

BY EMAIL

Jim Mackey
Chief Executive
NHS Improvement

8 October 2017

Dear Jim,

Re-employment of NHS whistleblowers

Many thanks for your attached reply of 15 September 2017.

Events have overtaken us. It has now been revealed that NHS Improvement helped to secure NHS re-employment for a white, female secondary care whistleblower *prior* to the launch of any employment support scheme by NHSI.

Not all the facts surrounding this matter are clear yet, but so far it seems that:

- 1) The whistleblower was dismissed by an NHS trust with a formal letter from the employer to the individual confirming dismissal on grounds of loss of trust and confidence.

- 2) The whistleblower subsequently applied for a job at another trust and was offered the post earlier this year. However, she understood

that her previous employer provided only a reference stating that she had been dismissed.

- 3) She contacted various managers at NHS England and NHS Improvement.
- 4) NHS Improvement made a telephone call to the prospective new employer, after which the whistleblower was given the job.
- 5) After the whistleblower secured the job, she received warm congratulations from senior NHS Improvement officials and others. For example:

“Wonderful news r”

In contrast, other whistleblowers have been told that they must apply for entry to NHS Improvement’s much delayed secondary care whistleblower employment scheme. They have also been told that they must satisfy a number of criteria, as assessed by a formally constituted panel, before they can be considered eligible.

In addition, the scheme to which they are applying currently consists only of preparation for return to work. NHS Improvement has even not offered the current cohort of interested whistleblowers trial employment, nor direct support to secure employment of the sort described in the case above.

Moreover, whistleblowers have been advised that this is their one chance of help, with a limited budget per person, which adds to the anxieties about the scheme.

Since I drew the above precedent of facilitated re-employment to NHS Improvement's attention, the NHSI senior manager overseeing the scheme has made these observations:

*"In response to your point about undertaking direct work to help secure someone a role, I agree we should do everything we can. **At NHSI we have made direct contact to help smooth individual cases and at our employer workshops we will be encouraging NHS employers to take proactive action.**"*

*Email from Maria Robson NHS Improvement Head of Trust
Resourcing 25 September 2017*

I am sure you will appreciate that many whistleblowers have been surprised to hear of the above precedent, and are wondering why they must jump through hoops when NHS Improvement has acted decisively and proactively for at least one person previously.

One possible reading of this situation is that NHS Improvement knows full well how many whistleblowers have been unjustly dismissed and bullied with false allegations and deliberately spoilt employment records.

Otherwise, it would have been a serious breach of safe recruitment procedures and Safeguarding protocols if NHS Improvement recklessly helped to secure NHS employment for someone who might have been a potential risk to patients and other staff.

If I am correct in surmising that NHSI is already well aware of specific unfair dismissals, may I suggest that we cut through all the bureaucratic obstacles ranged against whistleblowers in the form of NHSI's employment support scheme. What is needed is for NHSI to treat all fairly and equitably, and to proceed forthwith to expeditious, properly funded re-employment of other sacked NHS whistleblowers.

I await your response.

Yours sincerely,

Minh

Dr Minh Alexander

Addendum 9 October 2017

Since writing my letter, the following whistleblowers have reviewed its contents and indicated that they are in agreement:

Clare Sardari

Russell Dunkeld

Maha Yassaie

Narinder Kapur

Lloyd Armstrong

Two whistleblowers who wish to remain anonymous at this stage

All the above individuals and the whistleblower who received NHSI's help in securing a job have been bcc'd into this correspondence