

INWO decision report

Case: 202306141, Grampian NHS Board
Subject: Complaint handling



Summary

C raised a concern with the Board about a decision to withdraw their team's presentation from a conference. C was unhappy with the response from the Board and brought a complaint to the INWO about the concern and the Board's handling of it under the National Whistleblowing Standards (the Standards).

We decided that C's concern did not fall under the jurisdiction of the INWO. We agreed that our investigation would focus instead on the Board's handling of the concern. We found that investigators did not reasonably communicate with C during the investigation, they did not interview other relevant witnesses and they had a conflict of interest. We also found that the investigation did not fully consider the issues raised by C and was not sufficiently robust. We upheld C's complaint. In addition, we gave feedback to the Board on the stage 2 response letter.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- That processes are in place to ensure that whistleblowing investigations meet the requirements of the Standards.