

HSC RAISING CONCERNS ABOUT PRACTICE LEARNING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS RELATING TO PRACTICE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 You can raise a “concern” when you are worried about an issue that affects the people you are caring for and you are acting to protect them. **This form can also be used to notify the School of Health Sciences of any incidents which have occurred in practice which involve HSC learners or if an incident has impacted on the practice area as a learning environment.**

Such concerns may include:

- Danger or risk to health and safety, such as where health and safety rules or guidelines have been breached.
- Concerns relating to the quality of the learning environment.
- Issues relating to staff conduct, such as unprofessional attitudes or behaviour, including concerns related to equality and diversity.
- Issues to do with delivering care involving staff members (including safeguarding vulnerable people, prevention of radicalisation, risk of exploitation and equality and diversity).
- Issues relating to care in general, such as concerns over resources, products, people, staffing or the organisation.
- Issues relating to the health and well-being of a colleague, which may affect their ability to practise safely.
- Misuse or unavailability of clinical equipment, including lack of adequate training.
- Financial malpractice, including criminal acts and fraud.

1.2 In addition, HSC students can raise a concern about the practice learning environment that may be impacting on their ability to engage in their placement learning experience.

1.3 All UEA staff and students have a responsibility to raise any concerns using the HSC process so that appropriate action can be undertaken. Importantly, any concerns about safeguarding/patient safety must be reported to **UEA Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Lead for the organisation involved in accordance with their Safeguarding Policy at the earliest opportunity.** **CONCERNs REGARDING SAFEGUARDING AND/OR PATIENT SAFETY RAISED VIA THIS PROCESS WILL BE ESCALATED TO THE PLACEMENT ORGANISATION BY THE DIRECTOR OF PRACTICE EDUCATION**

2. HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

2.1 UEA PROCESS (SEE APPENDIX I)

You are advised in the first instance to discuss your concerns at the time of the incident with your Practice Educator/Supervisor/Assessor or clinical lead or an appropriate senior member of staff in practice.

If you feel you are unable to discuss it with your practice educator/supervisor/assessor or clinical lead or an appropriate senior member of staff in practice, then you should raise it with your Link Lecturer, Visiting Tutor or Adviser.

The Link Lecturer, Visiting Tutor or Adviser will then discuss the concern with the practice organisation. If the concern remains it should be reported in writing to the HSC Director of Practice Education who will escalate it to the senior management in the practice education provider concerned and log it on the Faculty of Medicine and Health database. To raise a concern, please fill in the [HSC Raising Concerns about Practice Learning and Reporting Incidents Relating to Practice Policy Form](#) online.

Normally, you will be informed about the plan of action and the outcome when completed depending on the nature of the concern.

Whilst we understand that there may be times when you would prefer to keep your identity confidential; however, it must be understood that anonymity cannot be guaranteed for professional and legal reasons. Anybody raising a concern will be supported throughout the process as required.

If you feel that the university has not adequately dealt with your concern about service user safety, you may want to seek help from outside the university and this should be through a recognised organisation listed in Section 3.

2.2 UEA PROCESS FOR STAFF (APPENDIX I)

2.2.1 ROLE OF LINK LECTURER (LL) / VISITING TUTOR (VT) / ADVISER (PA)

All staff have a duty to raise any concerns in practice either in their capacity as Link Lecturer, Visiting Tutor or Adviser. In the first instance it is expected that any concerns will be discussed with practice colleagues.

If a student raises a concern with academic staff then the member of staff, after clarifying the issue with the student must investigate the issue with practice before reporting the concern using Appendix II. It is expected that academic staff use their professional judgement to decide whether the concern should be formally reported or if it is adequately resolved in practice. The following criteria should be used to support professional judgements:

- What is the problem?
- Who is at risk?
- How could they be harmed?
- What is in place to mitigate against the risk?
- Is it enough?
- What else needs to be in place?
- What is the timescale that this needs to be achieved?

Any discussions with practice should be recorded on the [HSC Raising Concerns about Practice Learning and Reporting Incidents Relating to Practice Policy Form](#) available to fill in online.

Link Lecturers/Visiting Tutors/Advisers are responsible for supporting students who raise concerns and to feedback to students the outcome of any concern raised or escalated.

2.2.2 ROLE OF ACADEMIC STAFF MARKING

Sometimes academic staff might identify concerns through academic work submitted by students. In this case the Academic Lead (Assessment) should contact the student to clarify the concern.

If it is decided that there is a concern, then it should be reported to the Director of Practice Education and the process followed as above.

2.2.3 ROLE OF DIRECTOR OF PRACTICE

The Director of Practice Education has overall responsibility for the raising concerns and incident reporting process and is responsible for escalating concerns and following up incidents relating to practice with the Senior Education Lead and/or Chief Nurse or designate in all NHS Trusts/appropriate senior manager in other organisations that provide practice education for students. Concerns will normally be escalated within five working days.

In the case of serious concerns, the Director of Practice Education is responsible for the escalation of concerns to regulatory bodies and reporting the documented concerns immediately to the Dean of HSC.

The Director of Practice Education is responsible for maintaining a log of all concerns reported and cross referencing with other concerns raised in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. Any concerns raised will be reported within confidential [reserved items] section of the HSC Practice Education Governance Committee.

If students need to be removed from a practice area it is the Director of Practice Education who should initiate the process in consultation with the Dean of HSC or designate and the Chief Nurse/Senior Education Lead or relevant professional lead (e.g., Head of Midwifery, Allied Health Professions).

2.2.4 ROLE OF PRACTICE PROVIDERS IN RAISING CONCERNs AND REPORTING INCIDENTS TO THE HEI

Practice education providers (PEPs) have a responsibility to notify the University of any significant incidents in practice, pending CQC reports that might have a negative impact on the student learning, as well as never events and untoward incidents that involve UEA students. This is to be able to assess the risk, deliver planned support to students and to jointly action plan. If the PEP undertakes an investigation of any incident occurring in practice which involves students, it must notify the university in the first instance. **No student should be asked to write a statement without the support from the HEI.**

3. USEFUL LINKS/GUIDANCE

- [**HCPC Reporting Concerns: Managing risk and reporting concerns about safety**](#)
- [**NHS Improvement Freedom to Speak Up: Whistleblowing Policy for the NHS**](#)
- [**NMC Raising Concerns as a Student**](#)
- [**UEA Safeguarding & Prevent**](#)

Appendix I: RAISING CONCERN IN PRACTICE FLOWCHART

