



Ealing House

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POLICY ON WHISTLEBLOWING

Definition

Ealing House believes whistleblowing to be the informing of the management by staff, with the good of service users or the home in mind, of any malpractice or of mistakes or of causes for concern to do with other staff. The home recognises that in many organisations in the past a culture of secrecy or intimidation has existed whereby staff were discouraged from informing on fellow staff.

Policy Statement

All organisations face the risk of things going wrong or of unknowingly harbouring malpractice. Ealing House believes it has a duty to identify such situations and to take the appropriate measures to remedy the situation. The home believes that by encouraging a culture of openness within the organisation it can help to prevent malpractice.

Ealing House fully complies with Standard 18 - *Protection of the National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Older People*, which relates to the degree to which the registered manager of a home ensures that service users are protected from abuse, neglect and self-harm by supporting a policy on whistleblowing.

Aim of the Policy

This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning this home's approach to whistleblowing.

Whistleblowing Policy

All staff at Ealing House are encouraged to raise any genuine concerns about any malpractice, suspected crime, breach of legal obligations, miscarriage of justice, danger to health and safety or the environment, financial malpractice, fraud, corruption and breach of home regulations, or any cover-up of these, that they may come across, which affects the home, its service users or other staff.

Staff may be worried that by reporting such issues, they will be opening themselves up to the risk of victimisation or may be risking their job security. This policy is designed to give staff who raise concerns about other staff opportunity and protection.

In this home:

- staff should not hesitate to blow the whistle on suspected or actual malpractice
- all staff have statutory protection in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, provided that concerns are raised in the right way and they are acting in good faith
- the fear of being mistaken should not prevent a member of staff from raising their concerns, provided they are acting in good faith, and have a reasonably held suspicion.
- all staff who have a reasonably held suspicion, who raise concerns in the right way and are acting in good faith will be protected from reprisal or victimisation and will not be risking their job security.

The types of disclosure that this policy is intended to cover include the following:

- a criminal offence
- a failure to comply with a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- endangering the health and safety of any individual
- damage to the environment
- financial malpractice, including fraud, theft, corruption and deliberate damage to property
- clinical incompetence
- concealment of information relating to any of the above.

Staff who fail to follow this procedure and knowingly withhold information or evidence on any of the above occurrences or areas may be subject to disciplinary action, or to criminal proceedings in the event of a criminal

investigation.

Procedure

If concerned about any form of malpractice or any of the areas listed above staff should:

- normally first raise the issue with the immediate line manager-Sally Watson
- in cases where staff do not feel that they can tell their immediate line manager, for whatever reason,they may raise the matter with the head of home or with the home owner in writing or verbally
- if these channels have been followed, and staff still have concerns, or if they feel the matter is so serious that they cannot discuss it with any of the above post-holders, then staff should contact the local National Care Standards Commission inspector.

Local NCSC office contact:- 01603 598700 Richard Neale,Inspector

Failure to follow the appropriate route for raising concerns may constitute a disciplinary offence.

Staff who are unsure whether to use this procedure or who want independent advice at any stage should contact their union's legal representative for advice. Alternatively, or if they are not a member of a union, they may contact the independent charity Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609. Their lawyers can give confidential advice at any stage about how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work.

Any disclosure made to a lawyer, in the course of seeking advice on the procedure or the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, is protected under the Act.

Training

All new staff should be encouraged to read the policy on whistleblowing as part of their induction process. Whistleblowing and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 should also be included in foundation training and in regular in-house training updates.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Policy review date: _____

