

Bilateral Complaints Resolution Process

Information for medical staff submitting a complaint

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AHS is committed to creating workplaces where people feel safe, healthy, valued and included, and where each person is treated with respect and dignity. AHS has worked to ensure that workers can safely report worker-to-worker disrespectful behaviour, harassment, discrimination and violence.

The Bilateral Complaints Resolution Process (BCRP) sets out processes to resolve worker-to-worker complaints that involve employees and members of the medical and midwifery staff.

The process is aligned with the [Type III Worker-to-Worker Procedure](#) #1115-03.

This document provides information on the complaint resolution process for medical staff (complainants) who are submitting an allegation of worker-to-worker disrespectful behaviour, harassment, discrimination and violence by members of AHS employees or midwifery staff (the respondents) when the complaint will be channeled through the BCRP.

What is the AHS Bilateral Complaints Resolution Process?

The BCRP is a set of processes intended to ensure a people-centred, timely, equitable and aligned approach to addressing worker-to-worker complaints involving: i) AHS employees and ii) members of the medical and midwifery staff. It addresses allegations characterized as disrespectful behaviour, harassment, discrimination and violence. This process does not address other concerns such as quality and safety of patient care, clinical performance, academic teaching or research. It does not address complaints received from patients or family members. It does not pertain to issues considered in the AHS Medical/Midwifery Staff Bylaws. The goal of BCRP is to resolve conflicts to the satisfaction of both parties and enable them to return safely to the workplace. The BCRP is restorative; it is not intended to assign punishment.

You have a concern about an incident of worker-to-worker disrespectful behaviour, harassment, discrimination and violence. How can you report it?

There are multiple options for reporting worker-to-worker concerns:

- You can report it to your medical leader or to your leader's leader
- You can submit a report through **MySafetyNet (MSN)**; this functionality is currently under development for non-employees. You may request **Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)** file on your behalf.
- You can report it to a member of the Medical Affairs Issues & Concerns Team, which includes the Concerns Consultants, at pmaphysicianissuesconcernsmanagement@ahs.ca
- You can call the Safe Disclosure line at 1-800-661-9875
- You can contact the Respectful Workplaces team at conflict.support@ahs.ca to receive coaching, tips and tools to support a respectful workplace and assist in managing conflict.

Last updated 2024/03/05

Please include as many factual details as possible in your complaint. If there are more than one person making a complaint, each person should submit their own separately and in their own words.

The information from your report will be provided to the respondent if a review is conducted. This follows the principle of procedural fairness, allowing the respondent to fully understand and respond to the allegations.

The only reporting option that allows anonymity is the safe disclosure line. It is challenging, or even impossible, for AHS to fully investigate or take actions based on anonymous reports. If there is insufficient information to support fair process, it may be that no review will be undertaken.

Your safety is important. Retaliation against a complainant is not tolerated. You should report any threats or instances of retaliation to your leader and via MSN or WHS promptly. If you have concerns for your safety, please discuss those concerns with your leader so that a safety plan or other appropriate steps can be taken immediately.

How will your complaint be handled?

AHS takes allegations of workplace misconduct very seriously. Upon receiving a complaint of a worker-to-worker incident, Human Resources Business Partnerships (HRBP) or a Concerns Consultant will contact you to acknowledge receipt of your complaint. They may request additional information and make arrangements to meet with you to discuss your complaint in more detail. The situation may be channeled through a BCRP review if that is deemed most appropriate to the situation.

To ensure fairness, the respondent is entitled to know who made the complaint and the specific details of the allegation, in order to understand and respond to the concerns. HRBP and the Concerns Consultant will discuss this with you and obtain your agreement before the respondent is made aware of the allegation and a review is initiated.

In certain situations, a BCRP may not be selected as a review process, such as:

- Insufficient information can be collected
- The complainant chooses to engage in discussion directly with the respondent. Supports are available from your leader and a variety of conflict resolution resources can be found on the [Respectful Workplaces](#) Insite page.
- The reporting person does not have first-hand knowledge of the alleged incidents
- The allegations do not meet the threshold of misconduct as per the Type III Worker-to-Worker Procedure #1115-03. (Such complaints may undergo an informal resolution process.)
- There are allegations or threats of violence or other safety concerns that may require immediate action by the medical leader
- Other options for resolution or intervention would be more appropriate.

The medical leader, in partnership with a Concerns Consultants and HRBP, form a BCRP review team. This process may involve having information-gathering conversations with the complainant, the respondent, and witnesses.

During a meeting with the review team, you will be asked to provide details and your perspective on the issues you raised. Please be prepared to speak about people's actions, specific dates, names of any witnesses and other information to the best of your ability. It might be helpful for you to gather and prepare any evidence, including text messages, emails, photos and other information before the meeting. Meetings typically take 30-60 minutes. You will be asked questions by the review team intended to provide them with as much information as possible regarding your complaint. Please be open, honest, and detailed in your response. You may arrange for a support person to attend with you.

If a meeting is being held virtually, arrange to have access to a quiet and private place to join. Use a suitable electronic device, such as a laptop or computer, with audio and video capabilities and the required applicable software (such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom). It is expected that all participants' video features are turned on during virtual meetings. Audio or visual recording is not permitted.

Confidentiality is expected to be maintained at every stage to maintain the dignity of all involved. Discussions with others may jeopardize the integrity of the review. Please refrain from approaching other workers, even if they are participating in the review, to discuss any information related to the complaint. If others inquire, inform them that due to confidentiality requirements, you are not able to discuss the matter. The requirement of confidentiality does not prevent participants from discussing the matter with an advisor, law enforcement or as required by legislation (if applicable).

How will outcome findings and results be communicated?

At the conclusion of a review, you will receive written notification of the outcome, noting only whether the allegations are founded, unfounded, or inconclusive based on a balance of probabilities. You will not receive additional information of the review findings, nor be informed about any actions taken with the respondent; that is considered private information and is kept confidential..

Resources and Supports:

Your well-being is important. The expectations around confidentiality are not intended to prevent you from seeking professional support. Your leader can provide you support. Many resources are available through Insite. Physicians who are Alberta Medical Association members can confidentially access the Physician and Family Support Program at <https://www.albertadoctors.org/services/pfsp>. Medical staff who are AHS employees can access the confidential services of the Employee and Family Assistance Program at 1-877-273-3134.

Workplace Health and Safety and the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) are available to help physicians who are AHS employees when injuries occur at work. For psychological incidents related to bullying, violence or mental health in the workplace, WCB has some specific requirements. To begin the claims process, report workplace incidents in MSN and work with your physician and WCB to determine if missed work will be compensated via WCB or other banks such as sick leave. Doing so is not a violation of the confidentiality of the process.