

Catharsis Whistleblowing and Allegations about Staff Policy

Staff selected to work for Catharsis come with relevant qualification (all our therapists are qualified to at least MA level), registration, clinical supervision and insurance; Arts Therapists are governed by the HCPC (Health Care Professions Council) and all therapists are members of the governing body particular to their specialism. As such they are required to adhere to the codes of conduct, performance, ethics, and proficiency set out by their profession.

Other Catharsis policies, which have links with this policy, are as follows:

- Safeguarding Policies
- Quality Assurance
- Compliments and Complaints
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Catharsis Fraud Prevention, Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 legally protects workers who raise concerns about malpractice in an organisation. It is recognised that colleagues and employees are often the first to realise there is something seriously wrong. Catharsis is committed to providing the highest standards of practice and as such would encourage anyone to come forward to voice any concerns they may have about individuals working within Catharsis, or the business itself.

Catharsis has in place a Compliments and Complaints Policy, which explains the process by which anyone outside of the organisation can make a complaint. Similarly, the management team want to encourage staff to raise concerns about colleagues, or the organisation, at the earliest possible stage, so that this can be dealt with appropriately and confidentially if needed. Whilst confidentiality can be respected, this can sometimes hinder any investigation and therefore the Catharsis team are encouraged to raise concerns in the confidence that harassment or informal pressure placed on the person raising the concern will not be tolerated. Catharsis will ensure that no individual raising a concern in good faith will suffer dismissal, victimisation, or any detrimental treatment as a result of doing so. Fabricated allegations are likely to lead to action being taken. Catharsis supports guidance issued by ACAS in relation to Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. Issues will be raised with individuals clearly (in writing if required) and dealt with promptly.

Where a concern needs to be raised, Catharsis would encourage that in the first place the complaint is discussed openly and quickly with the therapist or staff member concerned. In the event this is not appropriate, the issue should be discussed with the Managing Director of Catharsis in person, or via e-mail: Hannah@catharsis.biz or by phone: 07979717669. Acknowledgement of a complaint will be made within 3 working days and a full investigation of the complaint will be made and feedback provided within 14 working days.

For therapists / staff who feel they are unable to escalate issues internally, there is the option of contacting the Government funded Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285)

Where a concern is raised but it is felt it has not been dealt with appropriately, or where a concern is so serious, escalation may be needed. Major / serious concerns may include for example fraud, corruption or the inappropriate use of public funds, inappropriate contact with children, staff or adults, offending behaviour or breaches of the law.

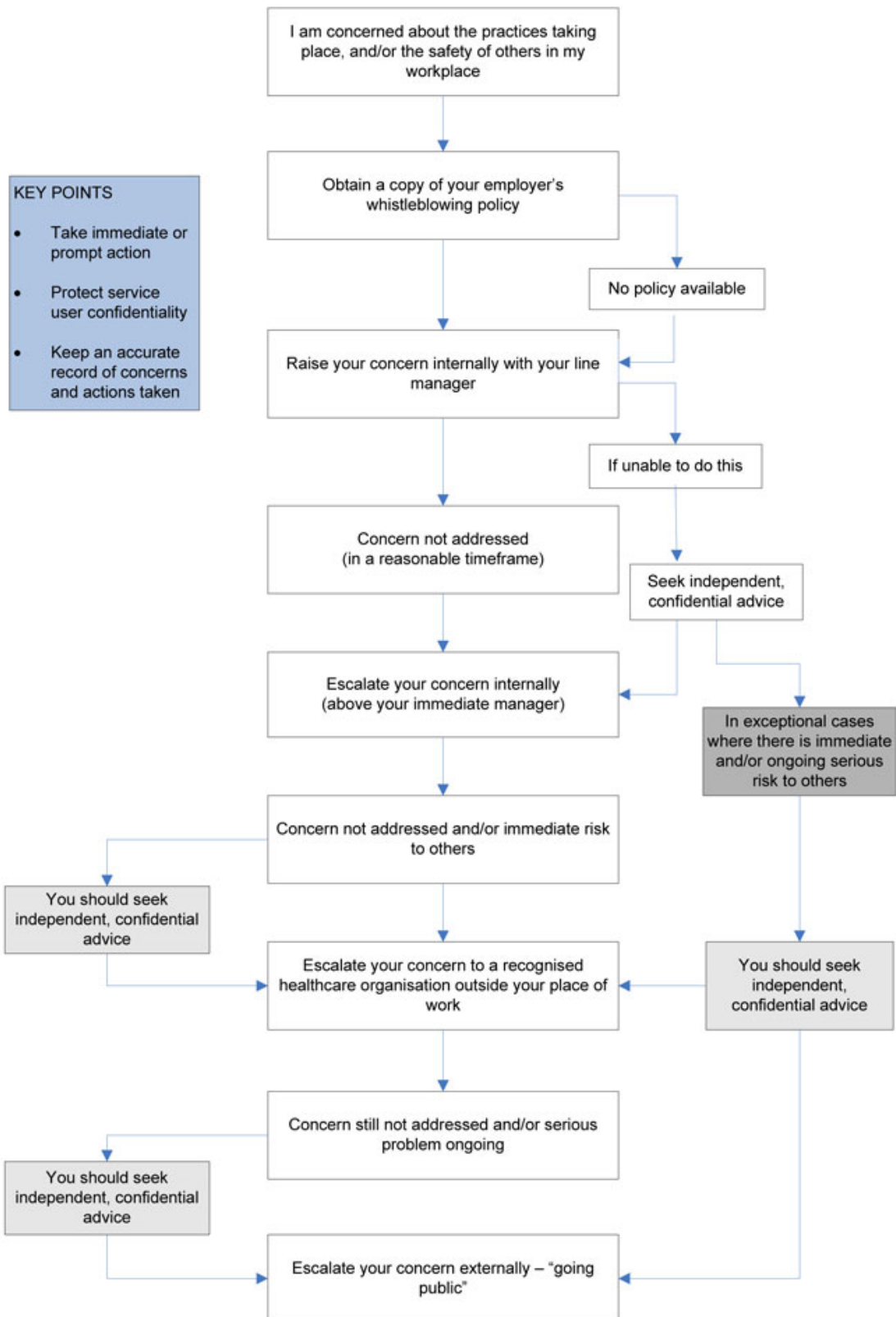
A referral to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) should and will be made if there is reasonable cause to believe that a person who works with Catharsis has behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child, has committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children. Catharsis also has a legal duty to refer people who leave our organisation because they harmed or might have been at risk of harming a child to the relevant disclosure and barring agency (DBS).

Access to the Derby and Derbyshire LADO referral form is available via the documents library section of the Safeguarding Children's Board website and from the Catharsis Senior leadership team. When working in other Local Authorities, staff will be supported to access the correct reporting mechanisms.

There are therefore 4 possible ways to raise a concern:

1. Raise concerns internally (with individual or Service Development Manager)
2. Escalate concerns internally (with Managing Director)
3. Escalate concerns externally (with HCPC, LADO, police, DBS or with the Whistleblowing Advice Line).
4. Consider raising concern publicly (seek appropriate advice prior to taking this course of action)

The following flowchart, provided by HCPC, is supported by Catharsis; this demonstrates the escalation process:



Review

Implementation / Review date	Reviewers
August 2025	Hannah Robertson
Next Review date	Keren Adler
August 2026	