

Raising and acting on concerns about patient safety

Key points

The GMC regulates the medical profession with the aim of protecting patient safety. We do so against standards which we set. In both *Good Medical Practice* and our explanatory guidance we set out what is expected of doctors and their duties.

All doctors have a duty to act when they believe patients' safety is at risk, or that patients' care or dignity is being compromised (*Raising concerns* paragraphs 1-3 and 7; and *Good Medical Practice* paragraphs 6 and 43-45).

Make sure that you understand

- The steps to raise a concern where you work (*Raising concerns* paragraphs 11-15).
- Your legal rights and the protections available to you (*Raising concerns* paragraph 10b and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998).
- The difference between raising a concern and raising a personal grievance (*Raising concerns* paragraph 14; and *Leadership* paragraph 66).

Advice and support

- It is important that you seek advice and support if you are not sure whether, or how, to raise a concern (*Raising concerns* paragraph 18).

There are many sources of help:

- a colleague, your educational supervisor or manager
- your medical defence body, royal college or professional association (such as the BMA)
- the appropriate regulator or other external body www.gmc-uk.org/raising_concerns_contacts
- the NHS Whistleblowing Helpline (doesn't operate in Scotland or Wales) or Public Concern at Work
- the GMC Confidential Helpline (0161 923 6399).

Contact details are available in the Useful contacts www.gmc-uk.org/raising_concerns_contacts

Final things to remember

- Keep a record of your concerns and the actions you have taken to resolve them (*Raising concerns* paragraph 15).
- Remember that you will be able to justify raising a concern if you do so honestly, on the basis of reasonable belief and through appropriate channels, even if you are mistaken (*Raising concerns* paragraph 10c).