

PE1495/CC

Chief Executive

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Mr Andrew Howlett
Assistant Clerk to the Public
Petitions Committee

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Dear Andrew

Consultation on PE1495

Thank you for the opportunity to construct a response to the above petition and I apologise for the delay in this response.

The response to the two questions are below:

1. What are your views on what the petition seeks and the discussions that took place at the meeting on the 26th of November 2013?

NHS Orkney supports the need for a robust and strong governance process in regard to settlement agreements and the impact they have at an individual, organisational and national level, and in this respect are supportive of the petition in its objective to remove “gagging clauses” from any settlement agreements.

NHS Orkney has never utilised any such “gagging clause” in any of its settlement agreements (formerly known as Compromise Agreements). We would not support the use of any measure that seeks to prevent staff from raising concerns in the workplace.

2. What management training do you have in place to ensure that all staff are enabled and encouraged to raise matters that may affect patient safety and quality of care as well as employment issues such as workplace bullying?

NHS Orkney has adopted in full the National PIN Policies on Whistleblowing and Preventing and Dealing with Bullying and Harrassment. We have recently recruited and are training a new cohort of Confidential Contacts to support and guide staff where required. The national alert line has been widely publicised across the Board and on the staff blog.

NHS Orkneys Corporate Plan 2013/15, priorities and promises supports our Staff Governance duties and embedding our values as part of “our promise” in everything we do. We believe such an approach helps make the 2020 Workforce Vision a reality.

Orkney NHS Board Headquarters:
Garden House, New Scapa Road,
Kirkwall, Orkney KW15 1BQ

Chair: John Ross Scott
Chief Executive: Cathie Cowan

Orkney NHS Board is the common name of Orkney Health Board



Yours sincerely

Cathie Cowan
Chief Executive