



Policy against abuse and exploitation of beneficiaries

1. Purpose and overview

In accordance with the mission and values of Orbis and principles of international law and codes of conduct, all Orbis staff, including full and part time employees, regular and temporary employees, interns, contractors, consultants, and volunteers (“Orbis Staff” or “you”), are responsible for promoting fundamental human rights, social justice, human dignity, and respect for the equal rights of men, women, and children. Furthermore, since Orbis’s mission is accomplished through its work with partners, partners are expected to abide by these standards. We recognise that Orbis’s standards of behavior must be upheld and that these standards take precedence over local and national cultural practices.

Orbis recognises the unequal power dynamic and the resulting potential for exploitation inherent in the work we do. We further recognize that exploitation undermines the credibility of our work and severely damages victims of these exploitative acts and their families and communities. Orbis Staff commit to upholding the highest ethical standard of integrity, accountability and transparency in the delivery of goods and services while executing the responsibilities of their position.

2. Definitions

Orbis: Orbis International and affiliated organisations including Orbis UK

Orbis Beneficiaries: all beneficiaries, including patients, community volunteers, and partner contacts.

Orbis Staff: full and part time employees, regular and temporary employees, interns, contractors, consultants, and volunteers.

3. Policy

Accordingly, as an Orbis Staff member, you commit that you will always strive to treat all beneficiaries, including patients, community volunteers, and partner contacts (“Orbis Beneficiaries”), with respect and courtesy in accordance with applicable international and national conventions and standards of behaviour, and never intentionally commit any act or omission that could result in physical, sexual or psychological harm to the beneficiaries we serve.

You must never abuse your power or position in the delivery of eye health services or program services, neither through withholding assistance nor by giving preferential treatment. Any form of intimidating, coercive, humiliating, degrading or aggressive behaviour towards beneficiaries is unacceptable.

Orbis Staff are also prohibited from engaging in sexual relationships with Orbis Beneficiaries. This includes the exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of coercive, humiliating, degrading, or



exploitative behaviour. Orbis will apply special considerations for Orbis Staff or partner staff who have an established personal relationship with an Orbis Beneficiary, such as marriage or formal engagement. While physical, sexual and psychological abuse and exploitation will always be prohibited, discretion may be used in the prohibition of sexual relationships with this policy if an assessment of the situation indicates a consensual and proper sexual relationship. In the case of a possible consensual or proper relationship, the Orbis International Chief of Program must be advised of the need for special considerations for Orbis Staff or partner staff in a personal relationship with an Orbis Beneficiary and upon assessment the Chief of Program will determine if special considerations are appropriate.

Sexual activity with children (defined according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as all persons under the age of 18) is strictly prohibited. For more details on Orbis UK's Child Protection Policy please consult the policy in the staff handbook.

4. Reporting concerns

Orbis is committed to responding appropriately to all reports or indications, including rumors, that suggest a beneficiary may be harmed or at risk of harm.

Reporting by Orbis Employees

Orbis International has established the Orbis Ethics and Compliance Hotline to provide employees with a tool to report their concerns about the abuse and exploitation of Orbis Beneficiaries in writing online or verbally via telephone in a confidential and anonymous manner.

If you have a good faith concern regarding the abuse and exploitation, including sexual abuse and exploitation, by an Orbis Staff member, you should promptly submit a report via the Orbis Ethics and Compliance Hotline. Or, if you prefer not to use the Orbis Ethics and Compliance Hotline, you may advise your line manager, the Director of Finance and Operations or the Chief Executive of Orbis UK, or the Orbis International Global Human Resources Director, the General Counsel, the Chief of Program, or the Chief Executive Officer.

Orbis UK is committed to investigating reported issues with care as described in our Whistleblowing policy.

Should a supervisor or any member of management become aware of the occurrence of abuse or exploitation of beneficiaries, irrespective of whether a formal complaint has been made, it is the supervisor's or manager's duty to report the matter immediately in accordance to the formal reporting guidelines.

Reporting by Orbis Beneficiaries

Orbis Country Directors and the partner organizations will agree on local reporting mechanisms that are relevant for the project and the context in which the project is being delivered. Beneficiary staff receiving reports of concerns arising from an Orbis



supported project must report the concerns to Orbis to ensure that appropriate measures are taken.

5. Ethics and compliance hotline

Orbis UK encourages any employee with a concern about this Policy to discuss the matter with their line manager, or the Director of Finance and Operations. In addition, as noted above, anyone who wishes to report a concern may do so using the Orbis Ethics and Compliance Hotline, subject to the limits imposed by local law. The Hotline also allows for anonymous reporting where allowed by law; however, keep in mind that an anonymous report may be more difficult to investigate, or to provide feedback on.

6. Discipline

Orbis UK considers sexual exploitation and abuse by Orbis Staff to constitute acts of gross misconduct. Therefore, all Orbis Staff, including managers and supervisors, may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Those volunteering, providing their services under a contract and other non-employees will have their agreement with Orbis terminated. Furthermore, Orbis Staff should be aware that they may be personally liable for money damages and criminal penalties if they engage in conduct contrary to this policy. Depending on the country, Orbis UK may be required or choose to alert legal authorities.