

INWO decision report

Case: 202301821, Forth Valley NHS Board
Subject: Hospitals / Complaint handling



Summary

C raised concerns about the culture and governance arrangements in the Women and Children's Directorate. The Board undertook an investigation under the National Whistleblowing Standards. The Board upheld C's concerns and made a number of recommendations.

C complained to the INWO that despite upholding the concerns, the Board's response had failed to address the specific issues raised. C also complained that the Board's recommendations focused incorrectly on a single team rather than the whole directorate, and that there had been failings related to the confidentiality of the whistleblowing process.

It was clear, following engagement with both C and the Board, that the failings were not in dispute and there was potential to achieve good outcomes without a detailed investigation by the INWO.

INWO held a meeting with representatives of the Board and C. There was constructive and open discussion about the issues raised by C and an agreement was reached on improvements and actions that would resolve the complaint. This included the expansion of the recommendations and a series of improvements to the Board's whistleblowing process.

We recognised C's public-spirited approach in raising concerns and positive engagement with the potential for resolution. We also recognised the Board's commitment to improving services, learning through the whistleblowing process and apologising where things had gone wrong.

As we were able to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of both parties, our decision in this case was to discontinue the investigation.