**BILSTON FAMILY PRACTICE**

**BILSTON HEALTH CENTRE
PROUDS LANE
BILSTON
WEST MIDLANDS
WV14 6PW**

# WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

## Introduction

Whistle-blowing is defined as:

The disclosure by an employee of information, which relates to some danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the workplace, be it of the employer or of a fellow employee(s).

A whistleblower is not a "sneak" or a "trouble maker" but someone who comes to a decision to express a concern after a great deal of thought. The law only requires that there be a genuine doubt – the individual is not expected to produce unquestionable evidence to support the concern.

## Applicability

The Policy applies to everyone who undertakes work in the Practice including Partner, staff, attached staff and contractors.

## Practice Policy

* The Practice has a duty to conduct its affairs in a responsible way
* The Practice encourages openness, freedom of speech and the voicing of concerns as a contribution towards maintaining and enhancing quality and ensuring high standards of governance and accountability
* The Practice encourages and enables employees to raise genuine and legitimate concerns internally, confidentially, and without being subject to disciplinary action or any other detriment
* The Practice provides an opportunity for those concerns to be investigated and for appropriate action to be taken to ensure that the matter is resolved effectively within the Practice wherever possible
* The Practice wishes to enable employees to raise concerns with appropriate outside bodies in the event that the concerns are not dealt with satisfactorily internally

### EXAMPLES OF SERIOUS CONCERNS COVERED BY THE POLICY

* An offence under, or breach of, any statutory instrument or legal obligation.
* Fraud, financial irregularity, dishonesty
* Malpractice, corruption, bribery
* Unethical conduct
* Medical or prescribing errors
* Breach of confidentiality
* Miscarriage of justice
* Danger to the health or safety of any individual or the environment
* The deliberate concealing of information about any such matter

## Procedure

1. Inform the Practice Manager in writing. Where the concern involves the Practice Manager directly the matter should be raised in writing to the Partner.
2. The Practice Manager/Partner will investigate the matter promptly and inform you of the findings in writing, and a copy will be sent to the member of staff who is the subject of the allegation.
3. Where an investigation results in the need for disciplinary action, the Practice Disciplinary Procedure is implemented.
4. Where there is evidence of criminal activity the Police must be informed.
5. If the ‘whistleblower’ remains concerned with the outcome of the investigation they are entitled to report their concerns to the local Primary Care Organisation, or other relevant outside body, e.g. The Care Quality Commission. The Partner and/or Practice Manager will support the escalation of reporting.
6. Anyone who raises any concern will be supported throughout the investigatory process by the Partner and/or Practice Manager.
7. Any victimisation of an employee who raises a concern, or any attempts to deter him/her from raising a legitimate concern, will be regarded as a serious disciplinary offence.
8. The raising of false or malicious concerns or complaints will be regarded as a disciplinary offence

Author: Practice Manager

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