

Number of investigations launched by organisations into formal complaints has skyrocketed since November 2020

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Investigators within companies must be better trained to make competent, unbiased decisions, TCM Investigations & Audits Annual Conference hears.

The number of investigations into formal complaints being launched by organisations has dramatically increased since November 2020, with such cases becoming increasingly complex, delegates were told at the TCM Group's recent Investigations & Audits Annual Conference.

Gary Rogers, Head of TCM Investigations and Audit Services, told the conference that TCM has conducted rapidly increasing numbers of independent investigations since November 2020. The business has seen a 68 per cent increase in the last seven months, compared to the previous seven months.

Likely causes of the increase in formal complex complaints include a move back into the workplace after the trauma of COVID-19, fears around the pandemic, mental exhaustion as well as a move to hybrid team working.

As such there is an urgent need for investigators within organisations to be better trained, in order to reach reasonable, balanced conclusions.

Urgent need for better training

During the conference, delegates heard that often individuals responsible for investigating increasingly complex cases within organisations do not have the competence and skills to conduct thorough, fair and objective investigations. This risks both reputational and financial damage to companies.

"With investigations becoming increasingly complex and teams struggling to re-enter the workplace after the trauma of the pandemic, it is becoming harder for organisations to reach reasonable, balanced conclusions in investigations," said Gary Rogers.

"It is essential that people conducting investigations within organisations are better trained to make competent decisions, thoroughly and fairly, objectively reviewing all evidence without bias.

"Countless recent horror stories of tribunals in the media emphasise what can happen when organisations fail to conduct fair and thorough investigations. Ultimately poorly conducted investigations can devastate companies both financially and reputationally."

During the Investigations & Audits Annual Conference delegates heard a range of experts including:

- Patricia Grealish – Chief People Officer NHS Blood and Transplant, who spoke about ways to handle complex case management at a time when the public sector is experiencing an increase in complex cases.
- Dominic Human, industry leading investigator, who spoke of the importance of correctly conducting interviews, focusing on the cognitive Interviewing technique.

- Davinder Sandhu, Head of Learning and Development at Unison, who discussed how to guide participants through the investigations process and keep them calm.
- Neil Fletcher, global investigations specialist, who spoke about key investigation competencies and the importance of having competently trained investigators.

For more information, interviews or to access a recording of the conference, please contact Erika Lucas at Erika.lucas@thetcmgroup.com or Rebecca Griffiths at rebecca@griffithshuntpr.com