



Registered Charity no. 1182184

Reporting a Suspected Malpractice (Whistle Blowing) Policy

It is the duty of every member of the committee and volunteers to speak up about genuine concerns in relation to criminal activity, breach of a legal obligation (including negligence, breach of contract, breach of administrative law), miscarriage of justice, danger to health and safety or the environment, and the cover up of any of these in the workplace. It applies whether or not the information is confidential.

Wendover Dementia Support (WDS) is committed to ensuring that any volunteer's concerns of this nature will be taken seriously and investigated. A disclosure to WDS will be protected if the volunteer has an honest and reasonable suspicion that the malpractice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur. Volunteers who raise concerns reasonably and responsibly will not be penalised in any way.

Who this policy is for?

This policy is for people volunteering with WDS. For the purposes of this policy only, this is someone who is:

- A trustee of WDS
- An independent consultant for WDS
- A volunteer with WDS
- Contractors and suppliers of services to WDS

Procedure

Any individual who has reasonable suspicions of malpractice should initially take their concerns to a Dementia Advisory Volunteer (DAV). If they do not feel that this is the appropriate person, they should approach the Chair of trustees, or if their concern is related to the Chair, they should contact another trustee or member of the management committee. It is recognised that for some individuals, raising a concern under this procedure may be a daunting and difficult experience. An individual may choose to be accompanied or represented by another volunteer at any stage of this procedure. All reported incidents will be investigated. All reports will be dealt with in confidence, with only trustees/committee members, who need to know, being informed.



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The Chair of trustees, another trustee or committee member will establish and record the basis of the concerns that have been raised and establish what further actions are required. The individual raising the concern will be advised of the outcome of the investigation as soon as possible, normally within two weeks of the date of their disclosure. Where a longer period is needed for investigation, the volunteer will be informed in writing.

The Chair of trustees will be informed of all reported disclosures and the actions being taken. In the case of disclosures on alleged fraud and corruption, WDS's Finance Officer will be informed by the Chair.

If an individual is not satisfied with the response received and any subsequent action taken, they should put their concerns in writing to the Chair of trustees/ management committee (or another appropriate trustee/committee member) who will arrange any further investigation as he/she thinks appropriate. The Chair will send a written response to the individual concerned.

Guiding principles

To ensure that this policy is adhered to, and to assure staff that the concern will be taken seriously, WDS will:

- Not allow the person raising the concern to be victimised for doing so;
- Treat victimisation of whistle blowers as a serious matter that may lead to disciplinary action that may include dismissal;
- Not attempt to conceal evidence of poor or unacceptable practice;
- Take disciplinary action if any volunteer destroys or conceals evidence of poor or unacceptable practice or misconduct;
- Liaise with the other organisations (see section below) to whom charities report malpractice.

Independent advice and further reading

Further Information for charitable organisations can be found on the Charity Commission's website on:

http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Our_regulatory_activity/Reporting_issues/Trustee_employee_and_volunteer_guidance_index.aspx

You may feel that it is more appropriate to report a matter to another organisation. Other organisations concerned with standards in the voluntary sector include:



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The Charity Commission - 0845 300 0218

Audit Commission for local authorities and the National Health Service in England and Wales – 0844 798 3131

Health & Safety Executive – contact on-line; <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/index.htm> or in emergency 0845 300 9923

NHS Fraud & Corruption Reporting Line – 0800 028 40 60

Public Concern at Work and ACAS can advise on the circumstances when it is more appropriate to contact an outside body.

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