



TAYSIDE AREA PARTNERSHIP FORUM

HUMAN RESOURCES

Voicing Concern

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Signed: **Executive Lead**
(Authorised Signatory)

NHS TAYSIDE - POLICY APPROVAL CHECKLIST

THIS CHECKLIST MUST BE COMPLETED AND FORWARDED WITH POLICY TO THE APPROPRIATE FORUM/COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL.

POLICY TITLE: _____ Voicing Concern _____

EXECUTIVE LEAD OFFICER: _____ John Cowie _____

Who has been involved in the development of the policy?	Tayside HR Forum
Is there an implementation plan?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Which officers are responsible for implementation?	All Line Managers
When will the policy take effect?	Already in place – minor clarification to text
Who must comply with the policy?	All employees of NHS Tayside and Trade Union Officials
How will they be informed of their responsibilities?	Intranet
Is any training required?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, has any been arranged?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any cost implications?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please detail costs and note source of funding	
Who is responsible for auditing the implementation of the policy?	Area Partnership Forum & Local Partnership Forum
What is the audit interval?	As per Self Assessment Audit Tool
Who will receive the audit reports?	Staff Governance Committee
Has the policy been assessed for its impact in terms of discrimination:	
Racial	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Age	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Religion	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Sexuality	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
When will the policy be reviewed and by whom? (please give designation)	April 2006 by the NHS Tayside HR Forum

Name: _____

Date: _____

NHS TAYSIDE

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NHS TAYSIDE

VOICING CONCERN - POLICY TO ENABLE STAFF TO RAISE ISSUES OF CONCERN APPROPRIATELY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 It is the policy of NHS Tayside that staff who wish to raise concerns about unprofessional behaviour or decisions should be able to do so in a formal and open manner.

2 GENERAL POLICY

- 2.1 This policy takes full account of the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects employees from any form of retribution, sanction, discrimination or punishment by omission as a consequence of any disclosure made in good faith.
- 2.2 Employees have a duty to report any concern to the appropriate manager or a person in authority. In the first instance, this should be to the department manager or head of department. Concerns may include
- Lack of adequate resources;
 - Improper or unethical behaviour of colleagues;
 - Inconsistency of standards of conduct;
 - Risks to the health and safety of staff and/or patients which may lead to compromised standards of care.
 - This procedure will apply to all employees, whatever their terms of employment, hours of work or length of service.

3 EXISTING CHANNELS FOR RAISING CONCERN

- 3.1 Staff should recognise that there are a range of channels open to them for raising matters of concern. These include the following: -
- Their immediate manager;
 - The Grievance Procedure allows staff, either collectively or individually to raise employment related matters;
 - The Local Partnership Forums and the Area Partnership Forum and sub groups - These are the formal communication mechanisms which allow staff side representatives the opportunity to raise matters related to general terms and agreements within the Board.
 - The Health and Safety Committees which allows the staff side representatives to raise health and safety matters within the Board.
 - The Complaints Procedure which allows patients or members of the public to complain about the service they have received. They may also request an independent review or investigation by the Ombudsman.
 - A police investigation will be carried out if there is suspicion of a criminal offence.

- 3.2 Staff who have concerns which do not fall into these categories, or if they feel that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved by bringing it to the attention of one of these groups, have a right to raise such matters with the Chief Executive/Director/Head of Department/Assistant Director. Any member of staff who approaches a member of the Board on this basis will have his/her concern listened to seriously and action taken following an investigation if necessary.
- 3.3 It is recognised that some staff may find it easier to talk to a person or organisation, which is not associated with the Board. In these circumstances, it must be remembered that patients have a right to confidentiality and that appropriate permission should be sought first. The release of any details which would identify the patient should only be made once appropriate permission has been given. Appropriate organisations include trade union or professional organisation who will deal with the matter on behalf of the individual.
- 3.4 In all cases, it is important to keep accurate records to substantiate any allegations made.
- 3.5 Once the Chief Executive/Director/Head of Department/Assistant Director has satisfied himself/herself that proper action has been taken, the outcome will be reported to the member of staff who raised the issue.

4 INDIVIDUAL STAFF RIGHTS

- 4.1 Where possible the anonymity of an individual will be preserved. This will not, however, always be possible and in such circumstances the anonymity will not be broken without permission of the individual involved. If the member of staff is not happy for their name to be revealed this may mean that the issue cannot be further investigated.
- 4.2 Staff will not be penalised for raising any matter under this policy unless it can be demonstrated that concern has been raised with malicious intent.

5. TIME LIMITS

It is appropriate that concerns which may be legitimately raised under this policy should be dealt with in a timely manner. Issues raised under alternative policy or procedure e.g. Grievance Procedures will be subject to the time limits detailed in the appropriate document. Alternatively, the following time limits will apply: -

- 5.1 Initial complaints/issues will be discussed with the appropriate officer within 7 working days. Complaints/issues which require a more immediate response e.g. Health & Safety will be the subject of an initial discussion within 24 hours.
- 5.2 The Investigating Officer will give the individual member of staff an indication of the likely timespan of an investigation and in any event will provide a report within 4 working weeks of the initial issue being raised.