

Post-session handout for Confidential Contacts

Case Study – Fraud

Part one

You receive a voicemail from a volunteer from the Hospital Broadcasting Service (HBS) as they saw your details on a local poster. They summarise they have concerns about how the money that is raised via fundraising is being used inappropriately and they want to speak to you about it.

Part two

You call the whistleblower and explain your role as Confidential Contact and ask that they explain the situation to you.

- The whistleblower explains that there are regular fundraisers for HBS and the money raised should go back into the voluntary services.
- The whistleblower has no knowledge of how this money is used, and acknowledges they would not normally be informed.
- The whistleblower highlights that, over time, they have seen new furniture across the clinical sites that would benefit staff, as opposed to patients and families.
- The whistleblower is worried the money raised via HBS is being used incorrectly.

The whistleblower highlights they are one of two volunteers and want to remain anonymous. The whistleblower has asked you to raise the concern on their behalf.

Part three

You let the whistleblower know that volunteers are entitled to raise whistleblowing concerns under the Standards. The Standards cover anyone delivering an NHS service.

You explain the difference between confidentiality and anonymity under the Standards and that in order to access the support and protections outlined in the Standards, the person must put their name to the concern. You explain and reinforce the importance of confidentiality and how it should be maintained by the Board. Only the people who the whistleblower agrees can know their identity will be entitled to know it. You explain that if the person decides to submit the concern, the email will



only be shared with the Whistleblowing Lead and that you will make it very clear that there are concerns around confidentiality.

You explain that, concerns relating to fraud may be handled slightly differently by the Board. The whistleblower can claim the protection of the Standards by raising it as a whistleblowing concern but the Board may then refer it to the Fraud Liaison Officer to progress. You also say that, if the concerns relate to the way a voluntary service is using the money, rather than the NHS, neither the Standards nor Counter Fraud Service may be appropriate. You say that the Board will need to consider this further when they receive the concern.

You say that you know this is a little complicated, so you share the relevant sections of the Standards (covering fraud) and let the whistleblower take some time to think about what they would like to do. You explain to the whistleblower that it would be helpful to receive their concerns in writing if they wish to take it forward, highlighting the time period that the concerns came to light.

The whistleblower emails the next day to say that that they are anxious about raising it but have decided to proceed with your support. They submit a written concern to you and you note that you will share the concern with the Whistleblowing Lead to action.

You refer the concern to the Whistleblowing Lead highlighting the whistleblower's concerns about confidentiality.

Takeaway points

- You can take forward a whistleblowing concern from a volunteer, even if they are not an NHS employee. The Standards apply to anyone who delivers an NHS service if they are raising concerns about an NHS service.
- If the concerns raised by a volunteer appear to relate to something that is not considered an NHS service, then they may not be eligible to be considered under the Standards, it is the Board's responsibility to review this and take a decision. You can manage expectations with the whistleblower if you have hesitations around eligibility and signpost to other sources of information.
- If you are unsure about what is expected or you need advice you can always contact your Whistleblowing Lead or the INWO advice line on 0800 008 6112.



- There is a difference between confidentiality and anonymity and anonymous concerns are not covered by the Standards. It is important to be able to understand and explain this to whistleblowers who contact you for advice. These sections in the Standards are helpful:
 - [Confidentiality and data protection | INWO \(spsso.org.uk\)](https://www.spsso.org.uk)
 - [Anonymity and unnamed concerns | INWO \(spsso.org.uk\)](https://www.spsso.org.uk)
- Confidential Contacts should familiarise themselves with the support options already available in the Board so that they are prepared to signpost. This could include counselling services, occupational health services, chaplaincy, trade unions etc. If you are unsure – ask the Whistleblowing Lead or the HR department.
- A whistleblower may be concerned about who needs to know their identity during the investigation process. As a starting point, the Whistleblowing Lead (who you refer the concern to) and the Investigating Officer will likely need to know. The Board must check with the whistleblower before sharing their identity with anyone.
- You can always refer to the National Whistleblowing Standards for information on what the whistleblower should expect to happen during [the whistleblowing process](#). You can also find the information you need to discuss things like [support and protection under the Standards](#), and [confidentiality](#).

Further information

- The [National Whistleblowing Standards](#)
- [Independent National Whistleblowing Officer FAQs for whistleblowers](#)
- [Independent National Whistleblowing Officer contact details](#)