



The Bribery Act 2010 came into force on 1 July 2011, reforming the criminal law of bribery and corruption making it easier to tackle these offences proactively. It creates specific criminal offences which carry custodial sentences of up to 10 years and potentially unlimited fines. It also introduces a corporate offence which means that the majority of organisations across the public, private and charitable sectors will be exposed to criminal liability, punishable by an unlimited fine, for failing to prevent bribery.

The Department of Health Legal Service has advised that NHS bodies are deemed to be a relevant corporate body and will become liable unless they put in place adequate 'preventative procedures', for acts of bribery and corruption committed by persons associated with it, in the course of their work. This is a collective, NHS wide initiative.

Bribery may be considered to be:

“An inducement or reward offered, promised or provided to someone to perform their functions or activities improperly in order to gain a personal, commercial, regulatory and/or contractual advantage.”

Zero Tolerance

Bribery is a criminal offence. NHS South Tees CCG does not, and will not, pay bribes or offer improper inducements to anyone for any purpose; nor do we, or will we, accept bribes or improper inducements. This approach applies to everyone who works for us, or with us. To use a third party as a conduit to channel bribes to others is a criminal offence. We do not, and will not, engage indirectly in, or otherwise encourage, bribery.

Proactively combating bribery has clear benefits for this CCG and the wider NHS. It helps prevent:

- adverse damage to or criticism of the organisation's reputation and funding;
- the potential diversion and/or loss of resources from NHS care;
- unforeseen and unbudgeted costs of investigations and/or defence of any legal action;
- and,
- a negative impact on patient/stakeholder perceptions.