

Action against Medical Accidents

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

AvMA is committed to being transparent and as responsive as possible to concerns about its conduct or performance, or that of its employees, volunteers or trustees. We welcome feedback and are committed to learning from complaints wherever possible and making any necessary improvements.

Informal Resolution of Concerns

Wherever possible we encourage the informal resolution of concerns so that matters can be put right without the need for a formal complaint. We encourage people with concerns to raise them in the first instance with the person at AvMA with whom they have been dealing. If that is not appropriate it may be possible to speak to their line manager.

Whether or not an expression of concern or dissatisfaction is expressed as a formal complaint or is resolved, the issue should be brought to the attention of the relevant department manager or Deputy Chief Executive. Reports to the Council of Trustees should include information on issues raised and action taken. If it is not possible to resolve an issue informally it should either be dealt with as a formal complaint (see below) or the person concerned advised of the complaints procedure and invited to complain in writing.

Formal Complaints: Stage 1

Complaints requiring a formal written response should be addressed in writing to the Chief Executive, or if the complaint is about the Chief Executive, to the Chair. Written complaints received by any other member of staff will be forwarded to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive, or in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive will ensure that the matters which are the subject of complaint are investigated and reply in writing within 20 working days (or, if this is not possible, will write within this timeframe to explain why and provide an estimated date of response). Where the complaint is about the Chief Executive, the Chair will be responsible for this.

Stage 2

If a complainant is not satisfied with the response of the Chief Executive, they have a right to appeal to the Chair of the Trustees of AvMA. To do this they should write within 20 working days to the Chair. In the Chair's absence, another trustee of the charity may consider the appeal. On receipt of this letter, the Chair or other trustee will review the file. If the Chair/trustee considers it necessary, this *may* involve appointing a sub-committee of the Council of Management to undertake a further investigation, s/he *may* refer the matter to the Council, s/he *may* contact you and/or ask you to attend a meeting, or *may* consult other professional advisors or related parties.

Taking into account the external commitments of trustees it is hoped that you will be notified in writing of the result of the complaint appeal within 20 working days. If however this does not prove possible, you will be notified within 20 working days of the reason(s) for the delay, and given an estimate as to when the appeal review is likely to be completed. In any event AvMA will endeavour to complete the appeal review within 2 calendar months.

The Chair's or other trustee's decision (or that of the Council or sub-committee if appointed) will be final.

Complaint Report and Action

Some complaints may indicate that changes in AvMA procedures are required. It will therefore be the responsibility of the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive to draw to the attention of the staff management team where such changes may be required.

A report on complaints received since the last meeting of the Council of Trustees will be made to the next Council of Trustees summarising the subject and outcome.

The Chief Executive will be responsible for producing an annual report on complaints for consideration by the staff management team and by the Council. This will be within the process of annual review and planning.

Agreed by Council 20th February 2008