

Whistleblower Disclosures

Frequently Asked Questions



At Benetas, we are committed to a safe, respectful and open environment where everyone, residents, families, staff and visitors, can speak up when something does not seem right. This guide explains what a whistleblower disclosure is, how it differs from everyday feedback and complaints, how to make one, and the protections available to you.

1. What is a whistleblower disclosure?

A whistleblower disclosure is a report of suspected serious wrongdoing. This is different from general feedback or a service complaint. A disclosure may involve:

- Abuse, neglect, or mistreatment of a person receiving care
- Breach of the Aged Care Act or the Statement of Rights
- Financial misconduct or fraud
- Serious safety risks to residents, staff, or others
- Illegal or unethical behaviour by a person or organisation

2. What is the difference between a complaint and a whistleblower disclosure?

Both are important ways to raise concerns, and Benetas welcomes both. The key difference is the nature and seriousness of the concern:

	Feedback & Complaints	Whistleblower Disclosure
What it covers	Service quality, care concerns, compliments, suggestions, dissatisfaction with how a complaint was handled	Serious wrongdoing: abuse, neglect, fraud, breach of aged care laws, serious safety risks, illegal or unethical behaviour
Who can raise it	Residents, families, carers, staff, volunteers, visitors, members of the public	Anyone, including residents, families, carers, staff, contractors, suppliers, volunteers, visitors
Anonymity	You may request anonymity	Anonymous reporting is available through the independent Integrity Line

How to raise it	In person, phone, email, online form or in writing to Benetas	Via Benetas directly, the independent Integrity Line (anonymous), or the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
Legal protections	You will not be victimised or discriminated against for raising feedback or a complaint	Additional legal protections apply under the Aged Care Act including confidentiality, identity protection and protection from retaliation
Resolution timeframe	We aim to resolve within 14 days	Timeframes vary depending on the nature and complexity of the investigation

Not sure which applies to you? You can always speak to a Benetas staff member or Service Manager who will help you direct your concern appropriately. You can also raise your concern first as feedback, if it appears to qualify as a protected disclosure, we will explain your options.

3. Who can make a whistleblower disclosure?

Anyone can make a whistleblower disclosure, including:

- Residents and people receiving Benetas services
- Family members, carers, representatives, and advocates
- Benetas staff, volunteers, and contractors
- Suppliers, visitors, and members of the public

You do not need to be directly affected by the issue to make a disclosure.

4. What protections do I have if I make a disclosure?

If you make a whistleblower disclosure in good faith, you are protected under the Aged Care Act. These protections include:

- Your identity will be kept confidential where possible
- You will not be victimised, threatened, dismissed, or disadvantaged for speaking up
- You may report anonymously through our independent Integrity Line
- Benetas will investigate your concern fairly and take appropriate action

These are in addition to the standard protections that apply to anyone providing feedback or making a complaint under our Feedback and Complaints process.

5. Can I make a disclosure anonymously?

Yes. Anonymous reporting is available through the independent Integrity Line, which is managed externally by Grant Thornton and is not monitored by Benetas. This means you can raise a concern without disclosing your identity to Benetas at all.

If you choose to identify yourself, your details will be kept strictly confidential and only shared with those directly involved in managing the disclosure, or where required by law.

6. How do I make a whistleblower disclosure?

Independent Integrity Line:

Benetas has established an external, independent and confidential Integrity Line managed by Grant Thornton. If you have a disclosure, we encourage you to contact the Integrity Line by:

- **Phone:** (free call) 1300 043 095
- **Email:** benetasintegrity@myvault.net.au
- **Mail:** Benetas c/- Fraud & Forensic Consulting
GPO Box 4736, Melbourne

Internal Benetas contact:

Julia Pryor, Chair of Benetas Board	Julia.Pryor@benetas.com.au
Sean Balding, Director and Chair Finance and Risk Management Committee	Sean.Balding@benetas.com.au
Alicia Goddard, General Manager, People, Culture and Diversity	Alicia.Goddard@benetas.com.au
Campbell Richards, Chief Finance Officer and Company Secretary	Campbell.Richards@benetas.com.au

External agencies:

- **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission:**
1800 951 822
- **Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN):**
1800 700 600
- **Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National):**
131 450
- **National Relay Service:** 1800 555 660

7. What happens after I make a disclosure?

Once a disclosure is received, Benetas will:

- Acknowledge your disclosure promptly
- Assess and investigate the concern where appropriate, applying the principles of procedural fairness
- Communicate the outcome to you where possible
- Implement improvement actions if issues are identified

If you have made an anonymous disclosure, we may not be able to communicate an outcome directly to you; however, we will still investigate the concern.

8. What if my concern could be either a complaint or a whistleblower disclosure?

Sometimes a concern may fit both categories. For example, a report of poor care could be managed as a complaint, but if it involves suspected abuse or a serious breach of the law, it may also qualify as a protected whistleblower disclosure.

You may choose to have your concern managed:

- Under our Feedback and Complaints process, or
- As a Protected Disclosure under the Benetas Whistleblower Policy

If managed under the Whistleblower Policy, additional confidentiality and legal protections will apply. A Benetas staff member can help you understand the options and choose the most appropriate pathway.

9. Will making a disclosure affect my care or my relationship with Benetas?

No. You will not be victimised, disadvantaged, or treated differently as a result of making a whistleblower disclosure in good faith. This protection applies whether you make a disclosure to Benetas, to the independent Integrity Line, or to an external body such as the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

Benetas values openness and will always act to address concerns raised, not to penalise the person who raised them.

10. Where can I get more information or support?

- Ask any Benetas staff member to explain the process
- Read the full Benetas Whistleblower Policy (available on this page)
- Visit the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission: agedcarequality.gov.au
- Contact OPAN for free, independent advocacy: 1800 700 600

If you need this information in another language, in large print, audio, or another accessible format, please ask a staff member — we are here to support you.

Benetas commitment

We are committed to ensuring that every person feels safe and supported to speak up. Whistleblower disclosures help us protect the safety, dignity, and rights of every person in our care and to hold ourselves accountable to the highest standards of conduct.