

Title:	Freedom to Speak Up Guardian Annual Report 2022/23		
Report to:	Trust Board		
Meeting:	17th May 2023	Agenda item:	8
Purpose of the report:	For Noting: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For Decision: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For Assurance: <input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary:

This paper is an annual review of the Trust's raising concerns processes and the role of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and Freedom to Speak Up Champions. It provides the Board assurance that concerns raised are robustly managed in line with current best practice.

The Trust has also undertaken a self-assessment using a new reflection and planning tool which was published by the National Guardian's Office in June 2022. The reflection tool, attached in **Appendix 1**, provides our speaking up arrangements and position against each of the principles identified.

During 2022/23, the Trust had 19 Freedom to Speak Up Champions attached in **Appendix 2**.

The Staff Survey results for 2022, showed that the Trust was the highest rated Community Trust for 'We have a Voice that Counts.'

The Board is asked to assess the proposed rating against the evidence and consider the proposed improvement actions where gaps have been identified in **Appendix 1**

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Freedom to Speak Up Self Reflection and Planning Tool

Appendix 2 - Meet the FTSU Champions

Recommendation:

The Board is asked to:

1. To assess the proposed rating in the reflection and planning tool (**Appendix 1**) against the evidence and consider improvement actions where gaps have been identified.
2. To note the content of the annual report.

	Name		Title	
Report author:	Mercy Kusotera		Trust Secretary and Freedom to Speak Up Guardian	
Executive sponsor:	Anita Pisani		Deputy Chief Executive	
Assurance level:	Substantial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reasonable <input type="checkbox"/>	Partial <input type="checkbox"/>	No assurance <input type="checkbox"/>

How the report supports achievement of the Trust objectives

Trust Objective	
Provide outstanding care	The report includes an update on raising matters of concern cases which included an element of patient safety/quality of care.
Collaborate with others	The report includes an update on how the FTSU Guardian, and the Trust have engaged with the National Guardian's Office and the local network of FTSU Guardians.
Be an excellent employer	The report includes raising concerns in relation to staff morale, wellbeing and welfare.
Be a sustainable organisation	The report includes information on whistleblowing on counter fraud cases.
Equality and Diversity Objective	
To fully implement the actions identified following our review of the No More Tick Boxes review of potential bias in Recruitment practices	An effective raising concern process is crucial to ensuring that staff are confident about raising concerns. Staff feedback from staff networks were taken into consideration to ensure inclusive recruitment panels.
The Trust Board will role model behaviours that support the Trust ambition to be an anti-racist organisation including actively implementing the Trust's and their personal anti racism pledges, to instil a sense of belonging for all our staff.	The Board shared with staff, how they were taking their anti-racism pledges forward. This instilled a sense of belonging to staff.
To commence collection of demographic data for people who give feedback.	Not specifically covered in this report.
To work with the data team and clinical services to target the collection of demographic data.	Not specifically covered in this report

Links to BAF risks / Trust risk register

Staff Morale
Workforce challenges
Care Quality Commission standards

Legal and Regulatory requirements:

Public Interest Disclosure Order 1999

Previous Papers (last meeting only):

Title:	Date Presented:
Freedom to Speak Up Annual Report	18 th May 2022

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an overview of the Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) activity during 2022/23 and plans for 2023/24.
- 1.2 The purpose of creating a speaking up culture is to keep our patients safe, improve the working environment of staff and to promote learning and improvement. The staff survey results 2022 and previous years confirm that the Trust has a safe culture; we will keep on building on that positive culture.
- 1.3 The global Covid-19 pandemic enabled us to introduce more speaking up channels as we maximised the use of the virtual platform to talk directly with staff on a regular basis. Staff continued to raise concerns during the pandemic through our more formal FTSU routes; however, speaking up arrangements were also adapted in response to the pandemic. Lots of concerns/questions were able to be raised directly with Executive team members during live question and answer sessions with staff. In addition, Service Directors have regular sitrep meetings with their direct reports where issues/concerns are also discussed and addressed directly.
- 1.4 The Trust also has three staff networks namely: Cultural Diversity network launched in July 2020, Long Term Conditions and Disability network launched in April 2021 and the LGBTQIA+ network launched in July 2021. These networks provide additional opportunities for staff to share stories and to raise and discuss any concerns. During staff network meetings, some staff directly raise their concerns, and these are then openly addressed during the meeting or followed up outside as appropriate. These networks continue to provide a safe space for our staff to share their stories and/or raise any concerns that they may have.
- 1.5 In June 2022, NHS England published an updated Freedom to Speak Up Policy which is applicable to primary, secondary and integrated care systems. The Trust updated its Freedom to Speak Up Policy to align it with the revised national FTSU policy. Key areas strengthen in the policy included:
- Clarifying options in terms of who staff can speak up to both internally and externally.
 - Outlining other existing processes and local policies linked to speaking up, for example local policies relating to patient experience and human resources.
 - Providing details for Trust speak up leads.
 - Explaining what would happen when a person speaks up.
- 1.6 The Board approved the revised FTSU policy on 25th January 2023.
- 1.7 During 2022/23, the Trust FTSU Guardian (FTSUG) continued to use various channels to communicate the role of the FTSU function and the importance of raising concerns; these included:
- Raising Concerns intranet page
 - Speak Up Month in October 2022
 - Promoting the Freedom to Speak Up Champions and recruiting new champions
 - Attendance at Joint Consultative Negotiating Partnership (JCNP) meetings
 - Freedom to speak up posters
 - Regular updates on FTSU via Comms Cascade
 - Trust staff networks.

2. Freedom to Speak Up national and local events

- 2.1 The National Guardian's Office (NGO) continues to support the network of FTSU Guardians and monitors both the implementation of the role and the development of a speaking up

culture across NHS organisation. On 9th March 2023, the NGO held the national conference speak up for FTSU Guardians, champions and leaders throughout the healthcare. Key areas covered included:

- Exploring ways to remove barriers to speaking up.
- Hearing from leaders about what freedom to Speak means to them and why it is essential to organisations.
- Sharing good practice.

The Trust FTSUG, the Non-Executive Lead for FTSU and some FTSU champions attended the national conference.

- 2.2 The Trust was invited by the National Guardian's Office (NGO) to participate in one of the key themes for the NGO speak up month. The Trust filmed why civility and respect is important for a speaking up culture. The article was widely shared on social media both internally and externally and can be accessed via the following link:
<https://nationalguardian.org.uk/2022/10/14/why-civility-is-so-important/>
- 2.3 On 23rd February 2023, the National Guardian's Office published a report into the implementation of FTSU Guardian role in ambulance Trusts. The findings of the report can be accessed via the following link:
<https://nationalguardian.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Listening-to-Workers-Speak-Up-Review-of-Ambulance-Trusts.pdf>
- 2.4. The Trust held a dedicated FTSU Board Development session on 22nd February 2023. Key areas covered included:
- What is a healthy speak up, listen up and follow up culture
 - Exploring the benefits and drivers of a healthy speak up, listen up and follow up culture.
 - Measures of the effectiveness of the Trust's speaking up culture arrangements.
 - Support for FTSU Guardian.
 - Areas requiring improvement, for example, telling stories about the change that has occurred from speaking up stories.
- 2.5 The Trust launched speaking up e-learning training for all staff which follows the National guidelines on FTSU published by the NGO in 2019. To date 97% of all staff have completed the FTSU Core Training. Board members have completed the follow-up training which is developed for senior leaders throughout healthcare. There are plans to promote the 'listen up' module for managers.

3. Freedom to Speak Up Accountability Arrangements

- 3.1 The Trust is committed to providing outstanding care to service users and to being an excellent employer. We focus on providing an environment where our staff are able to achieve the highest standards of conduct, openness, and accountability. The Chief Executive is accountable for ensuring that FTSU arrangements meet the needs of the staff across the Trust. The Deputy Chief Executive is the Executive Lead for FTSU and she provides leadership and oversees the supportive arrangements for speaking up within the Trust. The FTSU independent Non-Executive Director (NED) acts as an independent advisor and is available to the FTSU Guardian and the Deputy Chief Executive to seek second opinions and support as required.
- 3.2 The FTSU Guardian has direct access to the Chief Executive and Lead Executive for FTSU; she seeks support from the Executive Lead when required. There are no concerns about the support that has been provided to the Guardian during the reporting period.

4. Freedom to Speak Up Champions

- 4.1 The Trust created the FTSU Champion role in 2018 to work with the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian. FTSU Champions play a key role in supporting staff to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity and ensure that staff who raise concerns are treated fairly.
- 4.2 During 2022/23 the Trust had **19** FTSU champions (**Appendix 2**) across the various services; all were appointed through an open invitation for expressions of interest from staff. All staff who expressed an interest in becoming champions were appointed and all received training delivered by the Trust Secretary and FTSU Guardian and Deputy Director of Workforce.

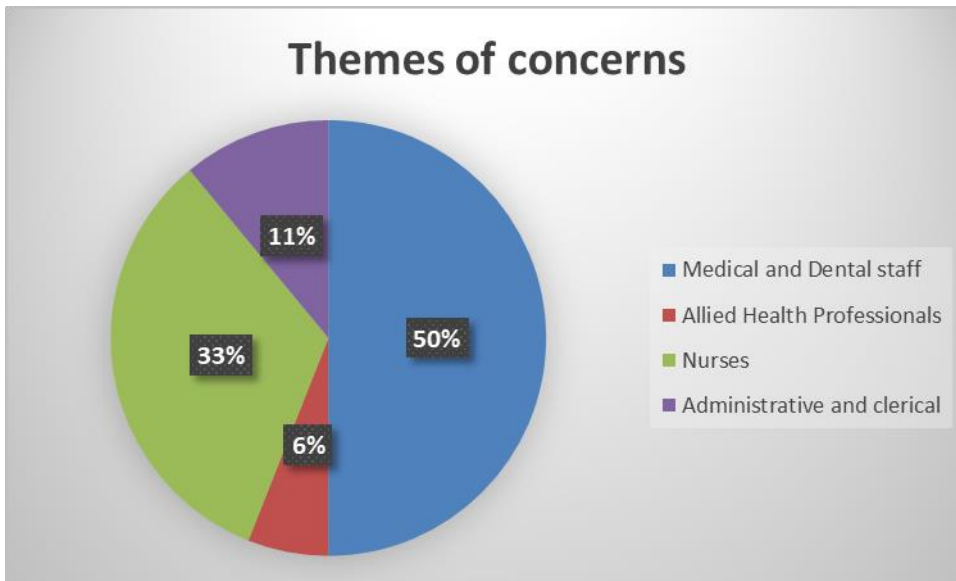
5. Freedom to Speak Up Reporting

- 5.1 FTSU Guardian reports to the Trust Board on a six-monthly basis through the Chief Executives report. These reports update the Board on Freedom to Speak Up activities. Quarterly data returns are made to the National Guardian Office and the information from all trusts making submissions is published on the National Guardian's website: <https://www.nationalguardian.org.uk/>
- 5.2 The data to be reported includes the following:
- Total number of cases reported
 - Number of concerns:
 - raised anonymously
 - with an element of patient safety/quality of care
 - with an element of worker safety
 - elements of behaviour including bullying and harassment
 - other inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.
 - Number of incidents where disadvantageous and or demeaning treatment (often referred to as detriment) is identified as a result of speaking up.

6. Freedom to Speak Up Concerns for 2022/23

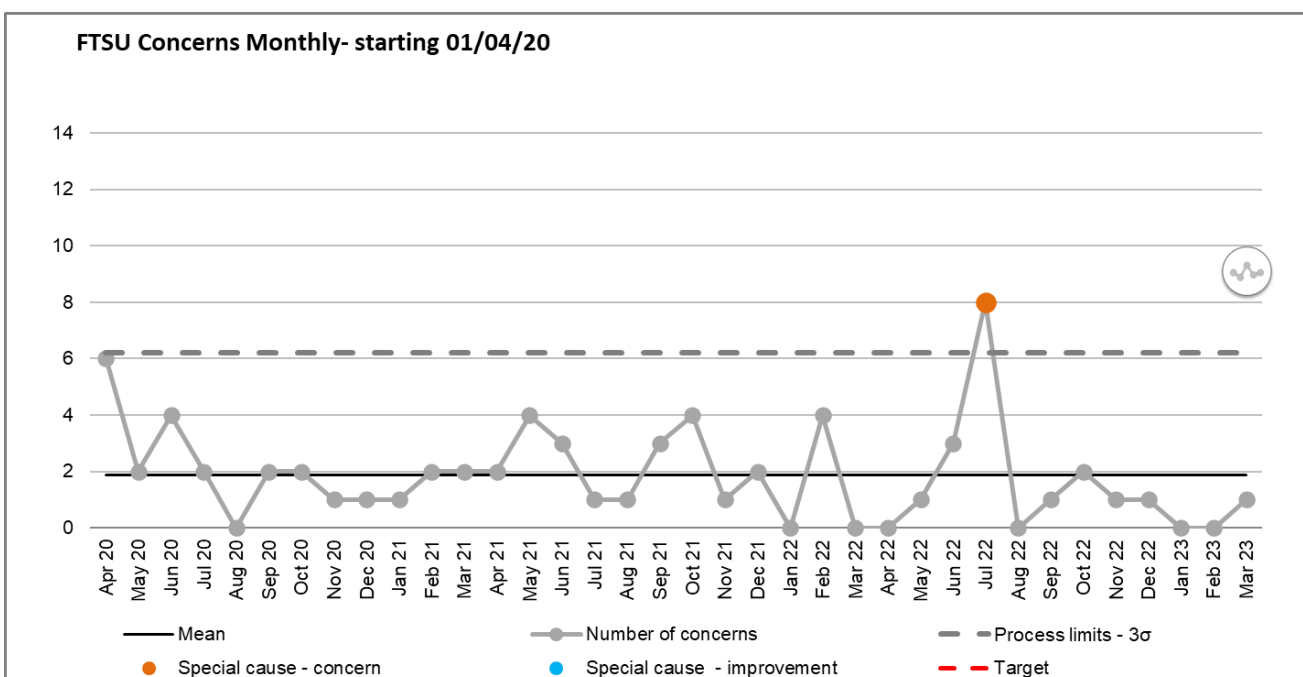
- 6.1 In line with best practice recommendations from the Trust Board, a FTSU the Executive Lead (Anita Pisani), Non-Executive Lead (Catherine Dugmore) for FTSU and the Trust FTSU Guardian held a meeting on 5th May 2023 to discuss themes and any learning from FTSU concerns raised during 2022/23. A FTSU learning event is also scheduled for 28th June 2023 with our FTSU champions. The main goal of the session is to provide oversight that the Trust's systems and processes for speaking up are working effectively and to share learning.
- 6.2 During this reporting period, 2022/23, 18 concerns were reported using our Freedom to Speak Up processes; the number of cases have decreased from the previous year during which 25 cases were recorded. I would like to remind the Board that the number of cases in this report do not include concerns raised using other forums for example staff networks or question and answer sessions. It should be noted that the number of issues raised directly via other routes (IMT, staff networks and service question and answer sessions) is substantially higher than the 18 cases which were formally raised via 'normal' speaking up channel. The Trust Board can be assured that our staff have many routes to raise/discuss their concerns and we have lots of evidence in place that they do, the main one being directly with their line manager. No staff reported experiencing a detriment as a result of speaking up.
- 6.3 Professional groups for raised concerns were varied as demonstrated in the chart below. Medical and dental staff accounted for the biggest portion (50%) of speaking up cases raised during the reporting period. I would like to remind the Board that when recording data, each individual speaking up is counted as a separate case even if they are speaking

about the same issue together or separately. Therefore 8 out of 9 cases recorded in July 2022 were raised by a group of staff, the concern could have been counted as one but based on recording guidance, the case was recorded as 8, which is the number of staff in that group.



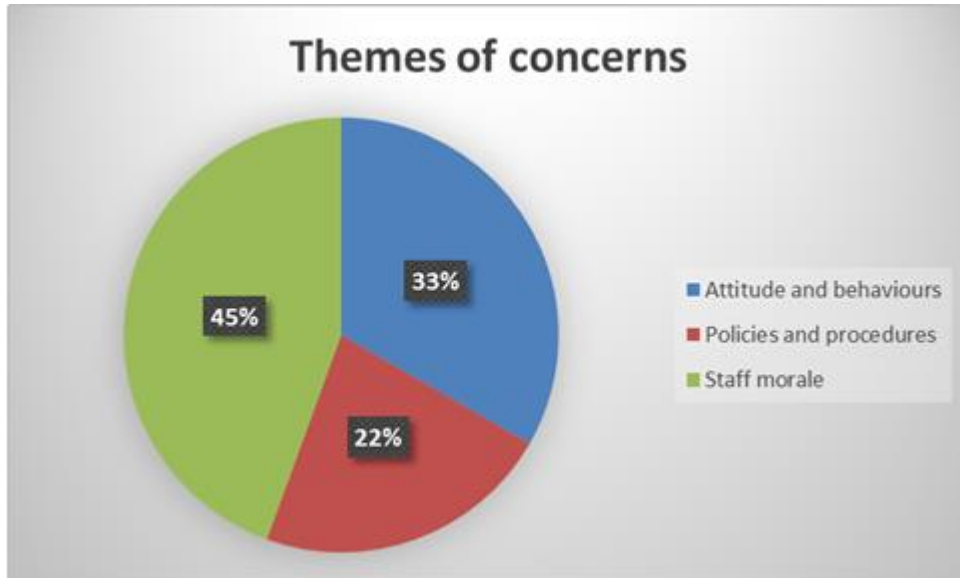
- 6.4 Reviews for each concern are independent, fair, and objective. Recommendations are reasonable and designed to promote staff and patient safety and learning. All the concerns raised during the reporting period were reviewed and closed.
- 6.5 The Statistical Process Control (SPC) chart below compares the number of concerns raised monthly from April 2020 to March 2023. The numbers in the lower series are quite low apart from July 2022 which had 8 cases recorded. The mean, when re-calculated after July 2022 spike shows that the process was very stable.

FTSU Statistical Process Control Chart: April 2020 - March 2023



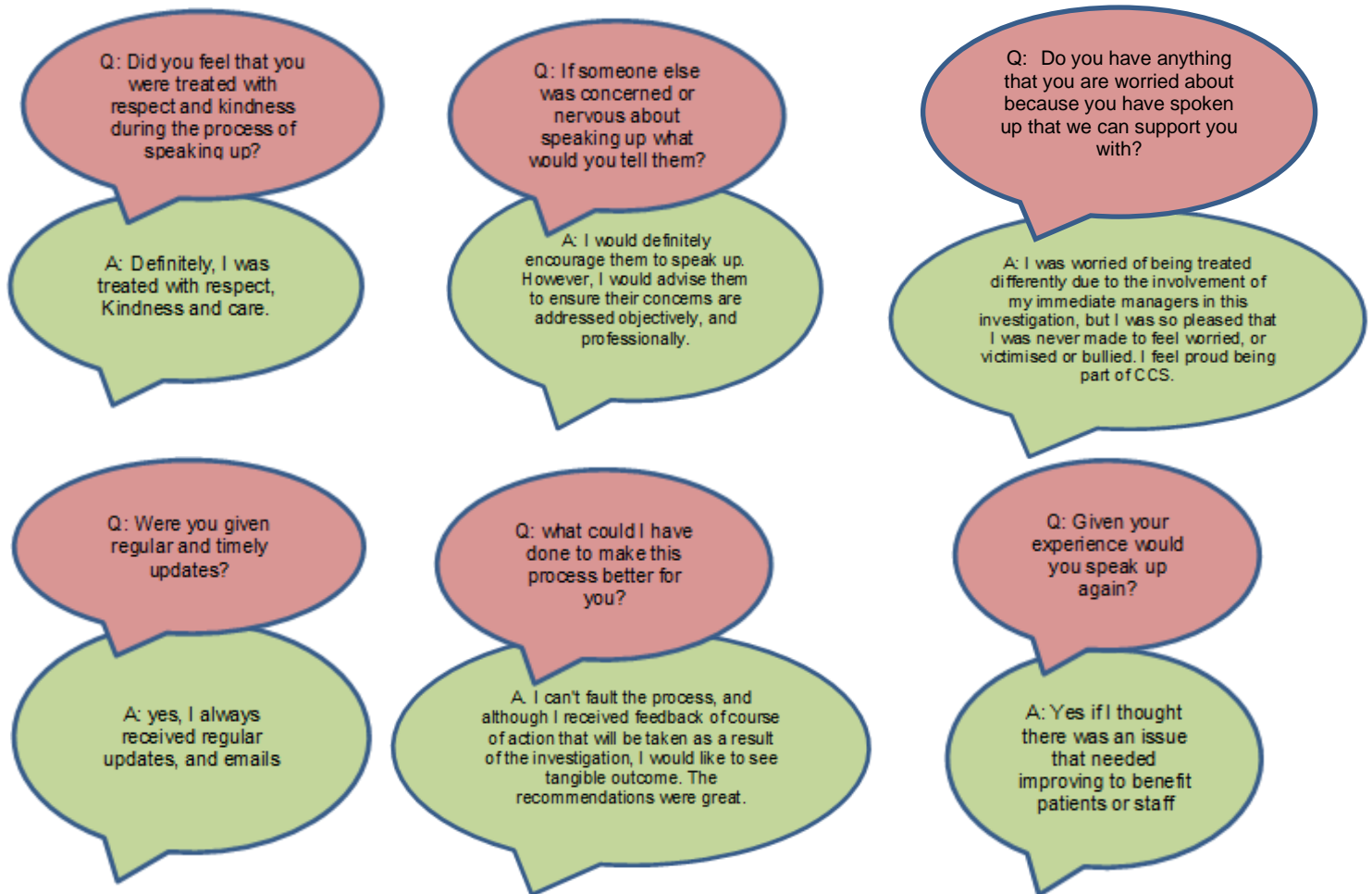
7. Themes of concerns

- 7.1 The chart below summarises the key themes for concerns raised from April 2022 to March 2023. The most prevalent themes related to staff morale and attitude and behaviours. Concerns relating to staff morale tend to originate from recruitment challenges and poor communication between staff and line manager or person in seniority.



8. Feedback

- 8.1 Feedback is an important part of the speaking up process. A staff who raised concerns during 2022/23 have been provided with feedback on the outcome of the matters they raised. Similarly, feedback has been sought from staff about their speaking up experience. The speech bubbles below show some of the feedback received from staff who raised their concerns during the reporting period:



8.2 The Board can take assurance that the Trust has a safe culture for speaking up and learning is captured from all the concerns raised and feedback received.

9. Learning and Improvement

9.1 The Trust is committed to continuing to learn and improve its systems and processes for raising concerns. All concerns raised during the reporting period were responded to on time and learning captured. Examples of learning outcomes include:

- **FTSU Champions role** – Enhanced visibility of the Champions Trust wide. Service Directors work closely with the FTSU Champions across services.
- **HR processes** – Revision to some policies and procedures to ensure they support our just and learning culture and also remain fit for purpose.
- **Staff voice** – Encouraging staff to share their lived experience. Staff networks provide a safe place for staff to share their stories.
- The annual meeting between the FTSU Guardian, Executive Lead and Non-Executive lead
- Learning events for FTSU Champions to be held going forward
- Working with our local and regional staff side colleagues
- Seeking feedback from those that raise concerns and those involved in the FTSU systems and processes
- Supporting our staff networks by encouraging staff to share their lived experience with the Trust
- The improvement action plan presented as part of the annual report.

- 9.2 Communication - key messages and awareness are raised to all staff through the intranet, communications cascade, and other internal communications e.g., screensavers.
- 9.3 Externally, the FTSU Guardian and the Trust have benefited from engaging with East of England Regional Network of Guardians and sharing learning.
- 9.4 The following learning points were identified from concerns raised during 2022/23:
- Ensuring that national guidance on Covid 19 was being followed across Trust services; processes regularly updated, and staff reminded on any changes.
 - Supporting managers on handling staff pressure and ensure the Trust continues to provide outstanding care to patients and support to staff.
 - Ensuring that emotional and wellbeing support is available to all staff who are involved in speaking up processes.
 - Keeping staff informed about national and local challenges, for example recruitment issues affecting their teams or services.
- 9.5 In 2023/24, we will continue to promote and improve visibility of our FTSU Champions Trust wide. We will continue to work in collaboration with our Service Directors, staff networks and Cultural Ambassadors to ensure all staff feel confident and safe to speak up.