

# Dealing with problems policy and procedure

## Dealing with problems policy

- > Volunteers are at the heart of Anthony Nolan's work and without them we simply couldn't do what we do. Anthony Nolan is committed to following volunteering good practice and ensuring our volunteers are supported.
- > The involvement of volunteers is almost always a positive and rewarding experience for both the volunteer and Anthony Nolan. However there may be times where concerns or complaints are raised either by or about volunteers.
- > The objective of this policy is to set out a clear process for dealing with volunteer concerns and complaints quickly, objectively, openly and consistently, so that:
  - our volunteers are treated fairly
  - the reputation of Anthony Nolan is protected
  - any disruption to staff, volunteers, donors, patients and their families is minimised
- > It is good practice to avoid using the same grievance and disciplinary policy for both staff and volunteers. This policy sets up a separate problem solving process for volunteers.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Anthony Nolan volunteers including; volunteer couriers, donor visitors, online community champions , friends groups, marrow, tea bars, R&Be, office volunteers, spit-kit packers , sample sorters, fundraising event , donor recruitment event volunteers, patient & families panel

## Policy statements

- most concerns and complaints will be resolved informally
- the formal procedure will only be used when there are significant risks or where previous attempts to solve the issue haven't worked
- all concerns and complaints will be dealt with quickly and fairly
- any volunteer who has had a concern or complaint raised against them will be given the opportunity to explain the situation from their perspective
- where a volunteer is asked to attend a meeting as part of the formal procedure they will be offered the opportunity to bring

one other person with them for support – this person must not be involved with the concern or complaint

- people involved in the concern or complaint (including the person who raised it and witnesses) will be kept informed of its progress
- the process will be treated confidentially and information will only be shared with people who need to know about it
- all volunteers will be informed that they have a right to appeal the outcome of the formal process and will be given information on how to do this
- the aim will always be to find the best solution for the volunteer at the same time as meeting the needs of Anthony Nolan

### **Definition; concern or complaint**

- > A complaint or concern is any issue raised by or about a volunteer. For example, someone may make a complaint against a volunteer's actions or attitude or a volunteer may raise a concern about their experience at Anthony Nolan.
- > A concern or complaint could be raised in a number of ways;
  - A volunteer may make a complaint about a member of staff or another volunteer
  - A member of the public, a patient or their family or a staff member may raise a concern or complaint about a volunteer
  - A volunteer may not meet the expectations of their role

### **Advice**

The Volunteer Engagement Manager is available to provide support and guidance throughout the dealing with problems process.

### **Dealing with problems procedure: complaint or concern about a volunteer**

Most concerns and complaints will be resolved informally by a discussion between the volunteer and the person supporting them. This will ideally be done in person, but in some circumstances this may not be possible. The discussion should;

- outline details of the concern or complaint
- explore why the concern or complaint may have happened e.g. does the volunteer feel supported, is the volunteer unfulfilled in their current role?
- seek to identify goals to resolve the issue e.g. does the volunteer need extra support or training, does the volunteer need to take a break from volunteering or to try another role?
- set a deadline for reviewing the situation with the volunteer

## Resolving complaints of concerns formally

- > Where the concern or complaint cannot be resolved informally or the concern or complaint is very serious then the formal process should be used.
- > Most of the time the staff member directly supporting the volunteer will deal with the concern or complaint. If they are directly involved with the issue then a staff member at a similar level should take this on instead. This will be arranged by the Volunteer Engagement Manager.
- > In exceptional circumstances, a volunteer may be asked to stop volunteering for Anthony Nolan immediately while a complaint or concern is explored. For example, if a volunteer is accused of theft, assault or acts of violence. In some cases, legal proceedings may need to be concluded before the next step of the dealing with problems procedure can be taken forward.
- > The decision to ask a volunteer to stop volunteering while the complaint or concern is explored will be made by the person supporting the volunteer. They will be supported by their line manager and the Volunteer Engagement Manager. The volunteer will be informed of this decision, by phone or in person, and this will then be confirmed in writing.
- > Where the concern or complaint raised about a volunteer relates to a safeguarding issue this will be immediately referred to HR. Please see Anthony Nolan's child protection policy for more information.
- > When dealing with the issue or complaint the person supporting the volunteer should :
  - organise a meeting with the volunteer involved to explain the complaint or concern and give them the opportunity to explain the situation from their perspective - this will ideally be done in person, but in some circumstances this may not be possible
  - speak to the person who raised the concern or complaint to make sure they have the full details
  - speak to anyone else involved in the complaint or concern (e.g. witnesses, other staff and volunteers)
- > When organising the meeting with the volunteer involved, the volunteer should be informed they can bring someone with them for support. That person should not be involved in the concern or complaint.
- > If a volunteer refuses to attend this meeting, they should be informed that a decision will be made in their absence based on current information.

- > Once the person supporting the volunteer has heard all the details of the concern or complaint, they will make a decision about the best outcome for the volunteer and Anthony Nolan. They will be supported to do this by their line manager and the Volunteer Engagement Manager.
- > There are a number of different outcomes of the dealing with problems process:
  - The complaint or concern is not held and no further action is needed
  - The volunteer is offered further training and support to address the concern or complaint
  - The volunteer decides the role is not right for them and is supported to step down from their role
  - The volunteer is asked to stop volunteering in their current role, but it may be possible for them to take on other roles at Anthony Nolan
  - A volunteer is asked to stop volunteering for Anthony Nolan altogether
- > The person supporting the volunteer should let the volunteer, and the person who raised the complaint, know the outcome - first by telephone and then followed up by a letter.

## **Appeal**

- > The person raising the concern or complaint or the volunteer it relates to can appeal if they feel;
  - the dealing with problems process was not followed
  - the outcome of the process was not in proportion to the concern or complaint
- > All volunteers will be informed that they have a right to appeal and how they can do this

## **Patients and families**

If a concern is raised against a volunteer and they are also someone affected by a blood cancer/disorder they should be able to carry on accessing support from Anthony Nolan. Where there is an issue with their behaviour when accessing services, this will be considered separately by the Head of Patient Experience.

## **Dealing with problems procedure: complaint or concern from a volunteer**

- > Most concerns and complaints raised by a volunteer should be resolved informally by a discussion between the volunteer and the person supporting them. The discussion should;

- explore the nature of the concern or complaint and how the volunteer would like it to be resolved
  - thank the volunteer for raising the concern, respond as appropriate and let the volunteer know when and how the complaint or concern will be resolved
- > If the concern or complaint concerns the person supporting the volunteer then the volunteer should contact the Volunteer Engagement Manager.

### **Resolving complaints and concerns formally**

- > Where the concern or complaint cannot be resolved informally or the concern or complaint is very serious then the formal process should be used.
- > To make a formal complaint a volunteer must write to the person supporting them.
- > The person supporting the volunteer will investigate the concern or complaint and then decide whether it is valid. They will be supported in this decision by their line manager and the Volunteer Engagement Manager. If the complaint is not justified, they must explain why to the volunteer, both verbally and then followed up in writing.
- > If the concern or complaint is justified and can be addressed by the person supporting the volunteer, they should thank the volunteer for raising it, respond as appropriate and let the volunteer know when and how the complaint or concern will be resolved.
- > If the concern or complaint is justified but is about a policy or action outside of the responsibility of the person supporting the volunteer, they should raise the complaint with the relevant team on the volunteer's behalf. The volunteer should be kept informed of the progress of the complaint.
- > If the issue is about the person supporting the volunteer, then the volunteer should contact the Volunteer Engagement Manager to explain why the issue cannot be dealt with informally.
- > The person supporting the volunteer (or their line manager) should let the volunteer know the outcome of the dealing with problems process; first by telephone and then followed up by letter.

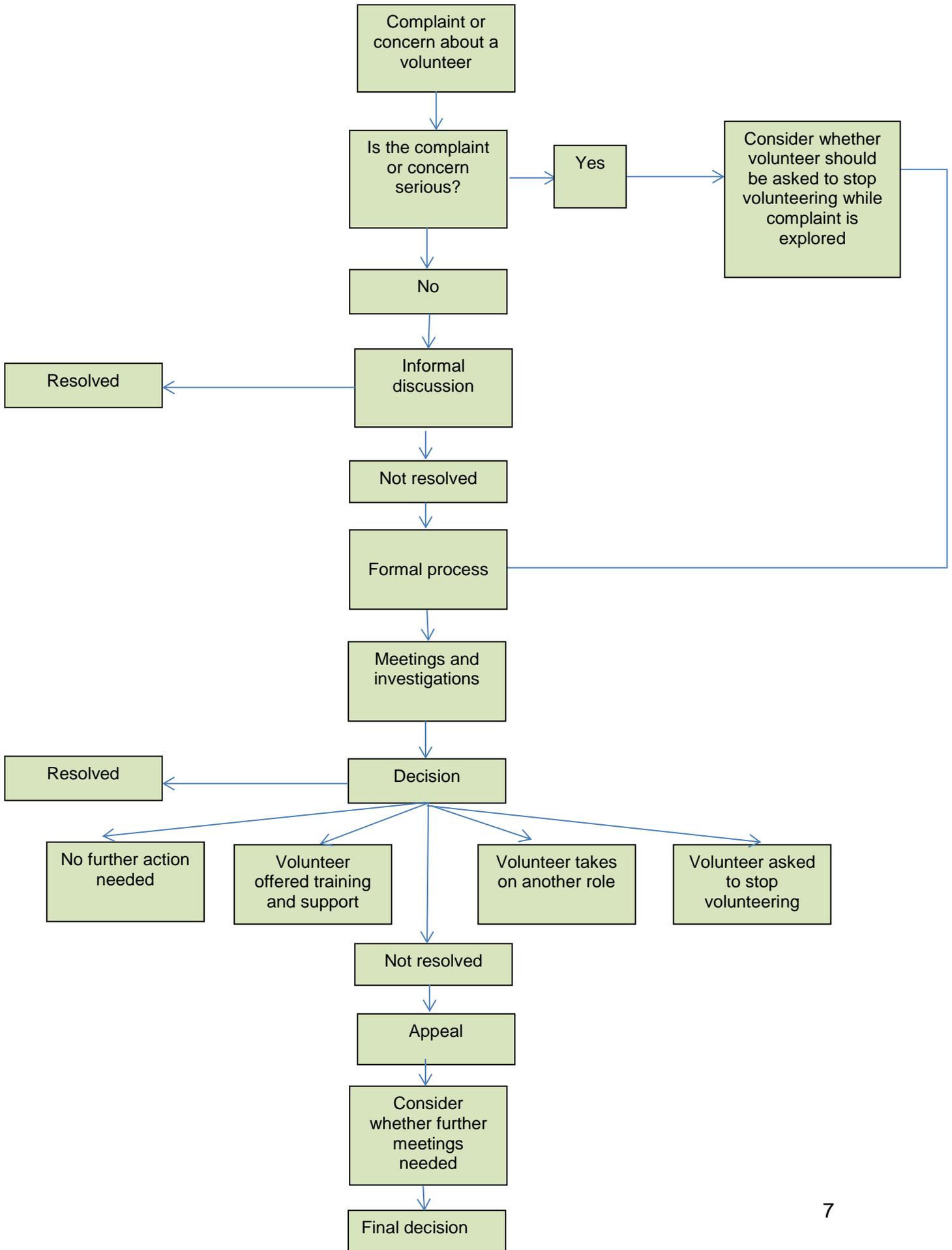
### **Appeal**

- > If the concern or complaint is not resolved at the formal stage the volunteer can appeal in writing to the Volunteer Engagement Manager.

- > All volunteers will be informed that they have a right to appeal and how they can do this

<b>Date of issue</b>	<b>Last revision date</b>	<b>Review date</b>	<b>Reviewed by (name &amp; job title)</b>
Dec 2014		Dec 2016	Liz Wigelsworth, Volunteer Engagement Manager

## Complaint or concern about a volunteer



## Complaint or concern from a volunteer

