



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

Date of Meeting	6 July 2021
Report Title	Whistleblowing Update
Report Number	HSCP.21.082
Lead Officer	Sandra MacLeod
Report Author Details	Name: Sandra MacLeod Job Title: Chief Officer Email Address: <i>samacleod@aberdeencity.gov.uk</i> Phone Number: 01224 523107
Consultation Checklist Completed	Yes
Directions Required	No
Appendices	Appendix A Draft IJB Whistleblowing Procedure

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to provide the Integration Joint Board (IJB) with
(a) an update on the recently introduced national Whistleblowing Standards
and (b) a draft Whistleblowing Policy for the IJB.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the IJB:

- 2.1. Note the action taken to communicate the national Whistleblowing Standards that came into effect on 1 April 2021;
- 2.2. Instruct the Chief Officer to report on a quarterly basis on any whistleblowing incidents raised under the Standards to the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee and NHS Grampian Board;
- 2.3. Consider and approve the draft Whistleblowing Policy for the Integration Joint Board (Appendix A); and
- 2.4. Instruct the IJB's Standards Officer to report on any Whistleblowing incidents raised under the IJB's Whistleblowing Policy to the Risk, Audit and



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

Performance Committee on a quarterly basis (if any incidents have been investigated and concluded in that quarter).

3. Summary of Key Information

National Whistleblowing Standards

- 3.1. Whistleblowing is when a person, usually working with or in a public service, raises a concern of mismanagement, corruption, illegality, or some other wrongdoing. The public value of whistle-blowing has been increasingly recognised since the term was introduced in the 1960s and is an invaluable mechanism for organisations to become aware of issues that need to be addressed.
- 3.2. Another helpful definition of whistleblowing is when someone who works (or worked) within an organisation raises a concern that relates to speaking up in the public interest where an act or omission has created, or may create, a risk of harm or wrongdoing, or exposes information or activity that is deemed illegal, unsafe, or a waste, fraud, or abuse of taxpayer funds.
- 3.3. National Whistleblowing Standards have been produced by the Independent National Whistleblowing Officer's Department and came into effect on 1 April 2021.
- 3.4. NHS Grampian the three Health and Social Care Partnerships (H&SCPs) and other relevant Partners have a clear ambition to develop a culture that welcomes, handles and responds to concerns in a caring, supportive and proactive way, from any member of staff and others who are delivering NHS services in the Grampian area.
- 3.5. To achieve this work has been undertaken across the system to embed an efficient, consistent, system wide approach to promote, encourage and learn from whistleblowing concerns raised throughout Grampian. The Partnership's Leadership Team received a presentation on the launch of the Standards ahead of the effective date of 1 April 2021 and have since communicated the Standards across the Partnership.



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

- 3.6.** Whistleblowing Concerns can be raised by anyone who is (or has been) providing services for the NHS, or working to provide services with NHS staff which includes:
- All NHS Grampian staff.
 - All Health and Social Care staff.
 - All those working in non-private Primary Care Services (including both salaried and independent practices).
 - Anyone contracted to provide services for NHS Grampian.
 - All Agency staff and Locums.
 - All Students, Trainees and Apprentices.
 - All Volunteers and Third Sector Organisations.
- 3.7.** In terms of next steps, NHS Grampian are to continue to communicate the Standards across the sectors, including commissioned services and the 3rd Sector, as well as signposting staff to training on the Standards held on Turas. NHS Grampian's Whistleblowing Standards Short Life Working Group will hold a "mop-up" session to capture how the first quarter of reporting has gone. The Board should note that Aberdeen City Council has its own Whistleblowing Policy but work has been progressed to communicate the new NHS standards to all relevant Council staff within the Partnership.
- 3.8.** In terms of reporting, Whistleblowing incidents captured through the process will be reported to both the IJB and NHS Grampian on a quarterly basis. It is proposed that the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee receive the quarterly reports.

IJB Whistleblowing Policy

- 3.9.** Officers from the Partnership have been in communication with the Independent National Whistleblowing Officer's Department regarding the production of a Whistleblowing Policy for the IJB. The Independent National Whistleblowing Officer's view is that although IJB's do not have to have a separate Policy, it would be good practice to establish such a Policy.
- 3.10.** As a result, an IJB Whistleblowing Policy has been drafted and is attached at Appendix A.



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

- 3.11.** The Policy relates to all IJB Members and Office Holders of the Board and is committed to dealing responsibly, openly and professionally with any genuine concerns held by staff of the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, Members of the Board or Office Holders, encouraging them to report any concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice within the IJB, which they believe has occurred.
- 3.12.** The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff and Members are fully aware of the types of matters that they should report and the reporting procedure they should follow to raise any genuine concerns about any possible wrongdoing or malpractice, at an early stage, without fear of penalty or victimisation.
- 3.13.** This Policy would not relate to members of the public who have concerns regarding the IJB, members of the public would be encouraged to use the IJB Complaints Procedure.
- 3.14.** If approved it is proposed that any whistleblowing incidents raised through this Policy will be reported to the Risk, Audit and Performance Committee by the Board's Standards Officer on a quarterly basis (if there are any incidents investigated during that time period).
- 3.15.** It is proposed that training on the Policy be made available to all Members of the IJB and the Board's Office Holders.

4. Implications for IJB

- 4.1. Equalities, Fairer Scotland and Health Inequality** - there are no implications in relation to our duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and Fairer Scotland.
- 4.2. Financial** – there are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.3. Workforce** – there are no immediate workforce implications arising from this report. The NHS Scotland Standards have been communicated as outlined in the report and if approved, the IJB Policy will also be communicated to staff within the Partnership.



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

- 4.4. **Legal** – there are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.
- 4.5. **Covid-19** – There are no implications relating to Covid-19 in this report.
- 4.6. **Unpaid Carers** – There are no implications relating to unpaid carers in this report.
- 4.7. **Other**- there are no other immediate implications arising from this report.

5. Links to ACHSCP Strategic Plan

- 5.1. The report is linked to all the strategic aims of the Partnership's Strategic Plan.

6. Management of Risk

- 6.1. Identified risks(s) - The updates provided link to the Strategic Risk Register in a variety of ways, as detailed below
- 6.2. **Link to risks on strategic or operational risk register:**

The main issues in this report directly link to the following Risk on the Strategic Risk Register:


6- There is a risk of reputational damage to the IJB and its partner organisations resulting from complexity of function, delegation and delivery of services across health and social care.

- 6.3. **How might the content of this report impact or mitigate these risks:**
The Chief Officer will monitor progress towards mitigating the areas of risk closely and will provide further detail to the IJB should she deem this necessary.

Approvals	
	Sandra Macleod (Chief Officer)



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

	Alex Stephen (Chief Finance Officer)
---	---