

## **Freedom to Raise a Concern Policy**

We believe that anyone who is working in any part of this organisation and who believes that the company or a responsible individual is involved in any form of wrongdoing is free to report their concerns. We value people who chose to speak up and will never discourage them in any way. We are an open and transparent organisation where staff feel secure about speaking up.

### **Who does this policy apply to?**

Anyone who is working anywhere within Window to the Womb whether they are employed directly, a contractor or agency staff may see things that concern them. This policy therefore applies to everyone within the organisation.

### **What concerns can I raise?**

You can raise a concern about risk, bad practice or wrongdoing that you think is harming the service that Window to the Womb or Firstscan deliver to our customers. Just a few examples of this might include (but are by no means restricted to):

- **unsafe customer care** such as poor scan room techniques or poor referral techniques
- **unsafe working conditions** which risks endangering the health and safety of an individual
- **inadequate induction or training for staff** which means that they could not be expected to provide a safe a professional service to our customers
- **lack of, or poor, response to a reported safety incident**
- **a bullying culture**

Remember that if you are a healthcare professional you may have a professional duty to report a concern. If in doubt, please raise it.

Don't wait for proof. We would like you to raise the matter while it is still a concern. It doesn't matter if you turn out to be mistaken as long as you are genuinely concerned.

**NB. This policy is not for people with concerns about their employment that affect only them - that type of concern should be raised with the line manager.**

### **Feel safe to raise your concern**

If you raise a genuine concern under this policy, you will not be at risk of losing your job or suffering any form of reprisal as a result. We will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone who raises a concern nor will we tolerate any attempt to bully you into not raising

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any such concern. Any such behaviour is a breach of our values as an organisation and if upheld following investigation, could result in disciplinary action.

Provided you are acting honestly, it does not matter if you are mistaken or if there is an innocent explanation for your concerns.

### **Confidentiality and anonymity**

We hope that you will feel comfortable raising your concern openly but we also appreciate that you may want to raise it confidentially. This means that while you are willing for your identity to be known to the person you report your concern to, you do not want anyone else to know your identity. Therefore, we will keep your identity confidential, if that is what you want, unless required to disclose it by law (for example, by the police). You can choose to raise your concern anonymously, without giving anyone your name, but that may make it more difficult for us to investigate thoroughly and give you feedback on the outcome.

### **Who should I raise my concern with?**

In many circumstances the easiest way to get your concern resolved will be to raise it formally or informally with your line manager and this is what we would encourage anyone to do in the first instance. But where you don't think it is appropriate to do this or have raised it with your line manager but are not satisfied that the matter has been resolved or you do not feel able to raise it with them, you can contact:

- **Our Freedom to Speak up Guardian:** Mark Witter ([mark@windowtothewomb.co.uk](mailto:mark@windowtothewomb.co.uk))
  - this person is an impartial point of contact for anyone wishing to raise a concern. He has access to anyone in the organisation. The person has been trained in receiving concerns and will give you information about where you can go for more support if necessary.

### **What will happen if you raise a concern?**

Your concern will be investigated by an appropriate person within the organisation. The Guardian will make sure that you receive direct feedback following the investigation. We will always take an expression of concern as an opportunity to learn and improve and this will be our primary objective.

### **Please note**

1. We encourage you to use the procedure if you are concerned about any wrong doing at work. However if the procedure has not been invoked in good faith (e.g. for malicious reasons or in pursuit of a personal grudge), then it will make you liable to immediate termination of employment or such lesser disciplinary sanction as may be appropriate in the circumstances.

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