



Whistleblowing Policy

Version Control

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1. Introduction

Team Medic will conduct its business at all times with the highest standards of integrity and honesty. The company expects all its employees to maintain the same standards in everything they do. Employees are therefore encouraged to report any wrongdoing by the company or its employees that falls short of these business principles.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees who report wrongdoing within the workplace but it is the aim of this policy to ensure that as far as possible our employees are able to tell Team Medic Management about any wrongdoing at work which they believe has occurred or is likely to occur.

Possible instances of wrongdoing include:

- A criminal offence
- Physical, emotional and mental abuse or maltreatment
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- A danger to health & safety
- Damage to the environment
- A breach of the company's rules or the procedures/code of practice of a regulatory body
- A deliberate cover-up of any of the above.

Furthermore, the additional purpose of this policy is to set out how Team Medic will manage any allegations of abuse to children and vulnerable adults relating to a member of staff, volunteer or contractor. This includes allegations relating to incidents both during the course of the work of Team Medic, or related to incidents outside of the work of Team Medic and in relation to Third Party contracts; i.e. Trust.

Team Medic recognises that employees may not always feel comfortable about discussing their concerns internally, especially if they believe that the company itself is responsible for the wrongdoing. The aim of this policy is to ensure that employees are confident that they can raise any matter with the company that concerns them. The management team should always operate an open door policy.

Associated relevant legislation and guidance pertaining to Allegations against Staff include the Sexual Offences Act (2003) and No Secrets (2000).

Allegations against staff procedures involve a multi-agency approach and is led and managed by the statutory role of Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) outlined within Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013 - Chapter 2). This Guidance offers a framework for the management of cases of allegations made against staff that work with children. Allegations regarding vulnerable adults will also be commensurate with guidelines from Adult Social Care (ASC) agencies across Team Medic's footprint.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, sub contractors, and sub contractors.

3. Aim

This policy is set to guide staff and managers when a whistleblower informs management of an allegation that one of our staff has abused a vulnerable person or child, and/or a wrongdoing has taken place. Within this policy it lays out the processes Team Medic must take when in receipt of this type of allegation or complaint.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities should set out accountability and delegation of responsibilities. This list is not exhaustive, but the following staff must be included.

4.1 Managing Director / Registered Manager

The Managing Director (MD) is accountable for the proper and effective management of risk within Team Medic and is responsible for ensuring the safety of patients, visitors and staff within the organisation. The MD's responsibilities will include;

- Having robust systems in place to identify trends and themes around allegations and wrongdoings against Staff incidents.
- Ensuring that measures are taken to ensure the safety of patients, staff and visitors is not compromised.
- Having robust systems in place to learn lessons across the organisation where possible.
- Ensuring this procedure is implemented within all areas of Team Medic through responsible Managers.

4.2 Compliance Manager

- Responsible for the updating and reviewing of the Whistleblowing Policy.
- to ensure the policy is updated every 24 months and to support the MD in terms of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Local Safeguarding Adults boards in their multi-agency safeguarding children and adults work.
- To maintain up to date and high level knowledge of safeguarding children and safeguarding vulnerable adults legislation, guidance and recommendations.

4.3. Operations Manager

- To ensure that all cases of wrongdoing and allegation against staff are either investigated and managed in accordance with this policy or referred to the Safeguarding Lead.
- to support the investigating management throughout the investigation process
- Communicating learning points identified during investigations to relevant internal and external stakeholders.
- To offer support and guidance to staff with concerns about issues relating to concern, whistleblowing and allegations against Staff.

- Conduct disciplinary procedures for staff in conjunction with Team Medic's Disciplinary Policies and Process and Code of Conduct.

4.4 All Staff

All staff have a responsibility to ensure:

- Personal responsibility for an action or omission which would knowingly cause offence or risk to others.
- Co-operation with investigations to ensure that allegations are fully and fairly investigated.
- Ensuring, as far as within their control, that any learning points that have been communicated to them are implemented.
- Personal responsibility for reporting initial concerns about potential abusers, i.e. liaison with the Safeguarding Lead, Line Manager in line with Team Medic or Trust's Policy and Guidance for the Management of Allegations and Whistleblowing against staff.
- Awareness of the policies.

Also see:

Code of Conduct v1.0

Disciplinary Policy POL00029

5. Staff Procedure for Reporting Wrongdoing

- a. If you have a concern you should, where possible, discuss the matter with a member of the Team Medic management team, or the Freedom To Speak Up Guardian, Tony Jenkins.
- c. Any matter reported under this policy will be taken seriously and treated as confidential as far as is practicable. However it is not always possible to maintain confidentiality and if this is the case the person making the report under the procedure will be consulted.
- d. If the matter requires further investigation, such an investigation will be carried out and you will be informed of the outcome and what, if any, action has been taken.
- e. Team Medic undertakes that any employee who makes a report under this procedure *in good faith* will not be subjected to victimisation as a result. This is in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996, s.47B. In the event that you believe you are being subjected to victimisation by any person within the company as a result of your decision to invoke the procedure you must inform the management team.
- f. If it should become clear that the procedure has not been invoked in good faith, for example for malicious reasons or to pursue a personal grudge against another employee, this will lead to disciplinary action which could result in dismissal.
- g. Team Medic recognises there may be matters that cannot be dealt with internally and external authorities may need to become involved. Where this is necessary the company will consult with the person making the report under the procedure.

6 External Reporting

- a. It is expected that issues giving rise to employees' concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with

by Team Medic Management.

- b. However there may be instances where an employee may wish to contact an external body. For example the company's internal procedures may have been exhausted and the employee may still have some concerns.
- c. In such a situation the employee may contact the appropriate regulatory authority. For example, in the case of a concern about safeguarding the appropriate contact would be the Care Quality Commission.

7. Allegations

The procedure applies to allegations where there is reasonable suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This policy also applies to instances where allegations are made that indicate that a person is unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults in their current role, or in any capacity.

Team Medic may be made aware of an allegation against one of our staff members via numerous mediums which include, but not limited to; member of staff highlighting a concern, the police, social service, patients, and complaint enquiry.

Action should be taken as soon as possible to inform the employee against whom an allegation has been made, about the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome. However before a consultation with the accused employee is undertaken, the LADO, ASC or Police should consult to ensure that this does not impede the appropriate exercise of enquiry, disciplinary or investigative processes.

Further to this, where the allegation was initially made by the Police, Team medic may be governed by the Police's timescale and instructions .

7. Staff Procedure to Report Allegations of Abuse

Allegations may take two forms and the Whistleblowing process described above should be enacted:

1. Allegations relating to an incident(s) occurring as part of an individual's employment with Team Medic.
2. Allegations relating to an incident(s) outside of employment with Team Medic.
 - a. if a concern arises about the person's behaviour with regards to their own children or vulnerable person occurring outside of their employment with Team Medic, then the Police and/or Social Care will inform the Safeguarding Lead in order to assess whether there may be implications for children or vulnerable persons with whom the person has contact through their work.

All allegations should, in the first instance, be considered as requiring a child/vulnerable person adult protection response. However, less serious allegations may be dealt with under Team Medic's performance management, disciplinary or complaints process.

Also see:

Disciplinary Policy
Complaints Policy

Code of Conduct Whistleblowing Policy

Any allegation made against a member of staff of physical punishment of a child/vulnerable adult, whilst carrying out their duties should be dealt with under these procedures.

Other situations where these procedures apply include:

- Abuse of trust - involving a child/vulnerable adult in sexual activities, where a professional relationship of trust exist. ;
- Grooming - developing a relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult with the intention of perpetrating sexual harm (Sexual Offences Act 2003);
- Offences suggesting a person may pose a risk of harm to children/vulnerable adult, including:
 - Possession of child pornography/Accessing inappropriate websites
 - Serious assault on an adult
 - Perpetration of domestic abuse
 - Serious drug offences
 - Cumulative concerns, including multiple unfounded/inconclusive allegations of abuse
 - Concerns indicating neglect or emotional harm.
 - Allegations of abuse relating to an employee, volunteers or subcontractor's previous employment or events in their pasts.
 - Involvement in terrorism or violent extremism.

8. Support for the individual

Team Medic accepts that it is distressing for an employee if an allegation is made against them, and as part of the Team Medic's duty of care undertakes that the employee has appropriate support. This support will be given both during the investigation (and the employee's suspension if this step has been taken) and beyond its completion if necessary.

As soon as an employee is made aware of the allegation or concerns, a named person (selected in consultation with the employee) should be identified to act as a support for the employee and to ensure that communication is effective between all parties concerned. The employee must be aware that any information which they share with the named person may have to be passed on to the police or social services, if felt to be relevant to the investigation.

The employee should be advised to see legal advice and to contact their union (if they are a member) as soon as possible.

9. Action During The Investigation

Team Medic must decide whether it is necessary to suspend, during investigation following a thorough risk assessment, without prejudice, the employee against whom the allegation has been made. This decision should be made with the advice of the LADO, Trust's Named Professional for Safeguarding, and also the Police if there is a belief that a criminal offence may have been committed. This should also be in accordance with Team Medic's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Suspension should always be considered following Team Medic's discipline and conduct procedures where;

- There is cause to suspect a child/vulnerable adult is at risk of significant harm, or

- There is concern that if the staff member under investigation could put the public at risk by continuing to work, or
- The allegation warrants investigations by the police, or
- The allegations is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal or
- Where it is necessary to allow the conduct of an investigation to proceed unimpeded.

Any decision to suspend a member of staff must always involve the Operations Manager and Managing Director. It is also prudent that HR (Peninsular) is consulted.

In the case where immediate investigation is unworkable; maybe due to allegation being made after hours, the on call manager must take a reasonable course of action as an interim measure. This would likely be to send the individual home following consultation with any third party stakeholders.

The suspension must be carried out in person with the member of staff accused.

The process must be handled sensitively. the member of staff should be informed that an allegation has been made against him/her and that suspension is being considered as a precautionary measure pending a full investigation of the case. The member of staff should be given as much information that is consistent and will not interfere with an investigation into the allegation. The member of staff should be informed that his/her status is not affected by the suspension.

When called to an interview where suspension is a possible outcome, the member of staff should be advised to seek the advice and assistance of his or her Trade Union or professional association.

10. Update Meeting

Every regular update meeting with the individual(s) concerned and their Trade Union representative to discuss the following:

- Update on the progress of the police investigation.
- Discuss welfare and any support Team Medic may offer.
- If suspended, confirmation of when this will be reviewed.
- If placed on alternative duties, discussion around any issues/concerns.
- Agree any actions required.
- Agree dates for the next meeting.

A letter should be sent by the investigating manager following the meeting, confirming the discussion, actions agreed and the date, time and location of the next meeting.

There are two outcomes from an investigation which are as follow;

1. The allegation is unsubstantiated.
2. The allegation is upheld

When Allegations are Unsubstantiated:

After the conclusion of an investigation by either by Team Medic, Police, Social Services or any other body or stakeholder, it is found that the accused employee is unsubstantiated then a report will be produced by the investigation manager and presented to the Managing Director to consider what further action, if any, should be taken.

The findings from the investigation and report will be presented to the accused employee, and the Operations Manager who will use the information to determine if the employee should still face Team Medic disciplinary proceedings if concerns remain about their conduct or behaviour in relation to children/vulnerable adults.

When Allegations are Upheld:

Where allegations against the employee are upheld the outcome will be placed on the employee's personal file.

Where it is found that the employee did not commit the alleged act, or that there are no grounds for concern, the employee should be notified in writing with 7 days of the decision, and that no further action will be taken.

Legislations that govern this policy;

1. Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
2. Children Act (1989, 2004)
3. Sexual Offences Act (2003)
4. No Secrets (2000)