



ON CALL AFRICA

Complaints Policy

April 2018

1. Introduction

- The majority of issues raised by patients, staff, volunteers, partners, donors and beneficiaries are likely to be concerns rather than complaints.
- On Call Africa is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without recourse to formal procedures.
- However, in those instances where someone does not feel a concern has been addressed, or it is of sufficient gravity, then the charity's formal complaints procedure should be used.
- The prime aim of the charity's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.
- The policy will be available also via the website and provided, on request, in hard copy to staff, volunteers, partners, donors and beneficiaries.
- Written records of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing will be kept.
- The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

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2. Complaints Procedure

In summary they are as follows:

Stage 1 – A concern is raised informally with an appropriate member of staff (the Operations Manager in Zambia or the Operations Director in the UK). Most concerns will be resolved at this stage. If not then stage 2 begins:

Stage 2 – The charity receives a formal written complaint. This can be done verbally, by telephone or in writing. A Complaints Form is available for people to

use(Appendix A). The matter will be investigated and resolved. If not then stage 3 begins

Stage 3 – The Operations Manager or Operations Director hears the details of the complaint and investigations that have already occurred and arranges a further investigation to resolve the matter. If the matter cannot be resolved, then the complaint goes to:

Stage 4 -The Board of Trustees will convene a Complaints' Panel for a formal hearing of the complaint. Their decision is final.

Stage 1 – Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the charity at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern.

On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case there will be an informal but informed response within a day or two. It is anticipated that the vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way.

Stage 2 – Making a complaint

- Formal complaints should be in writing and sent to the charity, addressed to the Operations Director. You may wish to use the Complaint Form at the end of this policy.
- The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The charity will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working days of receiving it and report on the action the charity will take to resolve the issue.
- Any investigation will at this stage be led by the Operations Manager in Zambia.
- The outcome of the investigation will be communicated in writing within 10 working days. Where this is not possible the charity will communicate in writing within 10 working days to explain when it can be resolved.
- In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Operations Director, the Chair of Trustees will be informed of the complaint and the Trustees will arrange for the matter to be investigated. The charity will normally give a response within five working days but in any case within no more than ten working days

Stage 3 – Further Investigation

- If the matter cannot be resolved at Stage 2, the Operations Director will review the information and may undertake a further investigation.
- Following the investigation, the charity will give a written response within ten working days. Where this is not possible the charity will communicate in writing within 10 working days to explain when it can be resolved.
- At each stage of the process the complainant will be asked to confirm whether or not the matter has been resolved.

Stage 4 – Complaints’ Panel

- If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 3, then the charity will advise the complainant of the right to refer to the Board of Trustees who will establish a panel of at least 3 people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
- Complainants should send their written complaint to the Chair of Trustees asking for the matter to be considered by the Trustees’ Complaints Panel.
- The hearing will normally take place within ten working days of the receipt of the written request for Stage 4 investigation. The panel will consist of 2 Trustees and one person who is independent of the management and running of the charity.
- The aim of the panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the charity and the complainant.
- All parties will be notified of the Panel’s decision in writing within five working days after the date of the hearing. The decision of the panel is final
- The panel will make findings and recommendations and these will be sent to the complainant. They will also be available for those involved in investigating the complaint to inspect.
- *NB: Written records will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.*
- All correspondence, statements and records of complaints are confidential (except where the complaint relates to a Safeguarding concern or a concern relating to fraud, bribery or financial irregularity).

Appendix A:

On Call Africa - Complaint Form

Please complete and return to info@oncallafrica.org who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Your relationship to the On Call Africa:

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Address:

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Postcode:

Email address if available.....

Telephone number if available.....

Please give details of your complaint.

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What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

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What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

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Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

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Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: