

AUSTRALIAN DOCTORS FOR AFRICA

Policy: MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

Date of last review: 04/2024

Date of next review: 04/2027

Approved by: Board

1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- ADFA presents a unified, informed and consistent response to the wide range of issues with which it is involved and
- that all communications are truthful, in line with its Strategic Plan and be approved by a media spokesperson.

Successful management of media issues ensures that ADFA's public profile and reputation is positively maintained, reinforced and enhanced.

1.2 Scope

This policy describes how ADFA responds and reacts to media inquiries / issues, the type of media issues ADFA comments on and the nominated spokespersons for ADFA. It includes the use of social media and public materials and applies to all ADFA staff, office bearers and volunteers.

2 POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 Commitments and Principles

ADFA is committed to:

- the dissemination of accurate, timely and accessible information about ADFA activities, including results and lessons, to all stakeholders and to seeking their input and feedback;
- the use of images and stories in communications in a way that portrays the people involved in a manner that respects their dignity, values, history, religion, language and culture, protects their safety and rights, and is authentic to the context, person and terms of consent given, and
- communicating outcomes and other relevant information in line with grant agreements and applicable communication and branding guidelines, eg Australian government support.

In responding to the media, ADFA will adhere to the following principles. ADFA does not:

- comment on Government health policy, either in Australia or in the countries in which it operates;
- react to comments made by other health organisations;
- comment on authenticated or new surgical research or procedures;
- rate surgeons, rate hospitals or comment on individual surgical excellence;
- endorse surgical products or techniques;
- comment on adverse events or surgical cases if they are being dealt with at a higher level / before a court of law;

- comment on areas that are not connected to ADFA activities;
- make statements about other people or organisations with the intention of creating a reputational or other advantage to ADFA; or
- comment on personal issues that concern a medical team member's competency or ability.

ADFA will, if required:

- profile and publicise individual work or team work undertaken by ADFA;
- profile and publicise the work of ADFA; and
- ensure that the collection of information, images and stories does not harm people or the environment.

2.2 Media Spokespersons

The nominated spokespersons for ADFA are the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the Board.

Only a nominated spokesperson may issue media releases and/or manage media events.

Team Leader or other team members may comment on clinical matters.

2.3 Management of Media Inquiries

The nominated spokesperson's primary task in handling media inquiries is to positively position ADFA's public profile while limiting the negative impact of issues that may reflect badly on ADFA.

All media inquiries / issues require a response from ADFA as soon as possible and preferably within 24 hours.

ADFA representatives' personal contact details cannot be given to the media without their express permission.

2.4 Public Materials and Social Media Communications

ADFA will publish materials which:

- are obtained and used according to ethical principles;
- are consistent with its stated purpose and values;
- accurately describe the nature and scope of its work;
- acknowledge the role of partners;
- are consistent with ADFA's Privacy Policy;
- are consistent with ACFID's Fundraising Charter where the public materials relate to fundraising; and
- are approved by a media spokesperson prior to publishing.

This applies to all information, stories and images collected for research, evaluation, and donor and supporter purposes.

3 REFERENCES

3.1 Related Documents and References

As a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct, ADFA is committed to meeting the standards within that Code that relates to truthful communication, and respect and understanding for partners, stakeholders and NGOs.

ADFA personnel shall adhere to the related ADFA policy documents listed below when handling media enquiries or publishing public material:

- Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct
- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Codes of Conduct

Note: For further information about the use of images, refer to *Annexure 1: Guidance Notes on Visual Images* contained in the ADFA Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

Established: June 2011

Reviewed: January 2013, October 2017, January 2021, April 2024