



Florence

Alert Notices Policy and Procedures Northern Ireland

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1. Introduction

Florence is committed to maintaining a structured approach to handling alert notices, ensuring the safety of care professionals and the public. The policy is designed to prevent the placement of care professionals subject to alert notices and promptly inform relevant authorities, such as the NMC.

Alert notices indicate concerns about a nurse's performance or conduct, posing potential harm to patients or staff. Florence's process directs received notices appropriately, ensuring that candidates are restricted from working, and agency workers face suspension or termination pending investigation.

The policy encompasses all Florence employees. It outlines roles, responsibilities, and the CEO's crucial role in fostering a culture of compliance. Safer recruitment practices, including professional registration checks, AccessNI checks, and referencing, are integral to the policy. The procedures for handling alert notices involve immediate reporting to the Registered Manager, suspension of workers on assignment, and collaboration with contracting authorities and the NMC. Continuous monitoring and compliance reviews are essential, aligning with Florence's commitment to ensuring the highest standards in healthcare services.

2. Policy Statement

We have a structured approach to dealing with alert notices. This system is used to ensure that we do not place a worker who is the subject of an alert notice and also to inform the NMC and others of nurses whose performance or conduct gives rise for concern particularly if it is considered that:

- Service users or staff may be at risk of harm from inadequate or unsafe clinical practice or from inappropriate behaviour; or



- There is a risk that an individual may pose a threat to service users or staff because their conduct compromises the effective functions of a team or service.

Alert notices are used to notify NHS bodies and others (including recruitment agencies) of a bogus nurse. Our process is designed to ensure that any alert notice we receive is directed to the right person and communicated as appropriate to ensure that:

- If registered with us, the candidate is prevented from working until the notice is revoked.
- If on a current assignment, the care professional is suspended immediately pending investigation or has their assignment terminated in line with the requirements of the alert notice.

It is also designed to provide care professionals working for us with a procedure for raising concerns and if appropriate triggering an investigation.

3. Scope

This strategy applies to all direct employees and contractors engaged in work on behalf of Florence in Northern Ireland.

4. Definitions, Roles and Responsibilities

CEO (Chief Executive Officer) The CEO is ultimately responsible for the overall management and direction of the company. Florence's leadership team has overall responsibility for ensuring that all employees are aware of their roles and responsibilities in implementing this strategy and for empowering them to escalate any risks or issues that they may identify in their day-to-day work.

Central Team - All direct employees of Florence that are not care professionals working through the Florence platform



Service User - a person who uses health and/or social care services. Sometimes known as a “patient”, “client” or “person in care”.

Care Professionals - Anyone on the Florence platform that carries out work on behalf of Florence in other organisations, for example registered nurses and care assistants. Care professionals have the responsibility to inform Florence of any alerts that relate to their own work, whether on placement with Florence or not. Concerns or alerts should be raised directly with our Registered Manager.

Employees - everyone employed by Florence directly and indirectly, including care professionals using the platform and the central team.

Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) - is the independent body responsible for monitoring and inspecting the availability and quality of health and social care services in Northern Ireland, and encouraging improvements in the quality of those services.

Registered Manager is responsible for ensuring that this policy meets the needs of regulators in Northern Ireland. for being the point of contact for responding to any alerts in Northern Ireland and escalating risks as appropriate within the Governance Team.

5. Procedures

Safer Recruitment

We conduct a robust recruitment and selection process to ensure that we do not place workers who are the subject of an alert notice. Our process is detailed fully in our recruitment policy and includes the following checks:

- Professional Registration & PIN Checks: NMC and NISCC. This check will be undertaken during onboarding to the Florence Platform and on a monthly basis thereafter. It is a condition of a care professional’s engagement that,



should their registration be suspended; their assignment will be terminated, and they will be excluded from the work for which the registration is required unless it is reinstated.

- AccessNI Checks: We obtain our criminal record checks through AccessNI in line with our Criminal Records & Barring Procedure. We will only supply nurses who are from the UK or who have already worked in the UK (and as such their criminal record and barring information will be accessible by AccessNI).
- Referencing: We will undertake referencing in line with our Recruitment Policy and Procedure. This involves obtaining a minimum of 2 satisfactory written references from previous employers to cover a minimum period of 3 years with no unexplained gaps including the most recent employer. We always ask the most recent employer if there are any concerns or alerts relating to the candidate as part of this process.

Most alert notices are identified through our safer recruitment process detailed above or through ongoing checks undertaken whilst the worker is on assignment. If an alert notice is received by us, it must be sent to the Registered Manager immediately.

We will then check the name of the care professional on the alert notice against our database to identify if the individual is registered with or working for us.

If the alert notice relates to a care professional who is registered with us or working for us we will conduct the following process:

- For candidates who are registered with us but not working, we will put their application on hold until the outcome of the investigation has been completed, and make a record on our database accordingly to prevent them from working until such time as the alert notice has been revoked or lifted.

For care professionals who are working on a current assignment, we will:

- Suspend them pending an investigation and advise the contracting authority immediately.



- Ask the care professional for a full explanation
- We will check with the Confirmer to establish information about the investigation and their decision relating to the worker (including whether they have referred the issue to the NMC/NISCC as appropriate).
- If it has been referred to the NMC or NISCC, we will obtain full details of the case (if available) and follow instructions relating to whether the care professional is to be allowed to continue working or not.
- Put a notification on their record on our system to prevent reassignment until such time as the alert notice has been revoked.

6. Monitoring and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if there are any legislative changes or other prevailing circumstances.

7. Version History/Review of Changes

Date	Reviewed changes
02/09/24	Registered manager name change

