



NHS Highland Annual Whistleblowing Report Summary

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Listening, learning & living our values



NHS Highland Whistleblowing Standards 2021/22 Infographic

 **10,500** colleagues

Key Geographical areas include Caithness, Sutherland, Skye, Lochaber, Inverness, Helensburgh, and Oban



14 concerns raised, **5** of these were whistleblowing. **3** of these were concluded by end of March 2022.

- 1 Stage 1
- 4 Stage 2
- 4 Safety and Quality
- 1 System Pressures

Bert, our Whistleblowing Non-Exec, travelled

1,158 miles

from Campbeltown to Caithness.

18 one-to-one conversations for advice
19 team and individual briefings



3 completed training for line managers

25 completed training for senior managers

104 completed the overview module

2 all-colleague Ask Me Anything Sessions in April 2021 and February 2022, with 4 further weekly update posts.

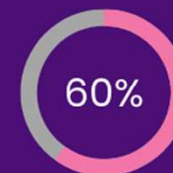


Partner Survey Results

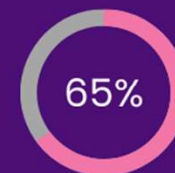
on Whistleblowing Awareness



Aware of Standards



Aware of Responsibilities



Aware of Where to Get More Info

from 248 responses

Executive Summary

This is NHS Highland's first annual Whistleblowing report, following the launch of the Whistleblowing Standards in April 2021. Over this year, we have had **14 concerns raised**, 5 of which were taken forward under the Standards and 3 of which have completed.

The report sets out how we have gone about promoting the standards and managing concerns and also includes some case studies and additional data and how we had an Internal Audit to ensure we had implemented them as best we could.

We have welcomed the Standards as another way to invite challenge and address concerns as a learning organisation. Moving forward, this is built into our 2022-7 Strategy and we have included details of how this is embedded in our 2022/3 Annual Delivery Plan.

Across the year, our Executive Lead has been personally involved in oversight of all cases and in the promotion of the standards, supported by our Whistleblowing Non Executive Champion has been proactive in visiting our huge board area and promoting the Standards to our colleagues. Using our Independent Speak Up Guardians to be the Confidential Contacts ensures independence and builds trust.

We have been able to use the Standards to address some longstanding challenges, but we have also had areas for development which we continue to address, including ensuring timely resolution and that people do not confuse the Standards with HR processes.

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NHS Highland Whistleblowing Process

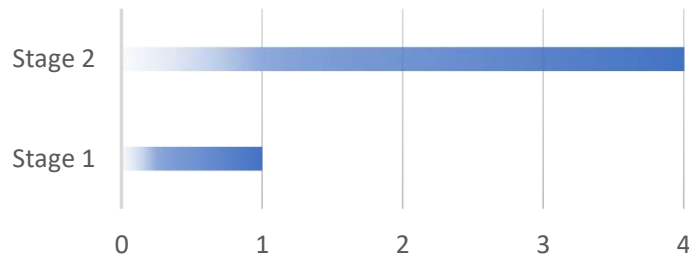
- The Guardians will take the details of the concern and then liaise with Fiona Hogg, as the Board Lead, who will review the concern and agree how it is to be taken forward.
- Concerns which are believed to be Whistleblowing are dealt with at a senior level, to ensure these can be quickly and effectively looked into and any learnings agreed and implemented without delay
- Fiona will discuss with Senior Management / SMEs who is best placed to manage the concern and the stage of the concern. This can either be Stage 1 (addressed informally and quickly within 5 days) or Stage 2 (more complex, should be completed in 20 days, or updates given every 20 days)
- Fiona maintains oversight of all cases throughout the process and liaises with the INWO as appropriate. She also provides advice to the managers hearing the cases, as required.
- Where a case is not believed to be Whistleblowing, following discussion with relevant SMEs as appropriate, Fiona will provide a detailed explanation as to why this is the case, which is provided to the complainant in writing, via the Guardians as the Confidential Contact
- This will include details of how to contact the INWO if not happy with our response, and details of possible alternative ways of addressing their concern
- If the matter is one which the Guardians can address in their Speak Up role (rather than the WB Confidential Contact role), they will also offer that support directly to the complainant
- The Guardians record the data about our WB concerns and cases and ensure they are followed up, so need to be copied into all correspondence.

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April 2021 to March 2022 - Whistleblowing Cases raised

NUMBER OF WB CASES



	Stage 1	Stage 2
Whistleblowing Cases	1	4

This data sets out only cases found to be WB. It shows concerns were higher at the start but have continued throughout and came from a range of sources, with most handled as Stage 2 concerns.

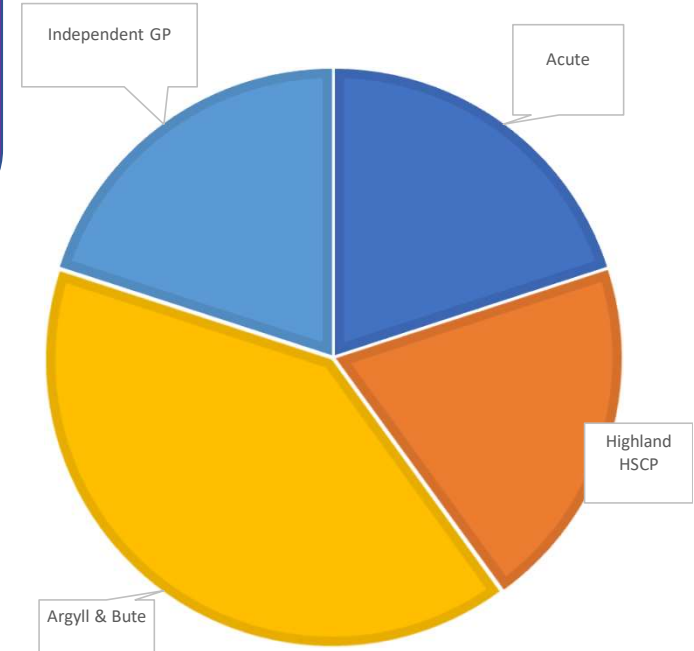
MONTH IN WHICH WB CASES WERE RAISED



	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
Raised	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0

WB CASE ORIGIN

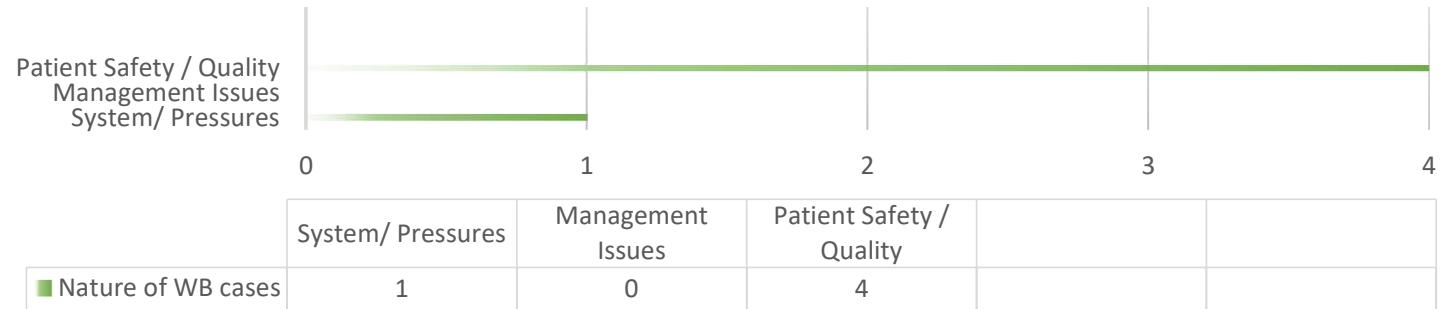
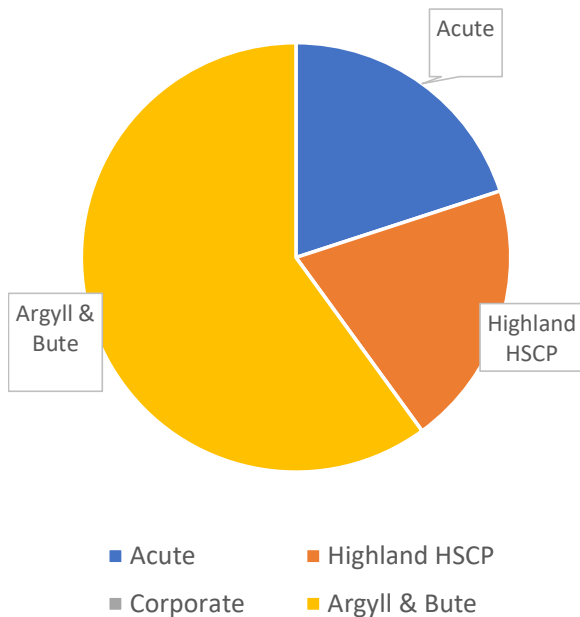
- Acute
- Highland HSCP
- Corporate
- Argyll & Bute
- Independent GP
- Other in scope
- Out of scope



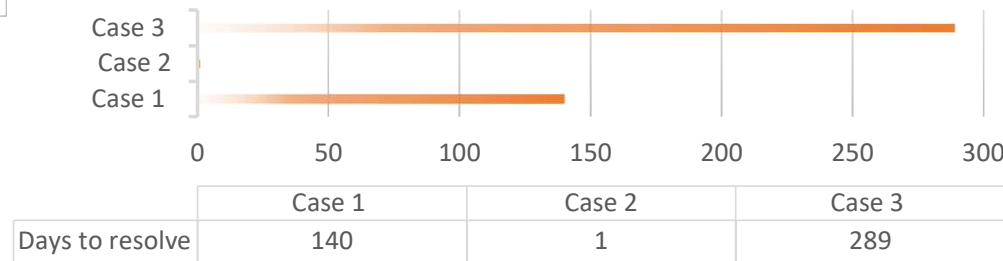
April 2021 to March 2022 - Whistleblowing Cases raised

NATURE OF WB CASES

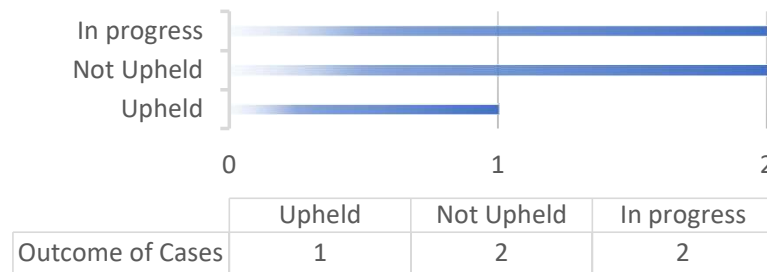
Area of WB case



TIME TO RESOLVE WB CASES



OUTCOMES OF WB CASES



Again, this is just looking at WB cases. It shows cases involve all areas except Corporate, and are mostly safety and quality related. The time taken to resolve Stage 2 cases is significant. This is due to both complexity and some process delays. We have had 3 outcomes, 2 not upheld and 1 upheld.

Our detailed reporting



All of our past NHS Highland Board reports are available publicly here:

- [WB Standards Progress report March 2021](#)
- [September 2021 –WB Q1 Covering Paper](#) [WB Q1 Apr - Jun 2021](#)
- [January 2022 – WB Q2 July - Sept 21](#)
- [March 2022 - WB Q3 Cover paper](#) [WB Q3 Oct - Dec 21](#)
- [May 2022 - WB Q4 Covering paper](#) [WB Q4 Jan - Mar 2022](#)

Prior to Board, the reports are reviewed at our Area Partnership Forum, our Staff Governance Committee and our Argyll & Bute Integrated Joint Board, as well as at our WB Implementation Oversight group and by our Executive Directors Group.

The current schedule of reports for 2022 – 2023

- [September 2022 – Annual report 2021-2022 and Q1 report April – June 22](#)
- [December 2022 – Q2 report July – Sep 2022](#)
- [March 2023 – Q3 report Oct – Dec 2022](#)
- [May 2022 – Q4 report Jan – Mar 2022](#)
- [July 2022 – Annual report 2022-2023](#)

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Contacts and information

- The National Whistleblowing Standards set out how the Independent National Whistleblowing Officer (INWO) expects all NHS Scotland service providers to handle concerns that are raised with them and which meet the definition of a ‘whistleblowing concern’.
- There is an excellent website with lots of resources and advice [Independent National Whistleblowing Officer | INWO \(spsso.org.uk\)](https://www.spsso.org.uk)
- There is also training on TURAS learn which it is highly recommended to complete.
 - [Whistleblowing : an overview | Turas | Learn \(nhs.scot\)](#)
 - [Whistleblowing : for line managers | Turas | Learn \(nhs.scot\)](#)
 - [Whistleblowing : for senior managers | Turas | Learn \(nhs.scot\)](#)

To raise a concern, contact the Guardians, as our confidential contacts, either via the WB hotline **0333 733 8448** (Mon – Fri 9 -5) or emailing Julie McAndrew Julie.m@theguardianservice.co.uk or Derek McIlroy Derek.M@theguardianservice.co.uk

