

# Freedom to Speak Up Vision and Strategy

## Purpose

Sir Robert Francis's 'Freedom to Speak Up' review in February 2015 highlighted the need for the creation of the National Guardian and Freedom to Speak Up Guardians at every Trust in England as a 'vital step towards developing the right culture and environment for speaking up'. This document sets out the Trust's Freedom to Speak Up vision and strategy.

This document should be read alongside the Trust's Raising Concern (Whistleblowing) Policy. The Trust has adopted the standard integrated policy which will be reviewed as required to continue to meet national guidance and best practice

## Our Vision

We are committed to promoting an open and transparent culture across the organisation to ensure that all members of staff feel safe and confident to speak out. Our Board and senior leadership team will support this agenda by:

- modelling the behaviours to promote a positive culture in the organisation;
- providing the resources required to deliver an effective Freedom to Speak Up function; and
- having oversight to ensure the policy and procedures are being effectively implemented.

Our FTSU Guardian and other champions have a key role in:

- helping to raise the profile of raising concerns in our organisation
- providing confidential advice and support to staff in relation to concerns they have about patient safety
- providing confidential advice and support to staff in relation the way their concern has been handled.

The Trust is fully engaged with the National Guardian's Office and the local network of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians in our region to learn and share best practice.

## Our Strategy

The Trust will take the following actions to deliver this vision:

- implement separate policies, which clearly differentiate between a grievance and raising a (whistleblowing) concern;
- increase effective awareness training for all staff so they are clear about what concerns they can raise and how to raise them;
- ensure managers are clear about their roles and responsibilities when handling concerns and are supported to do so effectively;
- provide regular communications to all staff (including those permanently employed on a full-time/part-time basis, temporary/ contracted workers and volunteers) to raise the profile and understanding of our raising (whistleblowing) concerns arrangements;

- communicate key findings to staff about the level and type of concerns raised and any resultant actions taken, as is appropriate under the scope of confidentiality;
- share good practice and learning from concerns raised, through a variety of fora, with the key aim of fostering openness and transparency, such as, newsletters, staff briefings, team meetings and the intranet; and
- actively seek the opinion of staff to assess that they are aware of and, are confident in using local processes and use this feedback to ensure our arrangements are improved based on staff experiences and learning.

## **Communication plan**

To create a positive FTSU culture, staff need to know how to speak up and to whom. They need regular messages that reinforce the message that speaking up is welcomed and lessons are learnt from speaking up. Our communication engagement with staff includes:

- Quarterly FTSU updates for all staff via communication team
- Dedicated FTSU intranet pages
- Screen savers
- Pop-up PC/laptop screen alerts
- Directorate/Team meetings
- Staff network meetings
- Reporting to the Board bi-annually
- Production and display of FTSU posters across Trust services
- Induction/training on FTSU as well as references within other training for example unconscious bias and effective communication
- FTSU e-learning for all staff

## **Outcomes and Measures**

1. Annual staff survey results.
2. Regular review of referrals with other functions involved in the process like Human Resources and Local Counter Fraud Specialist.
3. Number of channels available for staff to raise concerns including champions and other internal and external routes like Staff Side Chair.
4. Quarterly FTSU updates for all staff via communication team and intranet.
5. Evidence that investigations are evidence based and led by someone suitably independent in the organisation, producing a report which focuses on learning lessons and improving care.
6. High level findings provided to the Trust board and policy annually reviewed and improved
7. Internal audit reports

## **Monitoring**

Freedom To Speak Up bi -annual report will be presented to the Board each year by the Freedom To Speak Up Guardian and the Executive Lead for Raising Concerns; the reports will include:

- An assessment of the Trust's Raising Concern (Whistleblowing) Policy;
- An overview of the cases reported and the themes identified;

- Benchmarking
- An improvement plan for the next 12 months.