



There has been a lot of media coverage of whistleblowing over the last few months, with whistleblowing hitting the headlines on a regular basis. Articles in this quarter's newsletter includes the publication of the report from the Whistleblowing Helpline's Bridging the Gap campaign, and an invitation to get involved in the new guidance we are developing on raising concerns in health and social care.

Help us to update the national guidance

The Department of Health has asked the Whistleblowing Helpline to update the national guidance on raising concerns in health, and to extend it to cover social care. We are keen to involve key stakeholders in this process and there are a number of ways in which you can get involved.

- Firstly, go to the [website consultation page](#) and send us your thoughts on four key issues.
- Secondly, you can register to attend one of our Open Space events on Tuesday 22 October in central London. At the events, a variety of organisations and individuals with experience or expertise regarding the issues around raising concerns will be asked to share their views in developing the content and design of the guidance so as to best meet the needs of individuals and managers. The event will be in the form of two separate workshops. The morning workshop (from 10.00 a.m. till 12.30) will be targeted at the NHS and healthcare, whereas the afternoon workshop (from 1.30 p.m. till 4.00 p.m.) will focus on social care. To find out more or register for a free place, email rosemary.crockett@mencap.org.uk In addition to the guidance refresh work, there will be an opportunity at the workshop to preview the manager training package being developed by the Whistleblowing Helpline.

Changes in the law?

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills is seeking evidence to help them consider whether the whistleblowing legal protection framework needs further strengthening after the changes introduced earlier this year. The [consultation](#) runs until 1 November. You can respond directly to BIS or [NHS Employers](#) are conducting a survey of employers to help them decide how to respond to the BIS consultation.

Meanwhile, the changes to whistleblowing legislation which were introduced in July this year continue to 'bed down'. An [article in HR-Inform](#) reminds us of the recent changes and how our policies need to reflect these.

Interview with Dean Royles

Look on our [website page](#) to see the Whistleblowing Helpline Policy Manager interview Dean Royles, the Chief Executive of NHS Employers, about the importance of whistleblowing and how managers can help staff feel confident to raise their concerns.

Bridging the Gap

We have just published the report on our campaign Bridging the Gap, which aims to reduce the 'reporting gap' between the proportion of staff who know about whistleblowing, and the proportion who would feel safe to raise a concern. We want to help managers and staff to foster a work environment which encourages staff to openly discuss concerns and reflect on practice.

The key findings from our research are:

- People who have experienced whistleblowing describe the experience most commonly in negative terms.
- The communication of the Raising Concerns (whistleblowing) policy and the training for staff and managers needs improvement.
- Mechanisms for taking care of whistleblowers and ensuring their safety are necessary, in order to protect them from a negative and daunting experience.
- All the Trusts who responded to our survey had a policy in place and the content is broadly satisfactory. Policies could however be easier to read and use.
- The monitoring and reporting of whistleblowing cases needs improvement

To find out more and download a free copy of our report, click [here](#).

The Berwick report and the need for culture change

In August, [Don Berwick](#) published his report into patient safety in the NHS. It emphasises the need to move away from blame games towards a new culture of openness and learning from mistakes. Clearly this is the sort of culture which will encourage staff to raise concerns at an early stage. A large research study published in the BMJ's [Quality and Safety report](#) in September found that support and respect for staff was variable across the NHS and that staff who raised concerns were often viewed in a negative way. And, also in September, the CIPD published the findings of [a survey of 1,000 staff](#) which found that fewer than six in 10 workers would be confident to raise a concern about patient care with senior management.

Guidance from the NMC

The [Nursing and Midwifery Council](#) have published new guidance for nurses and midwives about raising and escalating concerns, which is very clear and easy to read.

Contact Us

As always we welcome feedback about our newsletter, do let us know if you have any thoughts about what people want to read or if you have any suggestions for improvements. You can contact the Whistleblowing Helpline on 08000 724725, or email us at enquiries@wbhelpline.org.uk

If you do not wish to receive the newsletter in future, please email rosemary.crockett@mencap.org.uk and ask to be unsubscribed.