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Title: External Stakeholders Complaints Handling Policy	

External Stakeholders Complaints Handling Policy

Background

Burnet's mission is to achieve better health for vulnerable communities in Australia and internationally by accelerating the translation of research, discovery and evidence into sustainable health solutions. As a medical research institute and DFAT-accredited NGO that works with a range of stakeholder groups both in Australia and internationally, the Institute strives to provide best practice across the range of services and interactions it provides and where required, an avenue for an effective mechanism for handling complaints. Burnet Institute welcome's feedback whether in the form of complaints, compliments, or suggestions from individuals, groups or organisations with which we have interacted in some way. This feedback will help ensure our services, processes and procedures better meet the needs of those we interact with and that issues raised are addressed in the most appropriate manner. It will also help develop our services and interactions by reinforcing what we are doing right and providing positive feedback to staff, as well as looking at how we can improve.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to give context and direction to the Burnet Institute's complaint handling procedures. Under this policy we:

- Recognise, promote and protect the individual's or external organisation's right to comment and complain about their dealings with the Burnet Institute;
- Provide an efficient, fair and accessible framework for resolving complaints;
- Identify how we will communicate about the complaints handling process;
- Set standards for dealing with complaints; and
- Support the monitoring of complaints in an endeavour to improve the quality of the services the Institute provides

Scope

A complaint can be made by any supporter, partner organisation, community or individual with whom we work or any member of the public whether an individual, civil society organisation or other entity.
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Definitions

A complaint is defined as: Any indication that an external person or organisation is dissatisfied with the communications, personal interactions, processes, services, or facilities provided by the Burnet Institute. Complaints can be received in person or by letter, email, telephone or via social media.

Policy statement/overview

Our commitment

All complaints will be handled quickly, fairly, effectively and courteously. In doing so, the Burnet Institute is committed to ensuring the rights of the complainant are protected, as are those of the staff who receive complaints, or who may be the subject of a complaint. Burnet Institute will ensure that stakeholders are aware of their right to complain by promoting its complaint handling procedures on the Institute's website and via the external newsletter. Burnet's commitment to endeavouring to resolve complaints means that complaints are handled at Executive Management Level through our Public Affairs Office and elevated (depending on the issue through to the CEO and the Board) if appropriate.

Our complaints record

It is important to record customer complaints in order to:

- Track progress of complaints
- Ensure accountability
- Identify and fix root cause
- Enable data analysis and management reporting

Burnet Institute will identify and record all customer complaints. Data about complaints will be electronically recorded at one centralised point in Public Affairs to allow for the monitoring of complaint procedures, to analyse complaints, and to report to management on complaints to allow for service improvement. The physical record of all complaints and responses to those complaints will be filed in the Public Affairs and Communications to allow for accountability and audit as required. In addition the register of complaints will be recorded in the Board reports and raised at the Burnet Institute Executive to ensure issues raised that require implementation of policy or procedural changes are addressed at senior management level.

Response Standard

Speed of response is consistently identified as being one of the attributes which most influence perceptions of a successful response system. Standards for response to a customer complaint at Burnet will be:

Complaints made in Person

Complaints received in person at the country office or field site by a staff member will be referred to the Country Representative who will also inform the Head of International Operations and the Chief of Staff in Melbourne of the complaint.

Telephone

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If possible, complaints made by telephone will be answered immediately. If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately it will be responded to within three working days to answer the complaint or, at a minimum, acknowledge receipt of the complaint and let the person know what is happening.

E-mail

Complaints by e-mail will be responded to within three working days to answer the complaint if possible or, at a minimum, acknowledge receipt of the complaint and let the person know of the progress of the investigation.

Letter

Complaints received by letter or via a customer feedback form will be responded to as soon as possible. Where a contact telephone number or e-mail address is provided an initial response will be made within three working days. If only an address is provided, a written response will be provided within 10 working days.

Understanding patterns of complaints empowers managers to improve service and prioritise resources for future planning. Burnet Institute will analyse and monitor the complaints received and report these to the Board on a regular basis.

Staff who may receive a formal complaint should immediately contact the Chief of Staff who will then deal with the issue in the most effective manner.

- All staff and external stakeholders will have easy access to the Institute's complaint handling policy and procedures.
- New staff will receive information about the Institute's complaint handling process when they receive their induction.

Complaints Procedure

The following procedure applies to persons wishing to lodge a complaint with the Burnet Institute. Burnet's Chief of Staff assumes responsibility for managing all complaints through to completion.

1. The complaint should be in writing and sent either by mail, email or fax to the complaints officer (Chief of Staff). If uncertain contact can be made by telephone. Head Office contact details are as follows: Chief of Staff Burnet Institute GPO Box 2284 Melbourne 3001 or email: feedback@burnet.edu.au or Tel +61 3 9282 2111 Fax +61 3 9282 2100
2. Once received, the complaint will be registered in our complaints handling system, and the Chief of Staff will issue a letter acknowledging its receipt to the complainant.
3. The relevant senior staff associated with the case in question will investigate the complaint together with the Chief of Staff.
4. The complaint may be escalated to the Institute's CEO or Board if deemed appropriate by the Chief of Staff.
5. A written and verbal response will be made to the complainant in relation to the course of action to be taken.

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6. Should this outcome not be satisfactory to the complainant and resolve the issue, an appeal can be made for review or the matter elevated to the Australian Council for International Affairs (ACFID) of which Burnet Institute is a signatory member.
7. Complaints can also be lodged in each of the countries in which Burnet Institute has a presence. See contact details below:

Burnet Institute is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and should you feel your complaint has not been completely satisfied then you can contact ACFID at: Private Bag 3, Deakin, ACT, 2600 or by calling +61 2 6285 1816, or emailing main@acfid.asn.au

Papua New Guinea : Insert office address

Myanmar: Insert office address

Responsibility for implementation

The Executive Management Committee is responsible for the implementation and review of this policy. All staff members are responsible for adhering to this policy.

Related Policies/ Procedures/Guidance

ACFID Code of Conduct: Quality Principles (<https://acfid.asn.au/content/quality-principles-and-commitments>)

Members enable stakeholders to make complaints to the organisation in a safe and confidential manner
Governance

Members seek input and feedback from all stakeholders