

## Raising Concerns as a Foundation Doctor

Healthcare is a rewarding but complex process, which does not always run smoothly. If feeling uncomfortable about some aspect of the system, Foundation doctors have many options for raising concerns, depending on their nature.

### General

Most concerns can be raised with clinical and or educational supervisors (CS, ES), as they are in frequent contact in the workplace. The CS and ES are natural sources of advice, though this cannot be the only source in all circumstances. They may well be able to direct the doctor to the best place for their issue. Rarely, it may be that the CS or ES *are* the problem.

Postgraduate/education team staff are also a natural source of advice, though they will be best at solving educational issues. If unable to solve the problem, they may well be able to direct the doctor to the best place for their concern. Every postgraduate centre has administrative staff who will support you. Every Foundation programme has one or more medically qualified Foundation Programme Directors who are there to support you.

There is a very active Foundation doctor group, the North West Foundation Forum (NWFF). There are first year and second year representatives in each Foundation programme, the NWFF shares best practice and has a direct line to the School Director. The North West of England School of Foundation Training and Physician Associates is run by NHS England North West, who have offices in Liverpool and Manchester, plus associate Deans who visit every site. We are usually able to advise on appropriate local solutions. The generic School inbox can be contacted on [england.foundation.nw@nhs.net](mailto:england.foundation.nw@nhs.net). The School director is Paul Baker, Deputy Postgraduate Dean, and any Foundation doctor is welcome to get in contact, on [Paul.Baker20@nhs.net](mailto:Paul.Baker20@nhs.net)

### Workplace issues

Directorate structures vary from Trust to Trust, so familiarity with the local set-up is important. The CS and ES may be able to direct concerns to the appropriate clinical director or manager.

For contractual problems, workplace concerns or terms and conditions of service, the Human Resources department (exact name may vary) should help you. The British Medical Association (BMA) may advise in contentious cases, membership is advisable for Foundation doctors.

There should be a procedural route into management for everyone in every Trust and programme, via a resident doctors' forum or liaison committee (names vary).

### **Safety**

Safety of patients, and of course colleagues, is everyone's business. There are local reporting systems in all sites for reporting safety incidents - Datex is a common example. You should use these mechanisms when appropriate as they are Trust's normal way of monitoring safety concerns.

Every site has a Guardian of Safe Working, who is responsible for overseeing the safety of resident doctors' working, and provides a system of exception reporting, plus hours and rest monitoring. The reporting also includes missed educational opportunities, such as cancelled teaching. The guardian reports directly to the board and Trusts have a contractual responsibility to address concerns which are raised by this route.

All Trusts also have a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, who support staff to speak up when they feel that they are unable to in other ways. Please do use the systems which are provided for you.

### **Raising Dignity Concerns**

Guidance on Raising Dignity Concerns has been developed in conjunction with the trainee led Allyship Network with the aim of supporting trainees to raise a concern and provide trainers with the tools to listen and act appropriately. Examples of this may include bullying and harassment, discrimination or unfair treatment, sexual harassment, microaggressions or exclusion and rude or inappropriate behaviour from colleagues or patients. These documents are available on the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) page of the NW website.

### **Raising Concerns Summary**

Identify the following in your locality and be prepared to speak to them as appropriate, about any concerns you may have. Some names may vary.

1. Clinical Supervisor
2. Educational Supervisor
3. Foundation Programme Administrator
4. Foundation Programme Director
5. Human Resources department
6. British Medical Association representative (if a member)
7. Representative on resident doctors liaison committee
8. Representative of North West Foundation Forum
9. Local incident reporting system
10. Guardian of Safe Working
11. Freedom to Speak Up Guardian
12. School Director at NHS England North West

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