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Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
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Raising concerns and Escalation Guidance

Introduction

Most trainees have a positive experience in their placements on their training programme here in Wales. However, sometimes trainees will encounter a problem or issue in the workplace that causes concern. Concerns can be wide ranging and could be associated with working environments, patient safety or even behaviour of other colleagues. We appreciate that locating the best person to raise concerns to can be confusing as trainees work within a host organisation, have a separate employing organisation and a separate educational organisation that oversees their training.

Patient safety is everyone's first concern and you should use the clinical governance framework in your Health Board to highlight a risk as soon as you become aware of it. All Health Boards will have policies for incident and near miss reporting, risk management and clinical governance. They will also have policies for bullying and harassment, and staff conduct and capability so there will be a mechanism and supervisors who can advise you.

We recognise that raising concerns can be a daunting process for trainees. The following pages will provide a step-by-step guide to raising concerns and supporting trainees who raise concerns.

Key principles

- Everyone has the right to work and train in an environment which is fair, free from discrimination, and where they're respected and valued as an individual.¹
- Everyone has a responsibility to act on any concerns arising from discrimination, bullying or sexual harassment.
- It is not necessary for an individual to have concrete proof of an act that they wish to report – a reasonable belief is sufficient.
- Individuals can raise concerns anonymously. However, it is important to note that it can make it more difficult to fully review and assess the concerns raised.
- Individuals are encouraged to raise any concern at the earliest opportunity so that there is time to assess the issues within a supportive environment.
- Concerns should, where possible, be raised locally. This is the best way to allow early and effective management however there may be times when

¹ GMC Good Medical Practice 2024 - [gmp-2024-final---english_pdf-102607294.pdf \(gmc-uk.org\)](https://www.gmc-uk.org/gmp-2024-final---english_pdf-102607294.pdf)

the response is inadequate or where you are worried about raising the issue locally. Use the escalation table below to support you with this.

What to expect when you raise a concern:

- Once a training concern has been received via one of the mechanisms outlined below, a local or informal investigation will take place which will usually involve the collation of further information. This will typically be gathered during an informal meeting.
- As with all complaints/concerns individuals will attempt to resolve issues on an informal basis in the first instance. If this does not work, then the issue may then be moved to a more formal process.
- It is reasonable to expect an update on the concerns raised or a follow-up meeting outlining progress and next steps. Depending on the type of issue raised you may be given differing amounts of information reported back to you.
- If the issue does not directly relate to you but you would like to be kept updated on how the issue is being managed, please make this clear to the person you raised the issue. Please be aware that progress updates may provide very limited detail and information.
- Issues relating to bullying, harassment, undermining and microaggressions should be dealt with promptly by whoever you feel able to report them to. They should meet with you in person to discuss the concern and offer a plan for follow-up.
- In certain cases, a tripartite meeting with representatives from the host organisation, NWSSP as your employer and HEIW may take place to agree the most appropriate mechanism for investigating or managing concerns and ensuring appropriate support mechanisms are in place for trainees.

The following will provide an overview of where your concerns can be escalated to maximise the chances of a swift and appropriate resolution.

Key

 Local Teams  HEIW  Employing functions

Issue/concern	Who to escalate concern to (see Appendix 1 for further details of these roles and contacts)
Clinical experience	1. Clinical Supervisor 2. Clinical Director for the department
	3. Foundation/GP/Training Programme Director 4. Head of School/Foundation Director/GP Director 5. HEIW Open
Working environment: rota, annual leave, IT, rest facilities	1. Clinical Supervisor 2. Local Faculty Lead

	3. Associate Medical Director for Health Board
Training environment: access to educational opportunities, time to attend teaching, access to study leave	1. Clinical Supervisor 2. Educational Supervisor 3. Clinical Director 4. Medical Education Team in the Health Board 5. Associate Medical Director for Health Board
	6. Foundation/GP/Training Programme Director
Patient Safety	1. Clinical Supervisor 2. Clinical Director for the department
	3. Foundation/GP/Training Programme Director 4. Head of School/Foundation Director/GP Director 5. HEIW Open
Colleagues: nurses, non training grade staff, consultants	1. Clinical Supervisor 2. Educational Supervisor 3. Clinical Director of Department 4. Associate Medical Director for Health Board
	5. Foundation/GP/Training Programme Director
Supervision: Educational Supervisors and Clinical Supervisors	1. Educational or Clinical Supervisor (if you feel able to) 2. Clinical Director 3. Associate Medical Director
	4. Training Programme Director 5. Head of School/Foundation Director/GP Director 6. Postgraduate Dean - HEIW
Training experience related to the programme/curriculum	1. Educational Supervisor
	2. Training Programme Director 3. Head of School/Foundation Director/GP Director 4. Postgraduate Dean - HEIW
Employment issues (payroll, contracts, annual leave)	1. NWSSP - employing organisation
Health	1. Educational Supervisor
	2. Occupational Health
	3. GP
Bullying, discrimination, harassment, undermining, microaggressions	1. Clinical supervisor and/or Educational Supervisor
	2. Clinical Director

	3. Associate Medical Director for Education
	4. Foundation/GP/Training Programme Director
	5. Head of School/Foundation Director/GP Director
	6. Postgraduate Dean - HEIW
	7. HEIW Open

Sources of support:

- **Professional Support Unit (PSU)** - The Professional Support Unit (PSU) in HEIW provides guidance and information to all parties involved in postgraduate medical training and provide support in a number of areas. You can contact the Professional Support Unit by email HEIW.ProfessionalSupport@wales.nhs.uk
- **BMA** - see [Raising a concern: guide for doctors \(bma.org.uk\)](http://www.bma.org.uk) and [Your wellbeing \(bma.org.uk\)](http://www.bma.org.uk) - Counselling and peer support services - Free and confidential 24/7 counselling line and peer support service open to all doctors and medical students on 0330 123 1245.
- The **NHS Speak up helpline**, available in England and Wales, offers [unbiased support and guidance](http://www.nhs.uk).
- Secondary care doctors in Wales [can follow the procedure for NHS Staff to raise concerns](http://www.nhs.uk).
- Doctors can also use Healthcare Inspectorate Wales's (HIW) [guidance for healthcare workers on raising concerns about healthcare in Wales](http://www.hiw.nhs.uk).
- **Canopi** offers a [free, confidential service](http://www.canopi.org.uk) that provides NHS and social staff in Wales with access to various levels of mental health support including counselling and peer support.
- **NWSSP** -have a number of resources for employees (trainees) through their [Health and Well-Being Centre \(sharepoint.com\)](http://www.sharepoint.com)

Resources

- HEIW - Healthy Working Relationships: <https://nhs.wales/healthy-working-relationships>
- HEIW: Compassionate Leadership Principles <https://nhs.wales/compassionate-leadership>
- HEIW: Health and wellbeing resources - <https://heiw.nhs.wales/support/colleague-health-and-wellbeing/>
- NHS Wales Respect and Resolution Policy and Processes: <https://heiw.nhs.wales/files/programmes-resources/respect-and-resolution-at-work-policy>

Appendix 1

STP	<p>Clinical Supervisors - Each trainee should have a Named Clinical Supervisor for each placement who is responsible for ensuring that appropriate supervision of the trainee's day to day clinical and educational performance occurs at all times (your ES will take on the NCS role when working in your department)</p>
	<p>Educational Supervisors - All doctors in training are allocated an Educational Supervisor who is responsible for the overall supervision and management of an individual trainee's educational progress during a training placement. They offer educational supervision, undertake appraisal, and provide regular, ongoing feedback, support, advice and access to career management.</p>
	<p>College Tutors/Local Programme Directors - are local appointments in training centres, usually, appointed by the relevant Royal College to promote the learning environment, support of Trainers & Trainees. Their role varies across the specialties, but they largely work collaboratively with the College, TPDs, Supervisors and the Medical Education Department.</p>
/CL	<p>Faculty Leads - work in partnership with HEIW to support, deliver and manage postgraduate medical training in Wales. A number of variations to the Local Faculty Lead model exist across Health Boards but areas of responsibility include trainers, trainees or Quality. Faculty lead contact details - HEIW (nhs.wales)</p>
	<p>Medical Education Managers & Medical Education Departments - support the work of the AMDs for Medical Education and the Faculty Leads within each LEP. They provide support for the education and training events that occur within the LEP and also offer local support and assistance to trainees. For more information, please see Medical Education Centres.</p>
LOC	<p>Assistant Medical Directors (AMD) for Education - lead on the delivery of medical education and training in the Local Education Provider (LEP), ensuring that General Medical Council (GMC) standards are met and that a robust governance structure in relation to medical education and training is in place.</p>

TRA	<p>Training Programme Directors - are also clinicians on the ground who are responsible for the recruitment, rotations, trainee progression and ARCPs within their specialties. They provide advice, support and management of the Specialty Training Programmes and trainees across Wales. For Specialty please visit - Specialty Training Programme Contact Details - HEIW (nhs.wales) and for GP please visit - GP relevant contact details - HEIW (nhs.wales)</p>
	<p>Heads of Specialty Schools and Associate Deans - These are clinicians on the ground but also employees of HEIW who have overall responsibility for the management of the training programmes in that specialty and its related sub-specialties. They are accountable to the Postgraduate Dean. Specialty Training Programme Contact Details - HEIW (nhs.wales) or GP relevant contact details - HEIW (nhs.wales)</p>
	<p>Postgraduate Dean - Postgraduate Deans oversee all aspects of postgraduate medical training. They have accountability for placing trainees in training environments that meet the GMC standards and for making sure systems are in place to identify and respond to concerns.</p>
	<p>HEIW Open - A mechanism for trainees to raise concerns directly to the Postgraduate Dean and Quality Management team within HEIW. See HEIW open guidance (nhs.wales) for further information.</p>
	<p>NWSSP - Single Lead Employing organisation for Doctors in training.</p>
	<p>Occupational Health - Support mechanisms focusing on the health of staff in the workplace with a role to making sure staff are fit to undertake the role they are employed to do.</p>