

Request title: Whistleblowing (monitoring of)

Date of Response: 23rd September 2015

Further to your Freedom of Information request, the Trust has answered your questions in the order they appear in your request.

Request

Monitoring of whistleblowing governance by Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

I write to ask if Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust has applied NHS good guidance practice on monitoring whistleblowing governance, as laid out in the 2010 document "Speak Up for A Healthy NHS. How to implement and review whistleblowing arrangements in your organisation" [1].

This guidance suggests that NHS organisations should refresh their whistleblowing arrangements annually. To this end, it specifically advises that organisations should monitor and audit their whistleblowing arrangements based on the parameters below:

- 1) "collect data on the nature and number of concerns raised"
- 2) "Is there evidence of constructive and timely feedback?"
- 3) "Have there been any difficulties with confidentiality?"
- 4) "Have any events come to the board's attention that might indicate that a staff member has not been fairly treated as a result of raising a concern?"
- 5) "could the issues have been picked up or resolved earlier? If so, why weren't they?"
- 6) "information from exit interviews"
- 7) "information from...PIDA or other legal claims"
- 8) Survey staff experience, using these questions:

"Suggested survey questions for staff

- Have you been troubled about some malpractice in the past three years? If so, did you raise the concern, and with what result?
- How aware are you of the whistleblowing arrangements?
- How likely are you to raise a whistleblowing concern with your manager and with senior managers?
- How confident are you that there will be no negative repercussions for raising the matter with your manager and those above?
- How confident are you that the matter will be addressed properly by your manager and those above?
- How likely is it that your colleagues would raise a whistleblowing concern with their manager or with senior managers?"

I would be grateful to know if your organisation has locally collected this data, either fully or in part. If it has collected part of this data, please could you indicate which of the above parameters have been monitored.

If your organisation has monitored whether staff have "not been fairly treated as a result of raising a concern?", please could you advise what data parameters are used, and specifically whether disciplinary action, suspensions and dismissals of staff, subsequent to their raising of concerns, are monitored.

If your organisation has collected the above recommended data, whether in full or partially, and or if it has collected other monitoring data on whistleblowing governance, please could you share all your data for years 2013 and 2014.

Please note that the legal definition of whistleblowing is the raising of qualifying disclosures under PIDA, whether internally within an organisation or via external reporting routes. This applies whether or not staff explicitly raise a concern under an organisation's whistleblowing policy. If your organisation applies a different definition of whistleblowing when collecting the above data, please could you advise what definition is used.

Please consider this a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Reply

The Trust has not collected the data outlined. However, the Trust can confirm that it has applied the guidance and recommendations in line with the Sir Robert Francis "Freedom to Speak Up Report" which was published in February 2015. Please find attached the Trusts' Whistleblowing Policy which details the Trusts approach to raising concerns and explains the assurance and reporting process through the Governance Committee which is a Sub Committee of the Board of Directors. The NHS Staff Survey contains questions relating to raising concerns and Whistleblowing, the Board of Directors receives and monitors the staff survey results (link attached) http://www.nhsstaffsurveys.com/Caches/Files/NHS_staff_survey_2014_RH8_full.pdf.