

BY EMAIL

Dr Henrietta Hughes
National Freedom To Speak Up Guardian
Care Quality Commission

25 April 2017

Dear Dr Hughes,

Re: Quality of CQC's whistleblowing data and compliance with recording requirements for Prescribed Persons

I have received some FOI data disclosed by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) which reveals significant doubts about the quality of CQC's whistleblowing data.

Chiefly,

1) CQC's manner of recording whistleblowing incidents obscures the precise number of whistleblowers and concerns. CQC says explicitly that its recorded data on so-called whistleblowing 'enquiries' may include aggregate data, and ***"...may not necessarily be reflective of individual contacts we may have received relating to whistleblowing"***.

2) CQC says that its whistleblowing data may include events that have been wrongly classified as whistleblowing, when they are not.

In short, CQC says its whistleblowing data cannot be used to judge trusts' performance.

I have provided the FOI data and a summary of the issues
here: <https://minhalexander.com/2017/04/24/4-years-of-cqc-mental-health-whistleblowing-data/>

Given that CQC is a Prescribed Person under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) and is now under a legal obligation to clearly record the number of disclosures which it reasonably believes are qualifying disclosures under PIDA*, this would seem an unsustainable basis for CQC's approach to whistleblowing data.

Moreover, it is now almost three years since the Public Accounts Committee recommended that public bodies should have effective arrangements in place to accurately track whistleblowing events.

I hope you can help with this key issue.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Minh Alexander

* The Prescribed Persons (Reports on Disclosures of Information) Directions 2017

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/507/regulation/5/made>

cc

Meg Hillier Chair of Public Accounts Committee

Sarah Wollaston Chair of Health Committee

Bernard Jenkin Chair of Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee

Sir Jeremy Heywood Head of the Civil Service

Chris Wormald Permanent Secretary DH

Sir Amyas Morse Comptroller and Auditor General NAO

Sir Robert Francis Chair of National Guardian Accountability and Liaison Committee, CQC

Helen Buckingham NHS Improvement and member of National Guardian Accountability and Liaison Committee

Dame Moira Gibb NHS England and member of National Guardian Accountability and Liaison Committee