MIRUS AUSTRALIA | manadplus+
helping you provide better aged care

Managing Feedback, Consumer Expectations & Transparency

Webinar | 26 February 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

2026

Artwork "Wurinyan" meaning "Come together in love" painted by Muruwari artist Daisy Hill

Agenda

1. Welcome

2. Data insights

3. Poll results

4. Presentation - Proactive Complaints Management

5. Live poll

6. Let's hear from the panel

7. Q&A

8. Close

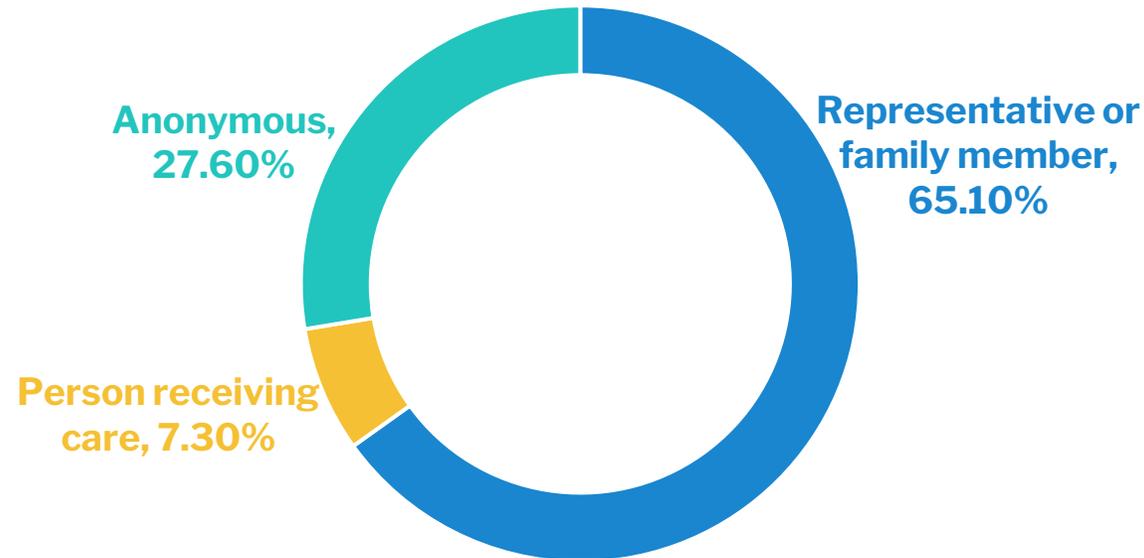This event qualifies for 1 CPD point. Add it to your log.
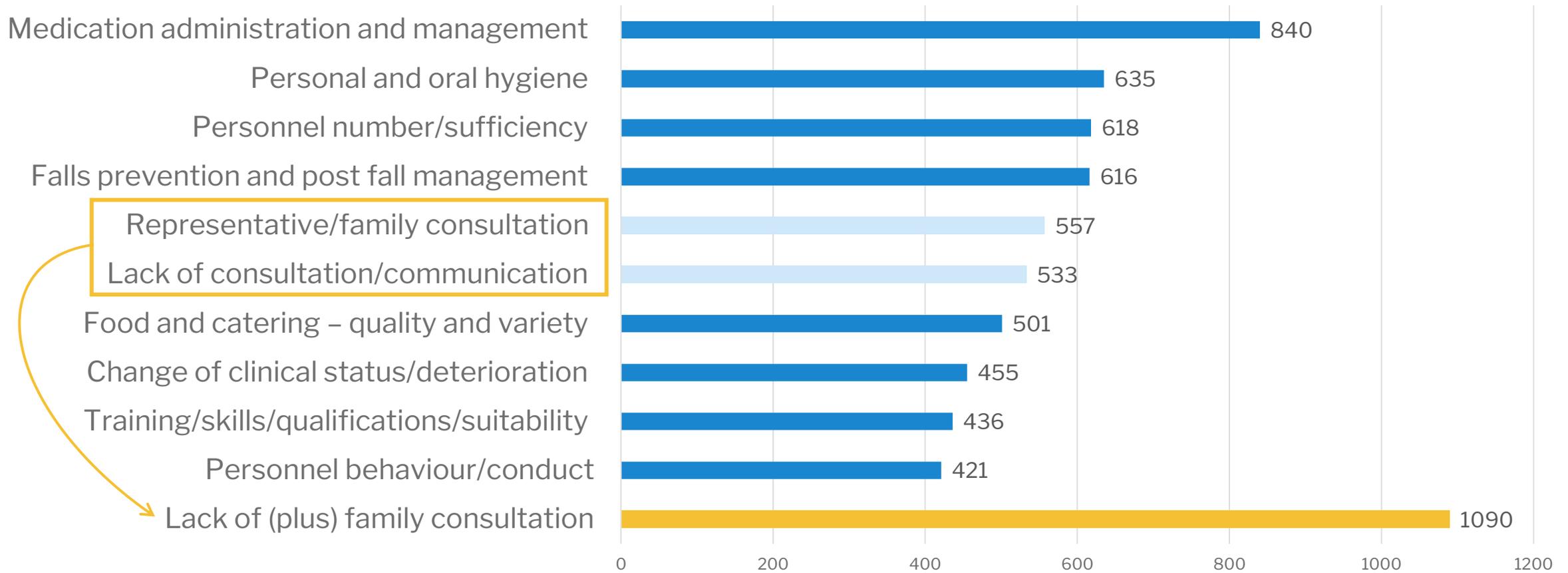
Please ask questions in the chat

Complaints about residential care

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Total
Complaints	1,724	1,288	1,135	538	484	168	17	39	5,427
Issues	5,286	2,924	2,548	1,352	1,200	409	52	147	14,022
Rate per 10,000 Occupied Bed Days	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.7	1	0.9	0.4	0.8

Residential complaints by source

Anonymous, 27.60%

Person receiving care, 7.30%

Representative or family member, 65.10%

Top 10 Complaint Issues

Issue	Value
Medication administration and management	840
Personal and oral hygiene	635
Personnel number/sufficiency	618
Falls prevention and post fall management	616
Representative/family consultation	557
Lack of consultation/communication	533
Food and catering – quality and variety	501
Change of clinical status/deterioration	455
Training/skills/qualifications/suitability	436
Personnel behaviour/conduct	421
Lack of (plus) family consultation	1090

Number of complaints about each residential service

0 complaints made	**32.4%**
1 complaint	**24.3%**
2 complaints	**14.5%**
3 to 4 complaints	**15.1%**
5 to 6 complaints	**7.1%**
7 to 8 complaints	**3.7%**
9+ complaints	**2.9%**
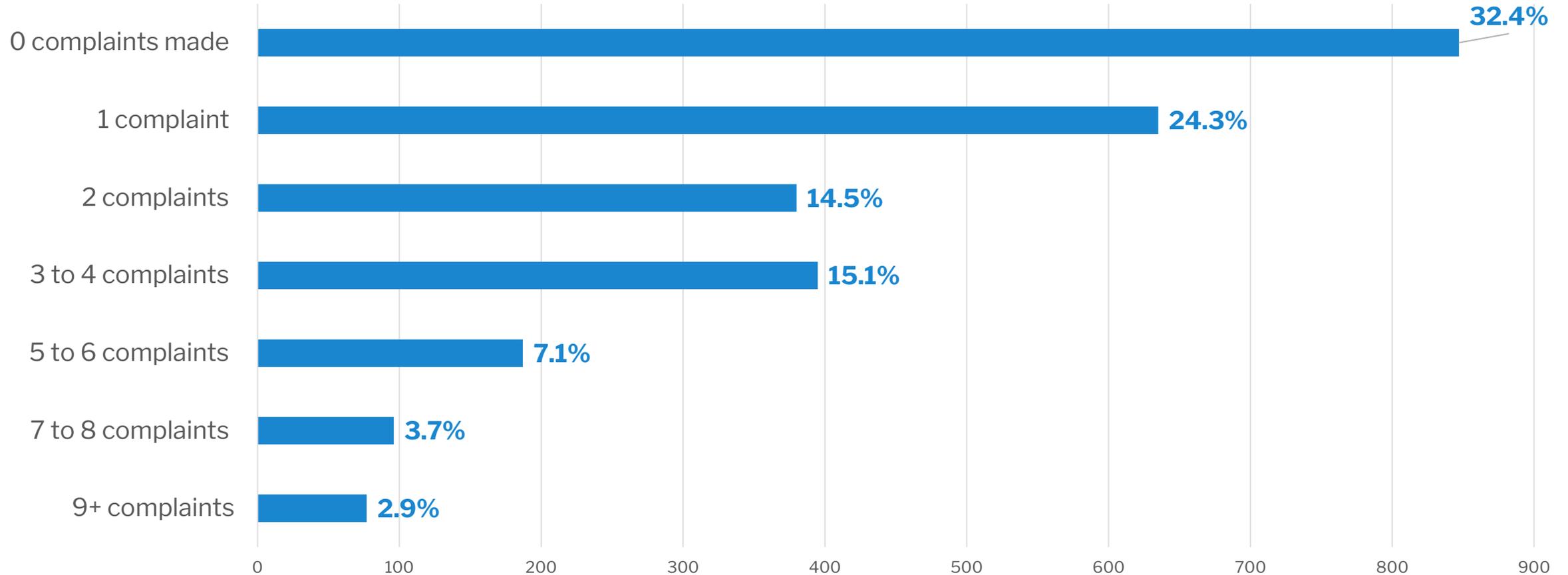
How confident are you that your current complaints system would meet regulatory scrutiny today?

23% — Very confident
67% — Somewhat confident
5% — Not confident
5% — Unsure
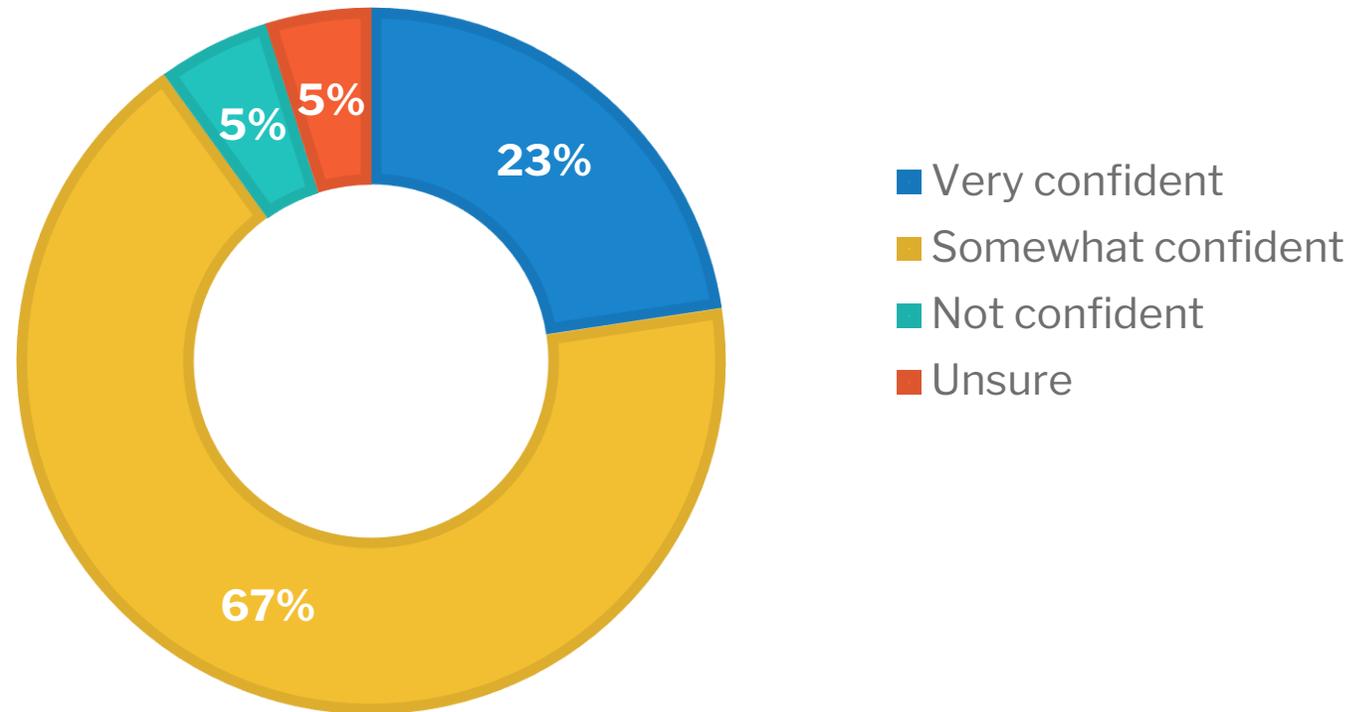
Represents 292 responses across 170 organisations

How easy is it for consumers and families to provide feedback or make a complaint at your service?

- Very easy and well understood — 48%
- Somewhat easy, but could be clearer — 45%
- Difficult or inconsistent — 3%
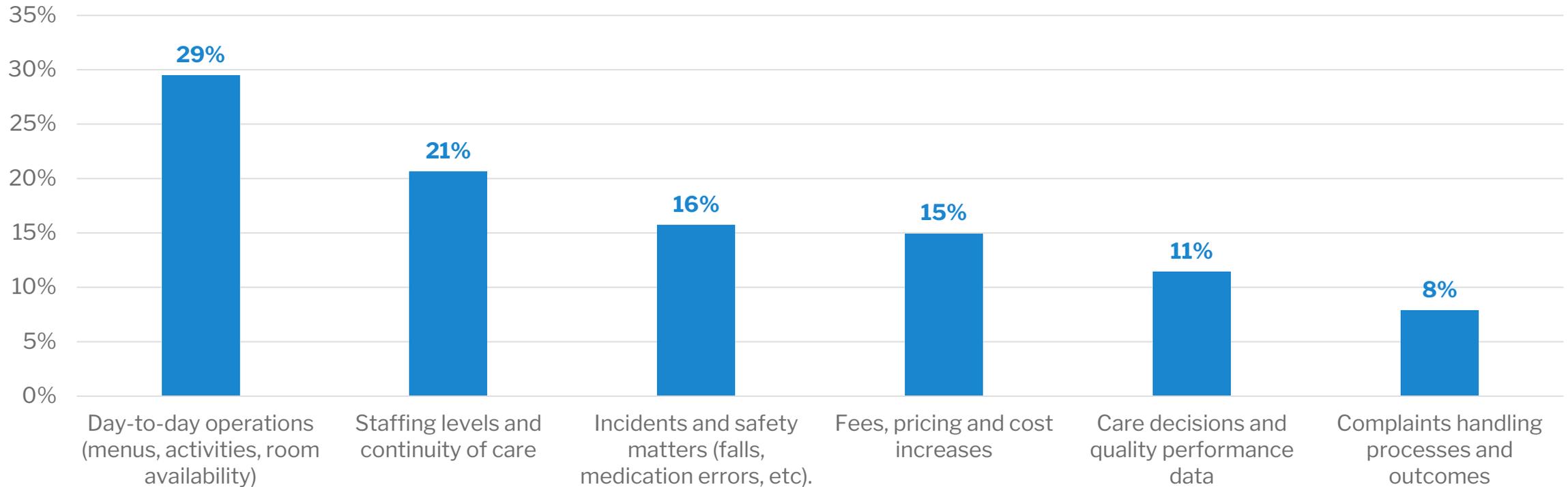- Not sure from a consumer perspective — 4%
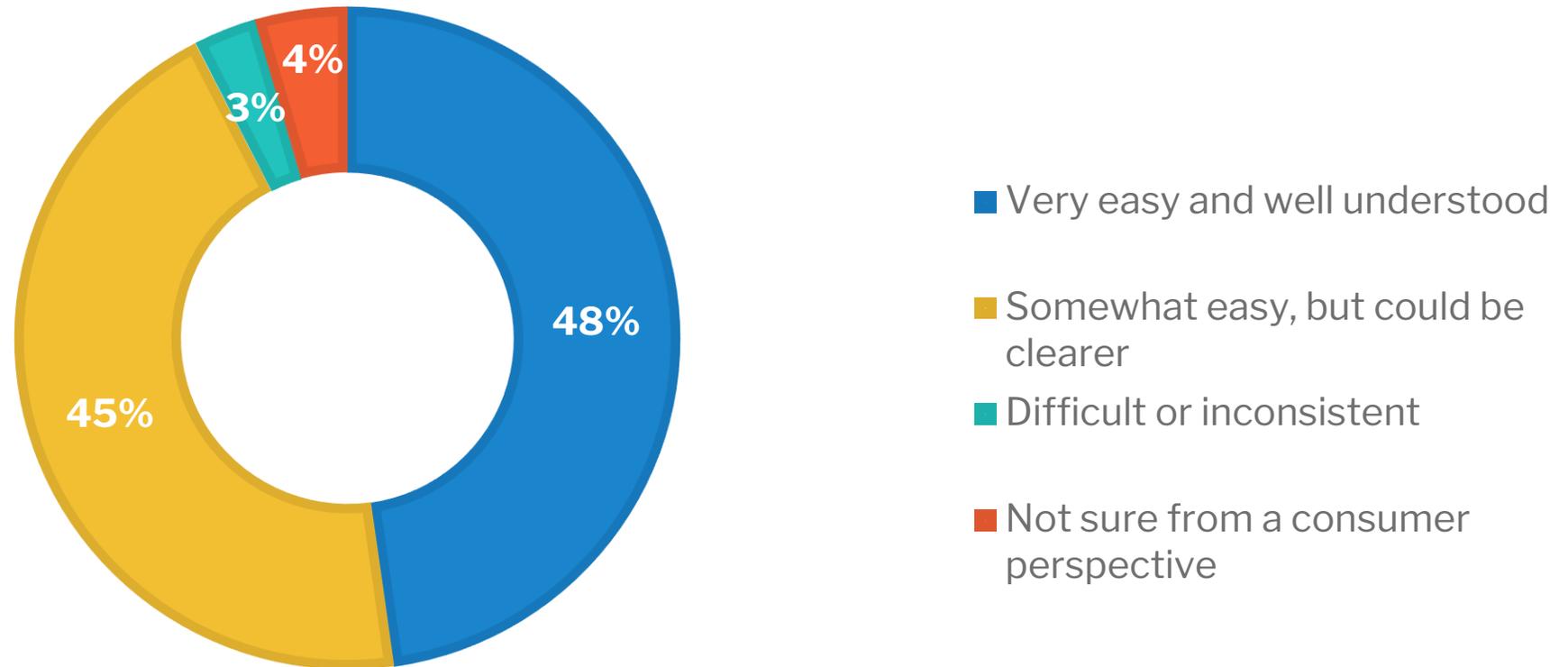
Represents 291 responses across 170 organisations

What typically happens to complaints and feedback once they are received?
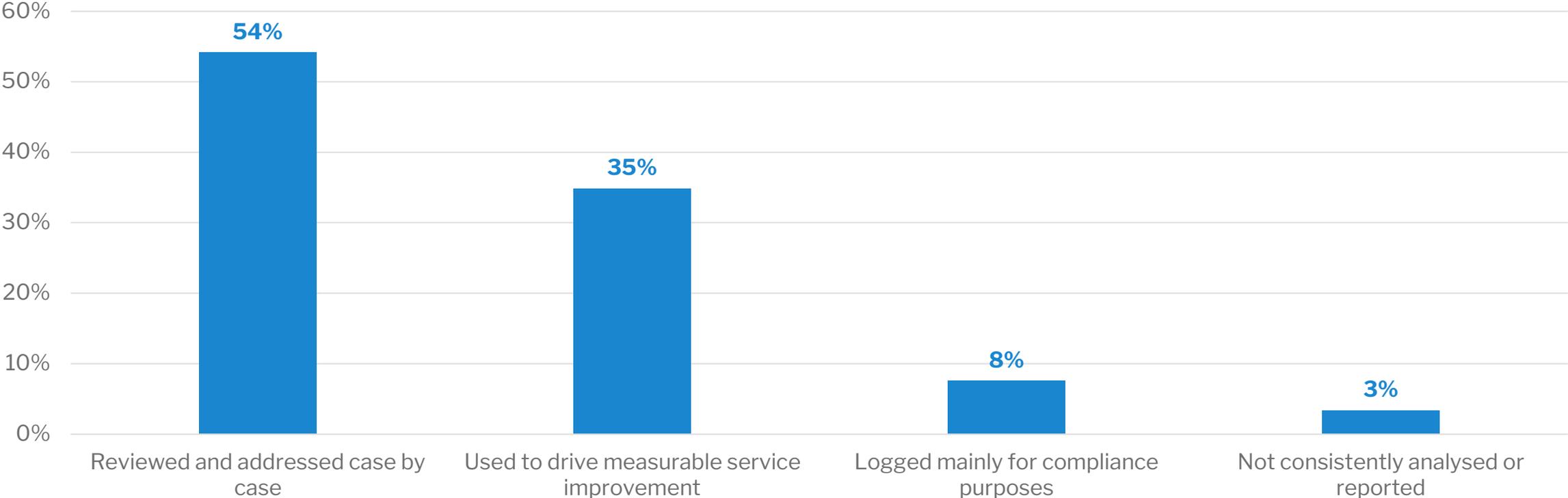
Represents 290 responses across 170 organisations

Which areas do consumers most frequently request more transparency about in your facility?

Represents 290 responses across 170 organisations

Joining us on the panel

Steve Aivaliotis

Proactive Complaints
Management

Nicola Burton

Executive Manager –
Quality and Organisational
Development, Peninsula
Villages

Jess McKenna

Quality and Compliance
Manager, Bene Aged Care

Managing Feedback, Consumer Expectations and Transparency in Aged Care

Steve Aivaliotis – Mediator – Proactive Complaints Management

Introduction

- Feedback and complaints are no longer "quality activities" — they are governance, risk and safety controls.

- Regulators are assessing how systems operate in practice, not whether a policy exists.

- The *Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards* and *Statement of Rights* require accessible, transparent and responsive systems.

- The real challenge is operational capability — embedding consistency, defensibility and learning.

- This session focuses on building practical, evidence-based systems that withstand scrutiny.

What Regulators Expect from an Effective Complaints & Feedback System

Regulators expect evidence of:

Accessibility & Safety

- A visible, easy-to-use system.

- Multiple complaint channels (verbal, written, anonymous).

- Access to advocacy, interpreters, alternative formats.

What Regulators Expect from an Effective Complaints & Feedback System

Escalation & Risk Controls

- Defined triage and harm categorisation.

- Clear escalation pathways.

- Integration with:

  - Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS)

  - WHS psychosocial risk controls

  - Clinical governance

  - Risk registers

What Regulators Expect from an Effective Complaints & Feedback System

Governance & Board Oversight

Boards and executives must be able to explain:

- What complaint themes are emerging.

- What risk signals are identified.

- What improvements have been implemented.

- How outcomes have changed as a result.

If leaders cannot articulate this, regulators may assume systems are not embedded.

Managing Consumer Expectations with Clarity & Transparency

Most dissatisfaction arises from misaligned expectations rather than adverse outcomes.

Transparency requires:

At Entry to Service

- Clear explanation of:

  ○ What services an organisation can and cannot provide.

  ○ Rights and limitations.

  ○ How to raise concerns.

Managing Consumer Expectations with Clarity & Transparency

At Complaint Intake

- Confirm:

  - ✓ The issue.

  - ✓ Desired outcome.

  - ✓ Investigation scope.

  - ✓ Timeframes.

Managing Consumer Expectations with Clarity & Transparency

During Investigation

- Provide updates.

- Explain limitations early.

- Outline potential outcomes realistically.

Managing Consumer Expectations with Clarity & Transparency

At Closure

- Written response should include:

  ○ Issues considered.

  ○ Findings.

  ○ Rationale for decisions.

  ○ Any improvement actions.

  ○ Review or escalation options.

Managing Consumer Expectations with Clarity & Transparency

If or when an outcome is "not substantiated," transparency about process and reasoning reduces escalation risk.

Clarity reduces:

- Regulator involvement.

- Repeated complaints.

- Staff distress.

- Defensive culture.

Turning Feedback into Meaningful Service Improvement

Complaints are organisational intelligence.

Beyond case resolution, providers must demonstrate:

Pattern & Trend Analysis

- Monthly or quarterly theme review.

- Cross-site comparisons.

- Identification of repeat issues.

- Root cause analysis.

Turning Feedback into Meaningful Service Improvement

Learning Loops

Evidence of:

- Policy amendments.

- Practice changes.

- Targeted staff training.

- Environmental adjustments.

- Communication improvements.

Turning Feedback into Meaningful Service Improvement

Documentation of Improvement

Maintain:

- Action registers.

- Improvement tracking logs.

- Completion dates.

- Impact review outcomes.

Turning Feedback into Meaningful Service Improvement

Regulators look for:

- Not just closure letters,

- But documented continuous improvement cycles.

The goal is not fewer complaints — it is safer systems and stronger trust.

Common Gaps Providers Face — and How to Address Them

Gap 1: Over-reliance on Policy

Problem:

- Policy exists but staff lack capability.

Suggested Solution:

- Structured training programs.

- Scenario-based learning.

- Standardised response frameworks.

Common Gaps Providers Face — and How to Address Them

Gap 2: Inconsistent Responses Across Sites

Problem:

- Variable decision-making and documentation.

Suggested Solution:

- Investigation templates.

- Triage matrices.

- Manager checklists.

- Central oversight of high-risk complaints.

Common Gaps Providers Face — and How to Address Them

Gap 3: Complaints Treated as Isolated Incidents

Problem:

- No theme identification.

Solution:

- Quarterly thematic reviews.

- Board-level dashboard reporting.

- Cross-functional governance discussions.

Common Gaps Providers Face — and How to Address Them

Gap 4: Poor Documentation

Problem:

- Files that cannot withstand audit or tribunal scrutiny.

Suggested Solution:

- Clear issue lists.

- Evidence logs.

- Documented rationale.

- Closure summaries.

Common Gaps Providers Face — and How to Address Them

Gap 5: Weak Escalation Pathways

Problem:

- Staff unsure when or how to escalate.

Suggested Solution:

- Risk severity scoring tools.

- Clear harm thresholds.

- Escalation triggers.

- Visible escalation flowcharts.

Using Data & Reporting to Demonstrate Compliance & Continuous Improvement

Data must tell a story.

Effective reporting includes:

Quantitative Measures

- Volume by service type.

- Themes and categories.

- Harm severity levels.

Using Data & Reporting to Demonstrate Compliance & Continuous Improvement

- Time to acknowledgement.

- Time to resolution.

- Escalation rates.

- Repeat complaints.

- Consumer satisfaction with complaint handling.

Using Data & Reporting to Demonstrate Compliance & Continuous Improvement

Qualitative Insight

- Root cause themes.

- Emerging risk signals.

- Workforce capability gaps.

- Culture indicators.

Using Data & Reporting to Demonstrate Compliance & Continuous Improvement

Governance Integration

- Board dashboards with narrative analysis.

- Linkage to risk register.

- Evidence of completed improvement actions.

- Trend comparisons over time.

If data is collected but not analysed and reviewed, regulators may assume it is not being used.

Closing Message

Complaints systems are a window into:

- Care quality

- Organisational culture

- Risk management maturity

- Governance effectiveness

Closing Message

Moving beyond compliance requires:

- Clear expectations.

- Transparent communication.

- Defensible processes.

- Strong documentation.

- Measurable learning.

- Board visibility.

- Continuous improvement.

Closing Message

The goal is not to eliminate complaints.

The goal is to demonstrate that when concerns are raised:

- They are heard.

- They are assessed fairly.

- They are responded to proportionately.

- They lead to safer systems.

That is what regulators expect.

And that is what builds trust.

Mastering Complaints Handling: Best Practice for Delivering Excellence

Steven Aivaliotis

Get Steve's book

Actionable insights and practical strategies for handling complaints with empathy, professionalism, and integrity for professionals in aged care, healthcare, and customer service sectors.

Live Poll

What is your home's current status regarding whistleblower protections? (Select one)

- We have policies in place and staff are trained on how to report concerns

- We have policies but haven't yet trained staff on the processes

- We're currently developing our whistleblower policy and procedures

- We're unsure what our obligations are under the new legislation

- We're relying on our broader organisational whistleblower framework (if part of larger organisation)

- We haven't yet addressed whistleblower requirements

More from the panel

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Questions from the chat

Accommodation Pricing Report

A report tailored to your organisation giving you insights into your competitors' room types and pricing

Free offer extended to 31 March.

https://www.mirusaustralia.com/accommodation-pricing-report

Care Minutes Performance Report

A customised report assessing funding risk and roster efficiency to support your workforce and funding strategy.

https://www.mirusaustralia.com/care-minutes-performance-report

Our next webinar

HELF as a Competitive Advantage

Thursday, 26 March 2026

12pm – 1pm AEDT

Watch your inbox for your invitation

Contact us

Ben Sturzaker

General Manager of Product

Ben.sturzaker@manad.com.au

Tyler Fisher

Head of Data and Insights

Tyler.fisher@mirusaustralia.com

MIRUS AUSTRALIA | manadplus+

helping you provide better aged care

1300 738 145 | info@mirusaustralia.com

mirusaustralia.com