RAISING CONCERNS POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 All of us, at one time or another, have concerns about what is happening at work. Usually these concerns are easily resolved. However, when the concern feels serious because it is about a possible danger, professional misconduct or financial malpractice that might affect patients, colleagues or Korus Health itself, it can be difficult to know what to do.

1.2 You may be worried about raising issues like these. You may think it best to keep it to yourself, perhaps feeling that it's none of your business or that it's only a suspicion. You may feel that raising the matter would be disloyal to colleagues, managers or Korus Health. You may have spoken to the wrong person or raised the issue in the wrong way and are not sure what, if anything, to do next.

1.3 Korus Health is committed to running the organisation in the best way possible and to do so we need your help. We have introduced this policy, with the support of staff side representatives, to reassure you that it is safe and acceptable to speak up and to enable you to raise any concern you may have at an early stage and in the right way.

1.4 We should all be watchful of wrongdoing in Korus Health and the importance of preventing and eliminating it. If something is troubling you which you think we should know about or look into.

1.5 If, however, you wish to make a complaint about your personal employment or how you have been treated, please write to the HR Manager, in the first instance or use the 1:1 sessions available to you.

1.6 This Raising Concerns procedure is primarily for concerns where the interests of others, or of the organisation itself, are at risk. If in doubt – raise it!

2. Purpose of this Policy

2.1 The aim of the policy is to develop a working environment where staff members feel confident to raise concerns about unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, dangers to the public and staff, damage to the environment or professional misconduct without fear of detriment or

victimisation.

2.2 Through implementing this policy Korus Health aims to protect employees from being subjected to a detriment by Korus Health for making a protected disclosure.

3. Scope

3.1 The policy applies to all who work for Korus Health: whether full time or part time, trainees, contractors, self employed or employed through an agency or volunteers.

4. Ownership and Responsibilities

4.1 Role of the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for the overall implementation of this Policy.

- ensuring that staff members are aware of this policy
- ensuring that, should a staff member raise a concern with them, it is dealt with in accordance with this policy.

4.2 Role of Individual Staff

All staff members are responsible for:

- raising concerns in accordance with this policy
- assisting Korus Health with the investigation of any concerns raised.

4.3 Role of Designated HR Manager

Designated Director are responsible for:

- listening to the concern
- ensuring the concerned member of staff understands the scope of the policy
- ensuring that the concern is dealt with appropriately in accordance with this policy and remaining a contact for the concerned member of staff.

5. Standards and Practice

5.1 Our Assurances to you

5.11 The Board of Korus Health are committed to this policy and will ensure that staff concerns are taken seriously and investigated. If you raise a genuine concern under this policy the board will give an unequivocal guarantee that you will be protected against victimisation. You will not be at risk of losing your job, demotion, pay reduction, failure to renew a contract, failure to gain potential promotion or other detrimental action.

5.1.2 Provided you are acting in good faith (effectively this means honestly), it does not matter if you are mistaken or there is an innocent explanation for your concerns. So please do not think we will ask you to prove it. Of course we do not extend this assurance to someone who maliciously raises a matter they know is untrue.

Maliciously making a false accusation is a disciplinary matter, as is an instruction to

cover up wrongdoing, and will be dealt with in accordance with Korus HealthDisciplinary Policy and Procedure. If you are told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent.

5.1.3 We will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern and with these assurances, we hope you will raise your concern openly. However, we recognise that there may be circumstances when you would prefer to speak to someone in confidence first. If this is the case, please say so at the outset. If you ask us not to disclose your identity, we will not do so without your consent unless required to do so by law. You should understand that there may be times when we are unable to resolve a concern without revealing your identity, for example where your personal evidence is essential. In such cases we will discuss with you whether and how the matter can best proceed.

5.1.4 Please remember that if you do not tell us who you are, it will be more difficult for us to look into the matter. We will not be able to protect your position or give you feedback. Accordingly, you should not assume we can provide the assurances we offer in the same way if you report a concern anonymously.

5.2 How to raise a concern

5.2.1 If you are unsure about raising a concern at any stage, you can get independent advice from your trade union representative, the National NHS Whistleblowing Helpline or Public Concern at Work.

5.2.2 You may also contact CQC for further advice.

5.2.3 Please remember that you do not need to have firm evidence before raising a concern. However, we do ask that you explain as fully as you can the information or circumstances that gave rise to your concern.

5.3 Step One

5.3.1 If you have concerns about risk, malpractice or wrongdoing at work, we hope that you will feel able to raise it first with your clinical lead. This may be done verbally or in writing.

5.3.2 If your concern relates to fraud, corruption or financial irregularity, it should be raised in the first instance with a Korus Health Board Member,

5.4 Step Two

5.4.1 If you feel unable to raise your concerns with the HR manager or clinical lead, for whatever

reason, please raise the matter with one of Korus Health Board Members.

5.5 Step Three

If these channels have been followed and you still have concerns, or if you feel that the matter is so serious that you cannot discuss it with any of the above, please contact:

- Care Quality Commission, Finsbury Tower, 103-105 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8TG. Telephone: 03000 616161
- National NHS Counter Fraud Line on 0800 028 40 60 (if your concern is about financial malpractice)
- Department of Health Customer Service Centre, Department of Health, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS. Telephone: 020 7210 4850
- South West Strategic Health Authority, South West House, Blackbrook Park Avenue, Taunton, Somerset TA1 2PK. Telephone: 01823 361000
- NHS Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group, Sedgemoor Centre, Priory Road, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 5AS. Telephone: 0845 170 8000
- Health Protection Agency Central Office, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1S 9SZ. Telephone: 020 7811 7000
- Health Protection Agency-South West, 1210 Lansdowne Court, Gloucester Business Park, Brockworth, Gloucester GL3 4AB. Telephone 08455048668.

5.7 External Disclosures

5.7.1 While we hope this policy gives you the reassurance you need to raise such matters internally, we recognise that there may be circumstances where you can properly report matters to outside bodies. In fact, we would rather you raised a matter with the appropriate regulator such as the Care Quality Commission, the Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts (Monitor), your professional regulator, the Audit Commission or the National Patient Safety Agency – than not at all. The National NHS Whistle blowing Helpline will be able to advise you on such an option and on the circumstances in which you may be able to contact an outside body safely. It should be noted that a discussion with your trade union representative does not constitute an external disclosure.

5.8 If you are dissatisfied

5.8.1 If you are unhappy with our response, remember you can go to the other levels and bodies detailed in this policy. While we cannot guarantee that we will respond to all matters in the way that you might wish, we will try to handle the matter fairly and properly. By using this policy, you will help us to achieve this.

5.9 What we will do

5.9.1 Once you have told us of your concern, the complaints Director involved at the relevant stage of

the process will assess the situation and consider what action may be appropriate. This may involve an informal review, or a more formal investigation. We will tell you who will be handling the matter, how you can contact them, and what further assistance we may need from you. If you ask, we will write to you summarising your concern and setting out how we propose to handle it and provide a timeframe for feedback. If we have misunderstood the concern or there is any information missing, please let us know.

5.9.2 When you raise the concern it will be helpful to know how you think the matter might best be resolved. If you do have any personal interest in the matter, we do ask that you tell us at the outset.

5.9.3 Whenever possible, we will give you feedback on the outcome of any investigation.
Please note, however, that we may not be able to tell you the precise action we take where this would infringe a duty of confidence we owe to another person.
While we cannot guarantee that we will respond to all matters in the way that you might wish, we will strive to handle the matter fairly and openly.

5.10 Independent Advice

5.10.1 If you are unsure whether to use this procedure or you want independent advice at any stage, you may contact:

- your union/staff association; or
- the National NHS Whistleblowing Helpline on 08000 724 725 or by email enquiries@wbhelpline.org.uk).
- the independent charity Public Concern at Work on 0207 404 6609 or by email at helpline@pcaw.org.uk . Their lawyers can give you free confidential advice at any stage about how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work.

6. Dissemination and Implementation

6.1 The staff will be made aware of the policy at induction for newly appointed staff and through mandatory training process for existing staff.

6.2 The document will be stored electronically in the Policies and Protocols folder.

6.3 Korus Health will continue to raise staff awareness by publicising the existence of the policy through a variety of methods which may include: an all user email, payslip message, screen saver, poster/ leaflet.

7. Updating and Review

7.1 This policy has been agreed by Korus Health management .

7.2 The policy will be reviewed every year or earlier in view of developments which may include legislative changes, national policy instruction (NHS or Department of Health) or Trust Board decision.

7.3 Where early revisions are significant and the overall policy is changed, the revised policy will be taken through the standard consultation, approval and dissemination processes.

9. Equality and Diversity

9.1. Equality Impact Assessment

Korus Health is a committed equal opportunities employer which aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment because of their race or ethnicity, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment and marital status. Korus Health is also committed to ensuring that any reasonable personal or domestic circumstances, medical condition, political affiliation or trade union membership, social or employment status should not unfairly disadvantage individuals or form part of any unreasonable conditions or requirements of employment. Korus Health will also ensure that employment polices are fair, monitored regularly, assessed and if breached, treated seriously.

9.1 As part of its development this policy and its impact on equality have been reviewed in line with theEquality and Diversity Policy by Korus Health’s Governance Board. The purpose of the assessment is to reduce and, if possible, remove any disproportionate impact on employees on the grounds of the 9 strands of equality, namely, age, disability, religion or belief, gender, transgender, pregnancy/maternity, race, sexual orientation or marital status/civil partnership. No detriment was identified.