

1.9.10 Safeguarding Allegations

Please describe how you would robustly manage an allegation that a member of staff has abused or neglected a child or adult at risk (either in their personal or professional life).

The Bidder has clearly demonstrated they have appropriate systems in place to manage an allegation that a member or staff has abused or neglected a child or adult at risk – Pass

The Bidder has failed to demonstrate they have appropriate systems in place to manage an allegation that a member or staff has abused or neglected a child or adult at risk – Fail

We take all allegation matters very seriously and commit to a high level, and proportionate response, utilising our documented processes to support decision making. On receipt of any allegation of abuse, neglect or harm by a member of staff towards an adult or Child, the Allegations Policy must be followed. This policy is designed to support both the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator to ensure a full and proper investigation takes place.

Allegations whilst on duty:

- The allegation must be raised to the Clinical Services Manager or Team Manager (unless it is about them and then it will be raised with their senior). The needs of the potential victim must be reviewed immediately, and appropriate welfare provided and depending on the nature of the incident, a transfer for medical examination.
- The colleague or manager raising the concern must deal with this in the strictest of confidence. The Policy does enable the receiver of this information to obtain support and guidance via the HR team and the Safeguarding Team. During the out of hours period, the National on call manager will take such calls and has the skills, knowledge and training to manage the incident management process. The key elements to be completed at this stage are to ensure the staff member is removed from patient service, to protect them until the allegations can be reviewed (and to avoid any tampering of potential evidence), securing any evidence, secure the immediate area where the alleged abuse has taken place (if appropriate), securing CCTV and witnesses who are in the area.
- A 'serious case initial findings' (SCIF) video call meeting will be arranged as soon as possible to include HR, service manager, area/regional director and head of safeguarding, to review the position. The information that is known at the time will be discussed, risk assessed, and actions agreed as appropriate e.g., HR around the management & support for member of staff (to include suspension or redeployment as appropriate); the head of safeguarding to contact the Local Authority designated officer (LADO) for children or adult safeguarding/PIPOT designated officer or Duty Social Worker out of hours, as appropriate and agree actions to be taken and by whom by when. The LADO/PIPOT/DSW will determine via Police contact whether this becomes an immediate criminal investigation other process depending on the allegations made.
- If this becomes a criminal investigation, Vocare will hold the case until the investigation is

completed, maintaining the staff member on suspension to protect them, with wellbeing support being provided by the service. Appropriate notifications will be made to the CQC (Regulation 18) and the CCG (contractual requirement), as well as the Local Authority who holds the adult or child “at risk”. A communications briefing will be developed in preparation for any potential media interest.

- All decisions are based on triggers identified within the fact finding and in line with the Policy and these will be documented as the investigation takes place. All notifications will be made in line with our policy and all actions documented clearly and added to the Datix system for record keeping and allocation of actions.
- Follow up meetings with Safeguarding, the investigating officer and HR as necessary, will take place until actions are completed, and the case is closed. A final meeting is held to agree shared learning requirements, training or follow up audit.

Allegations outside of work

If the allegations are regarding the staff member in their personal life, a similar process will take place, with regards to reporting and police involvement. Maintaining the staff on suspension during the police investigation, with a link to work for support.

Vocare will follow through on any actions pending the outcome of a Police Investigation, dealing with the HR element of the case in line with appropriateness of the findings.