

CSA update October 2018

Stakeholder engagement

Over the last month we have engaged with water service providers to ensure their public-facing complaints information is clear and accessible and that they are accurately signposting to our office at the end of their complaints handling procedure.

We met with a short-life working group of NHS Board representatives, the Scottish Government, and other key stakeholders to discuss NHS annual complaints reporting. The group looked at reporting in a consistent way against the nine key performance indicators.

We attend the NHS Complaints Personnel Association Scotland network meeting in October. We offered advice and guidance in relation to specific complaint handling queries and provided clarity on particular parts of the SPSO process including agreeing points of complaint. We also gave a general SPSO update to the network on our recent activities including a survey to inform our new visual identity and our draft British Sign Language Plan. We also provided information on plans for SPSO to relocate to a new office and shared a brief update on the Independent National Whistleblowing Officer function.

As part of our planned review of the model CHPs, we will be surveying public bodies and other stakeholders later this year. We want to understand how well the model procedures work in practice and what updating or development is needed to ensure they drive and enable good practice, consistency of approach, learning and good outcomes for complainers.

The Independent National Whistleblowing Officer

The next step in our preparation for taking on our new duties is to consult on the draft National Whistleblowing Standards. Consultation will run in parallel with the Scottish Government's consultation on the draft legislation. We will post all relevant information on the SPSO website, and welcome responses from anyone with an interest in this area.

We have been making progress with engagement across the health sector, to raise awareness of the work we are doing, and to encourage engagement through our consultation on the Standards. This month we attended a meeting of the Scottish Deans Undergraduate Medical School Fitness to Practice Group, where we discussed the implications of the Standards for medical schools and their current arrangements for raising concerns. We were keen to hear what guidance and support they would need to ensure that the new approach was fully accessible to all their students. We will be engaging further with individuals from this group as our work in this area progresses over the coming months.

We also met with representatives from the General Medical Council, to provide an update on this work, and to gain from their experience in this area. We are keen to ensure that their existing training and awareness sessions on raising concerns can be dovetailed with the Standards, to ensure that both are as effective as possible.

Other wider engagement and awareness raising has included exploration of issues for integration authorities and how the existing regulatory framework may interact with the Standards in relation to raising concerns. A meeting with representatives from the Professional Standards Authority provided an excellent opportunity to gain from their wide-ranging experience in this area.

This work has also taken us south of the border, with attendance at a training day for 'Speak Up Guardians' in England. This provided us with the opportunity to hear how their initiatives are progressing, and to learn from their experiences.

Networks

Universities – this group will meet next in December 2018

Local Government – this group will meet next in December 2018

Colleges – this group will meet next in November 2018

Housing – date for next meeting TBC.