



## Nursing and Care Directorate

Professor Craig White  
By email

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Dear Professor White

Please find below the NHS 24 response set out to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport's questions as detailed in the NHS BOARDS GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE MECHANISMS letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.

### NHS Complaints

#### **Mechanisms for the Board to detect and respond to clusters of complaints about the same clinician – With details of process and timescales for this:**

- All learning identified during complaints and subsequent investigations is shared with the staff members, direct line manager and the line manager above them. This allows for team sharing of learning.
- The NHS 24 'Respond' incident management system currently has the capability to record both the staff members name and their unique log in identification code in relation to investigated complaints of all types including, compliments, complaints and feedback. The system also allows for specific searches.
- As described by the National Model Complaints Handling Procedure, Stage 2 complaints are managed within 20 working days and Stage 1 within five working days. NHS 24 can demonstrate, in the previous quarter of April – June 2018, 100% of Stage 2 complaints were managed within time.
- Where a clinician is being complained about repeatedly, or there is a cluster of complaints, it is the line management team who have oversight and it would be they who identify, escalate and manage this. The team working arrangements allows for visibility of repeated concerns or complaints.

## **What arrangements are in place for ensuring timely decision making when the safety of practice of a consultant is raising concerns?**

There are two ways of describing the current arrangements in place:

1. Where a real time concern is raised, this will be managed with immediacy and depending on the situation, the clinician may be taken off line with bespoke development and individual performance management plans in place. There are also Human Resource policies that can be deployed immediately by senior management if required.
2. The second arrangement in place is where the local line management team are informed that there is learning for their team member and where there is a concern in regards to a cluster of repeated issues, it would be they who identify this. There are robust arrangements in place to support the line manager to manage this. This includes, where appropriate, deploying a development plan, taking the clinician offline for a period of learning, and where the response to the development and learning is not as desired, then there are options to manage this via formal routes which may relate to the human resource policies of 'supporting employee capability' or 'Management of Staff Conduct: Disciplinary'. Staff and managers are fully supported through these processes by senior clinical leaders and Human Resource department. Maintaining clinical and patient safety is the NHS 24 priority and where there are concerns around the capability of any staff member to deliver safe patient care, then the process and procedures described allow for swift and, where appropriate, immediate action to be taken. NHS 24 can provide examples of supporting and managing staff in this way. This includes supporting staff to successfully manage issues locally to escalating cases to regulatory bodies.

### **Surgical Safety and M&M reviews:**

- The majority of this section is not directly applicable to NHS 24, however to offer context, NHS 24 applies the Health Foundations 'Vincent Framework' to understanding how safe is our care and ensure there are organisational mechanisms in place to support staff to discuss any patient safety concerns. These include Scottish Patient Safety Programme executive patient safety leadership walkround, encouraging staff attendance / participation at regional Clinical Governance meetings, developing the staff engagement element in Adverse Events, creating space to discuss concerns at regional partnership meetings and NHS 24 support staff with CPD and e-Learning materials to ensure they remain updated.



- NHS 24 has senior executive on call arrangements each day and this is underpinned by having service delivery on call leads and there is always senior clinical managers delivering the services. NHS 24 has existing clear lines of escalation supported by a service management process.
- From the monitoring of the workload perspective, NHS 24 operates within the parameters of the working time directive ensuring our staff take regular breaks and where there are any workload issues these can be immediately escalated and resolved.

### **Supervision of Junior Medical Staff – Consultant oversight of junior medical staff**

- Whilst NHS 24 does not employ either consultants or junior medical staff, for assurance, NHS 24 has robust models of clinical supervision in place to ensure that all clinicians have immediate access to clinical supervision as required. All staff have one-to-one meetings with their manager each month where two calls that the manager has reviewed are discussed and where any learning or personal development identified is actioned.

### **Openness and Transparency:**

#### **A description of the processes in place to encourage open reporting and discussion of behaviours not consistent with NHSScotland Values:**

- NHS 24 is proud of the culture of openness, honesty and transparency in place. Staff, service users and all stakeholders are encouraged to openly report any issues or behaviours not value consistent – Example routes of reporting include face to face conversations, our Duty of Candour, Whistleblowing, Dignity at Work and Grievance policies. NHS 24 has mediation available as required. NHS 24 has an Adverse Incident reporting system where staff can capture any issues for discussion, partnership staff side engagement working is active and staff are empowered to speak up. Upholding our staff governance standards are vital. Our patients and all stakeholders have recognised routes to openly report and discuss any behaviours they have experienced not consistent with NHSScotland values. NHS 24 can evidence success where issues have been openly reported and subsequently actioned.

#### **How quality of outcomes are monitored and any deficiencies reviewed and necessary action taken:**

- NHS 24 monitors the quality of outcomes in many different ways, again, adhering to the principles of the Vincent framework as the benchmark. This looks at past care, reliability, learning and the care provided today with 'live data' on all of the above informing our daily decision making and

planning processes. As discussed above, every practitioner has two calls reviewed each month and the quality of outcomes is one of the metrics assessed. Where partners, patients or staff identify real time issues, these are addressed and resolved immediately. Organisationally healthcare quality outcomes are reviewed throughout the Clinical Governance structures. This indicates any deficiencies highlighted, learning that has been put in place as a result and the status of this. Where partners identify issues which indicates a poor quality outcome where immediate action is required then this is instigated. There are several channels of communicating with staff and sharing the organisational learning. Deficiencies are also actioned via clinical and operational process amendments and informing staff of these. NHS 24 has robust patient feedback platforms which are excellent indicators of quality outcome breaches and NHS 24 can evidence considerable learning that has been actioned as a result of patient feedback. NHS 24 has clear lines of reporting and escalation with all of our partners and this is an excellent indicator to assist in assessing and monitoring the quality of outcomes.

I trust this information is helpful and answers the questions set out in the Cabinet Secretary's letter. Whilst fully appreciating the context of NHS 24 is very different to our territorial Health Board Partners, we have tried to set out the NHS 24's Staff, Corporate and Clinical Governance mechanisms in place to provide the assurances required. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or further information or clarification you require.

Yours sincerely



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