



E: Alison.carmichael@gov.scot

Dr Minh Alexander
By Email: minhalexander@aol.com

Ref: Fol/19/00388

26 February 2019

Dear Dr Alexander

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002 (FOISA)

Thank you for your request dated 2 February 2019 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

You asked for information from Paul Gray, Director General Health and Social Care, and Chief Executive of NHS Scotland about whistleblowing champions as you had trouble finding the relevant email address for FOIs to NHS Scotland.

For ease we have provided responses to your questions as they arise.

- 1. Please advise if NHS Scotland holds any data about the activities of Health Board whistleblowing champions, since they were first established. If so, please advise what data is held.**
- 2. Please advise if NHS Scotland has reviewed or analysed how the whistleblowing champions are operating, or if NHS Scotland commissioned such review or analysis . If so, please give details and share any relevant findings and reports.**

The Scottish Government wrote to whistleblowing champions in July 2018, asking them to provide a summary of the role they undertake, particularly in relation to oversight. We also asked whistleblowing champions for information on how they assure themselves that whistleblowing cases have been handled and investigated appropriately. The responses we received to these questions are provided in **the Annex** attached separately to this letter.

This is the only data that is held centrally on the activities of whistleblowing champions and how they are operating. The link below provides links to the websites of the 22 health boards in Scotland. Please use this link if you would like to contact individual health boards to ask if



they hold any further data on the activities of whistleblowing champions and how they are operating.

<https://www.scot.nhs.uk/organisations/>

In addition, the Scottish Government hosts forums for the whistleblowing champions to meet to share good practice and discuss any issues in a confidential space. As such, no minutes or reports are provided from these forums, which usually take place every six months.

3. Please advise if whistleblowing champions have made any whistleblowing disclosures to NHS Scotland, and if so please advise of the number of disclosures to date and if possible, without risk of identifying individuals, a broad summary of the nature of the concerns disclosed by whistleblowing champions to NHS Scotland.

Since the role of whistleblowing champion was established in November 2015 between 1-5 whistleblowing champions have made whistleblowing disclosures to the Scottish Government. We are unable to advise you of the exact numbers or the nature of the concerns as this could potentially identify any individual(s) involved in the case(s).

The Scottish Government do not hold information on the number of whistleblowing disclosures made by whistleblowing champions in individual Boards. Decisions on how health boards record any disclosures received by whistleblowing champions are matters for each individual health board within the framework of their local whistleblowing policy and procedures.

Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your FOI request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to DGHSC@scotland.gsi.gov.uk. Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your appeal rights is available on the Commissioner's website at: <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx>.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Carmichael
Staff Governance Associate