

October 17th 2019

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is to be made available to service users, as their relatives and representatives need to be made aware of the agency's determination to take action where it comes across as abuse. It is important to bear in mind that the concept and even the term "whistleblowing" are not widely understood outside professional circles.

This document outlines the policy of Homecare D & D Ltd in relation to dealing with allegations of abuse of our service users made by members of staff of the agency against other staff. This process is known as whistleblowing.

In the past, the management of organisations often treated people who reported adversely on their colleagues as trouble-makers, but we now recognise that it is staff that are most likely to observe and be in a position to report on bad practice. We therefore try to create an atmosphere of open communications and commitment to high standards of work, within which criticisms can be frankly made and thoroughly investigated.

For the purpose of this policy, we consider that examples of potential malpractice would include:

- Stealing
- Corruption
- Breach of contract
- Negligence
- Danger to health and safety
- Abuse of service users
- Breach of Food Safety/Hygiene regulations
- Discrimination
- Pollution
- Unethical conduct and the cover up of any of these.

OBLIGATIONS ON STAFF TO REPORT ABUSE

1. It is required of staff that they observe the agency's work carefully and report diligently on anything which causes them concern.
2. We believe that teamwork and loyalty to colleagues should not be allowed to deter staff from reporting bad practice when they observe it.
3. Any member of staff who witnesses or suspects abuse by another member of staff should report it as soon as possible to their manager.

PROCEDURES

The manager to whom abuse by a staff member is reported should take the necessary steps under the agency's policy on abuse. In addition, they should if possible protect the source of the information. If a manager fails to act promptly, suppresses evidence or is involved in any action to discourage whistleblowing, they may render themselves liable to disciplinary action.

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When an employee feels that they cannot raise the concern with their immediate Supervisor, Organisation Manager or Organisation Owners, advice can be obtained from Public Concern at Work, they will help you choose the best course of action:

CAN Mezzanine
7 – 14 Great Dover Street
London
SE1 4YR
General Enquiries: Phone: 020 3117 2520
Email: Whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

Whistleblowing Advice Line: 020 7404 6609

DEALING WITH STAFF WHO HAVE REPORTED ABUSE

Any member of staff who attempts to prevent a staff member from reporting their concerns to a manager or who bullies, attempts to intimidate or discriminates against a colleague in these circumstances will be dealt with under disciplinary proceedings.

A whistleblower who feels themselves to be subject to hostile action from colleagues should inform their manager who should, if necessary, take steps to alter the staff member's duties so as to protect them from the hostile action.

We wish to develop a relationship of trust with all our employees. We, therefore, need to know your concerns, and we promise to: -

- Respect confidentiality
- Investigate thoroughly
- Provide support, and protection, if necessary
- Agree to report back on the outcome of our investigations
- And, if possible, on any resultant action that is proposed.

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT

The **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998** (Guidance May 2013) was created by Parliament to protect whistleblowers from detrimental treatment or victimization from their employers after they have made a qualifying **disclosure**.

What is a protected disclosure?

The purpose of the **Protected Disclosures Act** (the Act) is to encourage people to report serious wrongdoing in their workplace by providing **protection** for employees who want to 'blow the whistle'. This applies to public and private sector workplaces.

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For more information regarding the Public Disclosure Act please visit the following sources:

<http://www.pcaw.co.uk/law-policy/a-guide-to-pida>

<http://wbhelpline.org.uk/resources/public-interest-disclosure-act/>

UNJUSTIFIED REPORTING

Managers must take reports from whistleblowing seriously and investigate all allegations thoroughly. Any investigations against colleagues, however, which are found to be merely flippant or malicious, may render the person who made them liable to disciplinary action.

TRAINING

All Homecare D & D Ltd staff should read this policy on whistleblowing as part of the induction training for all new staff. All staff will also receive training on safeguarding of vulnerable adults as part of their mandatory training.