further information

Safety and Quality

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