HSC Clinical Education Centre

for Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals

Policy: Acting on concerns raised within a classroom setting

Title	Acting on concerns regarding patient safety raised within a classroom setting		
Lead author			
Consultation undertaken (if this was required please give some narrative)	Reviewed for feedback by SLT prior to approval		
Equality & Human Rights Screening completed	27/02/23	**Is a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) required?**	
Approved by	SLT	**Approval date**	December 2022
Issue date	28th February 2023	**Next review**	2025
Version number	Version 1 Replaced Guidance on Raising and acting on concerns for Nursing and Midwifery Teaching staff in the HSC Clinical Education Centre (October 2019) V2 as update to reflect changes in delivery of teaching methods.		

Strategic Context

The HSC Clinical Education Centre (CEC) is a business unit of the Business Services Organisation (BSO) and is committed to its mission “to deliver value for money and high-quality business services to Health and Social Care so contributing to the health and wellbeing of the population of Northern Ireland”. The CEC is accountable both financially and professionally to the BSO and to the Department of Health (DoH).

The CEC primarily exists to provide in-service education to Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) employed in the five Health and Social Care Trusts, the NI Hospice and the Southern Area Hospice. Alongside this the CEC provides education to various other statutory, independent and voluntary organisations.

The CEC operates from four geographically dispersed sites. This arrangement facilitates the delivery of In-Service education at local level via remote access, classroom teaching or in specific practice environments.
The CEC sites are:

- Clady Villa, Knockbracken Health Care Park
- Altnagelvin Hospital site
- Craigavon Hospital site
- Fern House, Antrim Hospital site

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the CEC that all staff raise and act on any concerns relating to patient safety that may be raised within an educational/classroom setting as set out within this policy document.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all CEC staff who are involved in the delivery of educational /teaching sessions. This policy should be applied to all methods of teaching employed within CEC including face to face or online virtual classrooms and be inclusive of all functions such as; break out rooms, white board exercises etc where issues of concern might potentially emerge. This policy does not replace nor supersede other policy relating to the conduct and behaviour of staff including; Code of Conduct for HSC

Employees (2016); Conflict Bullying & Harassment in the workplace (2019) or the Zero Tolerance Policy (2012).

Introduction and Purpose of the Acting on Concerns Policy

The CEC has a dynamic and challenging role in supporting the professional development of Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals both now and into the future. A confident and skilled teaching workforce is essential to enable CEC to fulfil its purpose to provide high quality in- service education to Nurses, Midwives and AHPs. This Policy seeks to outline the actions to be taken by teaching staff should an issue or concern relating to patient safety be raised by attendees at CEC programmes, whether in a face to face class or in a virtual classroom. This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant professional codes of conduct and professional guidance on raising concerns. This Policy cannot cover every situation but should provide a clear approach for staff on how to raise concerns appropriately and in a timely fashion within CEC.

Types of concerns

Concerns raised within a classroom may relate to any one of the following examples: (Please note that this is not an exhaustive list)

- Safeguarding issues;
- Patient safety;
- The adequacy of care environments;
- Equipment;
- Resource availability;
- Systems, policies and processes;
- The conduct, health or performance of individual staff members or teams

Roles and Responsibilities

If any member of staff receives information relating to a concern as described above, they have a professional responsibility to act on it promptly and professionally. As a result, teaching staff should apply their professional judgement based on relevant professional codes of conduct. If there is any doubt as to the applicability of this Policy

to a given situation it is recommended that advice is sought from a Senior Education Manager, an Assistant Head or the Head of the CEC or relevant professional bodies.

Actions required by teaching staff within CEC

1. All staff must ensure that they attend and keep up to date with relevant safeguarding training as per the CEC mandatory training matrix.

2. At the start of every programme delivered by CEC, the member of staff leading the programme should ensure attendees are fully aware of the responsibilities and processes in place with regard to issues such as raising concerns, confidentiality and disclosure of sensitive information.

3. If an allegation or disclosure is made in a class, whether face to face or in a virtual setting, in relation to any aspect of safeguarding, abuse, patient safety or poor practice, or any other allegation judged to be serious, the member of staff is expected to discuss this with the individual who has made the disclosure. This should be done in private and the member of staff must make a documented record of the discussion (Appendix 1). It is important to inform the individual that any disclosure will be escalated by the CEC to the individual's employing organisation.

4. The member of staff must report the incident judged to be serious to their Operational Senior Education Manager (SEM)/ AHP Assistant Head as soon as possible that day or first thing the following day. In those circumstances where neither the SEM or CEC SLA coordinator is available, the issue should be reported immediately to an Assistant Head or Head of CEC.

5. If the programme/session is being delivered by an external teacher they will be responsible for raising the concern as per policy to the AHP Assistant Head or the relevant SEM, dependent upon who is responsible for the programme in question.

6. Where a member of staff has a concern about discussions or issues raised within a particular teaching session they should also make note that an escalation was raised in the summative evaluation report for that particular programme.

Actions required by the appropriate Senior Manager within CEC

7. The CEC SLA coordinator for the relevant Trust will take responsibility for ensuring the processes outlined in this policy are then followed.

8. In circumstances of disclosure judged to be serious the CEC SLA coordinator must notify the Assistant Head of the CEC and the HSC Trust Assistant/Co Director of Nursing for Workforce and Education or the Lead for Education of the provider organisation[1] immediately.

9. In the absence of the HSC Trust Assistant/Co Director of Nursing for Workforce and Education or the lead for education of the provider organisation, the CEC SLA coordinator should contact a senior nurse/AHP who works at an equivalent level within the relevant organisation (for example; an Assistant Director/Co-Director for nursing and midwifery).

10. The HSC Trust Link or the Lead for Education of the provider organisation will be responsible for taking the allegation/disclosure forward in line with the HSC Trust's policy and will be expected to confirm that they are attending to the concern. The CEC SLA Co-ordinator should agree a time frame for follow up with the HSC Trust Assistant/Co Director of Nursing for Workforce and Education or the lead for education of the provider organisation.

11. Where specific actions are required by the CEC, the SLA coordinator will develop a time framed action plan identifying any required responses/actions

[1] Provider organisations include for example NIAS, NI Hospice, Southern Area Hospice, other hospices, Nursing Homes, Nursing Agencies.

to be taken. The action plan will be agreed and 'signed off' by a relevant CEC Assistant Head.

12. If, at any point, the CEC SLA Co-ordinator is concerned that the matter is not being dealt with appropriately by the HSC Trust or provider organisation the CEC SLA Co-ordinator should discuss their concern with the Assistant Head of CEC, agree and implement any necessary actions accordingly.

13. In all circumstances of serious allegations/disclosures, the member of staff and the managers involved will complete and retain a comprehensive written record of the incident (Appendix 1).

14. The completed template (Appendix 1) should be forwarded to the CEC Assistant Head by the relevant Senior Education Manager who will have responsibility for safe retention and storage of same.

15. Information relating to any disclosure will be stored securely in the Senior Management Team Folder which only designated staff have access to as per DoH Good management Good records Guidance and the BSO Records Management Policy.

Please Note;

16. CEC staff will be expected to contribute to local HSC Trust processes where it is relevant to do so (for example; as part of evidence gathering for a safeguarding investigation).

17. Disclosures of serious allegations made within a classroom (Virtual or face to face) should be included as:
    (1) A standing item on the agenda of all SLA meetings with Trusts
    (2) An item on the agenda of the CEC's Senior Management Team meetings and local operational team meetings.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

This policy has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The equality screening has been published and can be accessed here

SIGNATORIES

Assistant Head:	**Siobhan Murphy**	**Date:**
Author:	**Paul Canning**	**Date:**

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Raising and Acting on Concerns Policy
Report of Disclosure

Date of programme	
Programme Title	
Method of Delivery (Face to Face or Virtual)	Location (Face to face)
Teacher(s)	CEC Staff involved
Nature of disclosure & action taken including discussions with member of staff and SEM/AHP Assistant Head.	
Date discussed with SEM/AHP Assistant Head (Include names)	
Decision taken	
Date and Signatures of Teaching Staff and SEM/AHP Assistant Head	Signature Date
	Signature Date
Date raised with HSC Trust/Organisation include names and timeline for review (if deemed Appropriate)	
Date forwarded to Assistant Head CEC for recording	
SEM/AHP Assistant Head Signature	